

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord" (Isa. 1:18).

**WHEN GOG'S ARMIES MEET THE ALMIGHTY IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL**

AN EXPOSITION OF EZEKIEL THIRTY-EIGHT AND THIRTY-NINE

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## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

Having returned from the Holy Land in the summer of 1939 and having studied in a special manner the prophecies relating to the end time, I wrote the present volume, which issued from the press in 1940.

These facts must be borne constantly in mind because the book was written from the standpoint of conditions in the Holy Land in 1940. Since then many and stupendous changes have taken place in the land. Progress and development are moving with incredible speed. This year, 1958, the State of Israel is celebrating its tenth anniversary of independence and statehood.

Though the outlook of this book is from the standpoint of 1940, the exposition of the Word contained therein is as fresh and new as if it were written in 1958. My studies during these eighteen intervening years have only confirmed the interpretation of the Scriptures as given in the first edition. There is, however only one point to which I wish to call special attention now. While I have always recognized that there are two invasions of Palestine mentioned in Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39, I did not make this point stand out as boldly as the facts now demand. In Ezekiel 38:1-39:16 is a prophecy of an invasion of the land of Israel by Russia and her associates, which occurs before the Tribulation. In Ezekiel 39:17-29 is another prophecy regarding the invasion of Palestine by the armies of the world, which, as we know from related passages, will occur at the end of the Tribulation. Also in these verses are flashes of glory of the reign of Messiah, which He establishes upon His coming to earth at the end of the tribulation.

David L. Cooper

Los Angeles, California  
August 1958

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

This volume first appeared in February 1940. The large edition published has been completely exhausted. There is still a greater demand for this message than ever before since people are realizing more and more than ever the great importance of this particular prophecy. Thousands of people have read this volume. Book reviews have come from different portions of the world. I have received scores of letters from ministers and bible teachers regarding it. I am glad to report that with one or two exceptions the reception accorded its message has been most gracious and gratifying.

I have studied this subject more than ever during the last three years. Many things have transpired during this period. At this writing I do not have to change any of the positions taken. This fact is due to my refusal to set dates and make out human schedules. On the contrary I have endeavored to expound the Word—just as it is.

In this new edition I have added a fifth chapter which contains a chart showing the unfolding of the ages from the birth of Christ to eternity. Graphically the position, in point of time of the fulfillment of this position, is clearly seen. This new material makes its distinctive contribution. May God use this small volume in bringing a blessing to many thousands of His people.

David L. Cooper

Los Angeles, California  
April 15, 1943

## PREFACE

The proper understanding of the prophecy of Ezekiel 38 and 39 is essential to the correct approach in studying the predictions relating to the end time. Since prophetic students are directing their attention in an especial manner to this marvelous prediction, I felt led of the Lord to write this small volume in an attempt to expound the truths of this startling oracle.

These are great and momentous days. Epochal events are occurring. The international stage is constantly being reset. People are asking what may we expect next. The answer is to be found in the prophetic word alone, to which we shall do well to take heed as to a light shining in a dark place until the day dawn (II Pet. 1:19).

Since all students have their own special and peculiar approach to any subject, naturally differences arise in their interpretation of the Prophetic word. This fact should not discourage anyone in his effort to learn what God says relative to the future.

Let each one of us be considerate of those who differ from us, granting to the other that which we ask for ourselves; namely, that we desire the truth and nothing but the truth.

May the Lord use this small volume to the blessing of many souls is my sincere prayer.

Los Angeles, California  
February 15, 1940

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## CHAPTER I

## WHO ARE THE ACTORS IN THIS PROPHETIC DRAMA?

## I. PROPHECY OF EZEKIEL, CHAPTERS 38 AND 39

**38** And the word of Jehovah came unto me saying, 2 Son of man, set thy face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, 3 and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal: 4 and I will turn thee about, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armor, a great company with buckler and shield, all of them handling swords: 5 Persia, Cush, and Put with them, all of them with shield and helmet; 6 Gomer, and all his hordes; the house of Togarmah in the uttermost parts of the north, and all his hordes; even many people with thee.

7 Be thou prepared, yea, prepare thyself, thou, and all thy companies that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them. 8 After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, that is gathered out of many peoples, upon the mountains of Israel, which have been a continual waste; but it is brought forth out of the peoples, and they shall dwell securely, all of them. 9 And thou shalt ascend, thou shalt come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy hordes, and many peoples with thee.

10 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: It shall come to pass in that day, that things shall come into thy mind, and thou shalt devise an evil device: 11 and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates; 12 to take the spoil and to take the prey; to turn thy hand against the waste places that are *now* inhabited, and against the people that are gathered out of the nations, that have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the middle of the earth. 13 Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take the spoil? hast thou assembled thy company to take the prey? To carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take great spoil?

14 Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: In that day when my people Israel dwelleth securely, shalt thou not know it? 15 And thou shalt come from thy place out of the uttermost parts of the north, thou, and many peoples with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army; 16 and thou shalt come up against my

people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land: it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring thee against my land, that the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.

17 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Art thou he of whom I spake in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, that prophesied in those days for many years that I would bring thee against them? 18 And it shall come to pass in that day, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah, that my wrath shall come up into my nostrils. 19 For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; 20 so that the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the heavens, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are on the face of the earth shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. 21 And I will call for a sword against him unto all my mountains, saith the Lord Jehovah: every man's sword shall be against his brother. 22 And with pestilence and with blood will I enter into judgment with him; and I will rain upon him, and upon his hordes, and upon the many peoples that are with him, and overflowing shower, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. 23 And I will magnify myself, and sanctify myself, and I will make myself known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.

**39** And thou, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal: 2 I will turn thee about, and lead thee on, and will cause thee to come up from the uttermost parts of the north; and I will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel; 3 and I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. 4 Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy hordes, and the peoples that are with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. 5 Thou shalt fall upon the open field; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord Jehovah. 6 And I will send a fire on Magog, and on them that dwell securely in the isles; and they shall know that I am Jehovah. 7 And my holy name will I make known in the midst of my people Israel; neither will I suffer my holy name to be profaned anymore: and the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, the Holy One in Israel. 8 Behold, it cometh, and it shall be done, saith the Lord Jehovah; this is the day whereof I have spoken. 9 And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall make fires of the weapons and burn them, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall make fires of them seven years; 10 so that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut

down any of the forests; for they shall make fires of the weapons; and they shall plunder those that plundered them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord Jehovah.

11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place for burial in Israel, the valley of them that pass through on the east of the sea; and it shall stop them that pass through: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude; and they shall call it the valley of Hamon-Gog. 12 And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying them, that they may cleanse the land. 13 Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown in the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord Jehovah. 14 And they shall set apart men of continual employment, that shall pass through the land and, with them that pass through, those that bury them that remain upon the face of the land, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. 15 And they that pass through the land shall pass through; and when they seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog. 16 And Hamonah shall also be the name of a city. Thus shall they cleanse the land.

17 And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Speak unto the birds of every sort, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come: gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh and drink blood. 18 Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. 19 And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. 20 And ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord Jehovah.

21 And I will set my glory among the nations; and all the nations shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. 22 So the house of Israel shall know that I am Jehovah their God, from that day and forward. 23 And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against me, and I hid my face from them: so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they fell all of them by the sword. 24 According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions did I unto them; and I hid my face from them.

25 Therefore saith the Lord Jehovah: Now will I bring back the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for my holy name. 26 And they shall bear their shame, and all their trespasses

whereby they have trespassed against me, when they shall dwell securely in their land, and none shall make them afraid; 27 when I have brought them back from the peoples, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations. 28 And they shall know that I am Jehovah their God, in that I caused them to go into captivity among the nations, and have gathered them into their own land; and I will leave none of them anymore there; 29 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 Jehovah.

[In order that the reader may receive the greatest possible amount of good from this study, he should reread the Scripture passage which has just been quoted. The only way to get the content in any passage of Scripture is to become familiar with the exact wording of every statement. If, therefore, the reader has an accurate knowledge of the facts set forth in these chapters at the outset of this study, he will get far more than he can possibly acquire otherwise.]

A careful examination of these chapters reveals the fact that there are two groups of nations described in addition to the children of Israel. Hence in these chapters, we shall examine all the evidence and attempt to identify these peoples.

## II. THE NORTHEAST CONFEDERACY

In Ezekiel 38:1-6 we read of what might properly be termed "The Northeastern Confederacy." This title may be somewhat new to the reader, but it seems to be more accurate than the usual designation, which is "The Great Northern Confederacy." The reason for this statement is that the nations which are mentioned occupy the land which forms a semicircle around Palestine. Although the title, "The Northeastern Confederacy," is not literally accurate, it is sufficiently definite for the countries mentioned in the prediction, since all but two of them lie to the north and east of Palestine. The two exceptions are Ethiopia and Put, the latter of which is usually identified as Somaliland, that is north and east of Ethiopia.

As we attempt to identify and to locate the nations mentioned in this prophecy, let us always bear in mind the fact that the past, present, and future are one eternal present with the Lord, and that, if the prediction was not fulfilled in the past, it will yet be carried out literally.

The proper approach to the study of the nations given in this prophecy is an examination of Genesis 10:1-7. A glance at these verses shows that the peoples mentioned here are the descendants of Japheth, with the exception of Cush and Put. In his prediction concerning Tyre, Ezekiel spoke of several of these nations and of their having commercial relations with her as the seaport of the world at that time.

Who is Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal? This question has been a matter of great debate, and much confusion and uncertainty have arisen as a consequence. The late Doctor T. G. Pinches, in the article "*Rosh*" in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, gives us the following information.

"The identification of Rosh is not without its difficulties. Gesenius regarded it as indicating the Russians, who are mentioned in Byzantine writers of the 10<sup>th</sup> cent. Under the name of Rhos. He adds that they are also noticed by Ibn Fossilan (same period), under the name of Rus, a people dwelling on the river Rha (Volga). Apart from the improbability that the dominion of Gog extended to this district, it would be needful to know at what date the Rus of the Volga arrived there.

"Notwithstanding objections on account of its eastern position, in all probability Fried. Delitzsch's identification of Rosh with the *mat Rasi*, 'Land of Rash' of the Assyrian inscriptions, is the best. Sargon of Assyria (c 710 B.C.) conquered the counties 'from the land of Rasu on the border of Elam as far as the river of Egypt,' and this country is further described in his Khorsabad Inscription, 18, as 'the land of Rasu, of the boundary of Elam, which is beside the Tigris.' Assyria having disappeared from among the nations when Ezekiel wrote his prophecies, Babylonia was the only power from which Gog of the land of Magog' would have had to reckon, but it may be doubted whether the Bab. king would have allowed him to exercise power in the district of Rasu, except as a very faithful vassal. It may here be noted that the Heb. spelling of Rosh presupposes an earlier pronunciation as Rash, a form agreeing closely with that used by the Assyrians. See Fried. Delitzsch, *Wo lag das Paradies?* 325."

According to Dr Pinches, Fried. Delitzsch was the one who identified the subject of Ezekiel's prophecy as "the land of Rasu on the border of Elam." Although there was such a country or province bordering on Elam, as is evident from the clay tablets unearthed, testimony of which led this noted archaeologist to identify this historic country with the subject of Ezekiel's prophecy, the monumental evidence is not conclusive and does not justify such an identification; in fact, such an interpretation is impossible. The prophet stated that this prince and his land are in the uttermost parts of the north—north from Babylonia, where Ezekiel was when he issued the prophecy, and Palestine, his native home. (See 38:15 to 39:2). The country which meets the conditions of these statements can be none other than Russia, because she occupies the country which is north of both Babylonia and Palestine.

Gog, the prince addressed, is of the land of Magog and is the prince of "Rosh, Meshsech, and Tubal." The great Hebraic scholar, Gesenius, identified Rosh as the modern Russia; Meshech as Moscow; and Tubal as Tobolsk. He saw in the Hebrew words the phonetic equivalent of these modern names in the Russian tongue. Since it is evident from Ezekiel 38:1-39:2 that the country of Gog is in the uttermost parts of the north, there can be little doubt concerning Gesenius's identification of these cities.

The next in the list of those allied with Russia is Persia. Ezekiel lived in the time of the Babylonian supremacy. At its overthrow the Medo-Persian Empire became the ruling power of the day. It, in turn, was succeeded by the Greek kingdom, which later was overthrown and swallowed up by imperialistic Rome. Notwithstanding the fact that Medo-Persia went down as a world power, this kingdom in its contracted and weakened form has continued through the centuries and has persisted even to the present time. In our day she is known as Iran.

The third name associated with Russia is Cush. According to Genesis 10:6, Cush is listed as the first son of Ham. This name is mentioned in Ezekiel 30:4,5, but is there rendered *Ethiopia*. The same word in the original appears in both passages. In Ezekiel 38:5 it should have been translated *Ethiopia*, the same as in 30:4,5. This fact leaves little doubt but that these verses refer to the country which is known today as Ethiopia in East Africa.

*Put* is the next nation appearing in this list. Put, the father of the people inhabiting the country called by that name, was the third son of Ham as is indicated in Genesis 10:6. The authorized version of the Scriptures translates this Libya. This rendering is indeed faulty, since grave doubt exists with reference to it. A person cannot be absolutely dogmatic on this point, since the preponderance of evidence seems to favor one's identifying this country as Somaliland east and north of Ethiopia.

Gomer is next mentioned in the prophecy. According to Genesis 10:2,3 Gomer was the oldest son of Japheth and was the father of Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. The same representation appears in I Chron. 1:5,6. Gomer has been identified as modern Germany. The evidence seems to favor this interpretation.

Togarmah is the last one given in this company of nations. As seen in the preceding paragraph, Gomer was the father of Togarmah. By some scholars Togarmah has been identified as modern Armenia, which has been swallowed up by both Russia and Turkey.

In addition to the groups that are mentioned by name there are numbers of others who are included in the expression, "and all his hordes." These multitudes are mentioned as "many peoples with thee." This expression possibly refers to other groups of smaller nations which become allied more or less closely with the countries mentioned. Of course, it refers to the multitude of the peoples, whose armies will be very large.

A glance at this prophecy shows that Gog, the prince of Russia, plays the leading part in this great dramatic action. Ever since the rise of Hitlerism in Germany, there has been an outward antagonism between Russia and Germany. Many students, seeing this prediction, recognizing that it foretells a treaty between these countries, and knowing of the intense antagonism between them, could not see how this forecast could be fulfilled. On the other hand, those students who are thoroughly convinced that every prediction of God's Word will be fulfilled literally have insisted (and still do) that eventually this hostile attitude, whether real or assumed, would vanish, an approach would be made, and a treaty would be concluded.

Suddenly, as overnight, the entire world was amazed by the announcement coming from Moscow that a treaty of nonaggression had been signed between Russia and Germany. This epoch-making event was proclaimed to the world the latter part of the summer. These initial steps up to the present moment have been followed at intervals by successive advances. At this stage of the development (January 1940), no one knows to what extent the cooperation between these two nations has gone. It would be a matter of pure speculation for one to attempt to say. Though the relationship between Russia and Germany may not have progressed to the extent contemplated in Ezekiel's prediction, and though there should be an apparent reversal of the present development, we may be certain that, since the Word of God will be fulfilled literally, the agreement and cooperation foretold in this passage will eventually take place. It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one word which God has spoken to fail of realization.

From Ezekiel's prophetic declaration, it is evident that Russia plays the principle part in this great international drama. The head of this people is said to be "a guard unto them," or, as the marginal reading renders the word, a "commander." From this utterance it is evident that Russia will be the leader in this coalition of nations, and that Germany will be a secondary power. That is exactly what has occurred even during this short period of collaboration between these great countries. At the present time it is recognized generally that Germany is now playing a secondary role. In the terms of the proverbial saying, Russia, in the Polish campaign, used Germany to pull her chestnuts out of the fire. The latter did the fighting while the former stepped in and took

the spoils. Whether or not the present state of affairs will continue until this prediction is completely fulfilled we do not know, but we are confident that, when the time comes for the fulfillment of this passage, God will make good every statement included in this oracle.

There must be a shifting of the international scene and a realignment of certain nations in order that this prediction may be fulfilled. For instance, Turkey is bound to France and Great Britain by her present treaty obligations. This accord was brought about in order to check Germany in her drive toward the East and to counteract the march of Russia into Europe, especially in the Balkan States. Persia also is tied more or less closely to Great Britain by mutual interests and treaties. On the other hand, Ethiopia has been annexed to Italy. This was accomplished at the end of the Italo-Ethiopian war. While the entire country has not, according to reports, been conquered—only the principle cities—for all practical purposes one must admit that Ethiopia is part of the Italian Empire. At the present time there is great antagonism between Italy—deeply religious—on the one hand and Russia—the hotbed of atheism—on the other. In order that the prediction might be fulfilled, it appears that there must be a break between Ethiopia and Italy. If by the term *Put Somaliland* is indicated, there must be some readjustment of its present political status before this can be accomplished.

In our modern world we are accustomed to seeing great and mighty changes occurring overnight. The present setup of the international situation can very easily be shifted and that which is set forth in this passage be brought about. What it took centuries and even millenniums to accomplish in former generations may be brought about in a few weeks, or even a few days. We are living in a rapidly shifting world. The unexpected occurs.

Almighty God is able to shift and to direct the movement of nations in order that His purposes might be brought to pass. A glance at history shows that throughout the past the invisible, unseen hand of the Lord has ever been present, directing the movement of all nations. God has never abdicated His throne in favor of anyone; neither will He do this. Satan, though very powerful, is subject to the command of the Almighty; he cannot do anything without first securing permission from Him as his Overlord and Master. Whenever the former is allowed to do a certain thing, limitations are always placed upon him. As proof of this, study the case of Job. Satan had to ask permission of God to tempt His faithful servant. When this concession was granted, certain restrictions and limitations were placed upon Satan, beyond which he could not go. What is true in this case is also correct in others. The Lord Omnipotent reigns.

Jehovah bringeth the counsel of the nations to nought;  
He maketh the thoughts of the peoples to be of no effect.  
The counsel of Jehovah standeth fast forever,  
The thoughts of his heart to all generations (Ps. 33:10,11).

As we shall see later, it is God's plan to bring this confederation of nations into Palestine in order that His glory might be manifest to the Chosen People especially and that His purposes might be forwarded. We may expect, therefore, this development, as here foreseen, to come to pass or to spring into materialization at the proper time.

### III. THE WESTERN DEMOCRACIES

Opposed to this Northeastern Confederacy is a group of nations which might properly be termed "The Western Democracies." Yet this designation is not accurate in every particular, because it consists of "Sheba, Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof." Who are Sheba and Dedan? According to Genesis 10:7, Raamah the son of Cush was the father of Sheba and Dedan. There were two other brothers bearing these names who were the sons of Jokshan, a son of Abraham by Keturah, his second wife (Gen. 25:3). From the historical testimony which has been brought to light, it appears that there were two tribes by these names in both the south of Arabia and in the northwestern section of that country. Some have seen a contradiction in the evidence. This is not a necessary conclusion at all. The sons of Raamah were Hamites. In Genesis 10:6,7 we see the sons and grandsons of Ham. The sons of Cush inhabited the country now known as Ethiopia. His younger brother was the ancestor of the Egyptians (Mizraim). Put's descendants evidently inhabited the country of Somaliland; and the posterity of Canaan, the land of Palestine. Some of Cush's descendants would naturally settle in southwestern Arabia.

On the other hand, Sheba and Dedan, the grandsons of Abraham, normally would settle in the country of their nativity or thereabouts. Abraham journeyed from Ur of the Chaldees to Syria and finally, when his father died, entered Canaan. Jacob in fleeing from the wrath of his brother Esau went to Laban his uncle in Syria. It is altogether possible, and quite probable, that Sheba and Dedan would settle in the country with which their ancestors had had such close connections.

In view of the facts stated in the last two paragraphs it is quite likely that the evidence found in modern Syria for the Sheba and Dedan communities in northwestern Arabia must relate to the descendants of Abraham by Keturah. On the other hand, Sheba and Dedan, the descendants of Ham through

Raamah, would be those who settled in the countries south of Edom in the land bordering on the Red Sea, which is now under English control (1940).

To what does the expression "the merchants of Tarshish" refer? Some scholars have thought that Tarshish was an ancient name for Spain whereas others see in it a reference to England. When all the historical statements are examined thoroughly, it seems that the evidence is in favor of identifying Tarshish as England. This conclusion is confirmed by statements which speak of the ships of Tarshish in a number of prophetic utterances. Tarshish, therefore, appears to be the leading maritime power in the end of the age. England has held for decades and still retains the balance of sea power. We are thus led to conclude that Tarshish of this passage in all probability refers to England.

But who are "the young lions thereof"? Since we are to take the common sense meaning of every passage if it makes good sense, we will apply this principle to the present case. These young lions in connection with Sheba, Dedan, and Tarshish issue a protest in regard to the invasion of Palestine by the hosts of the Northeastern Confederacy. Lions do not talk. This fact makes it evident that the expression is not to be taken literally. What, therefore, is its symbolic meaning? A glance at Daniel 7 shows that a beast when used symbolically always indicates a king or his kingdom. In this vision Daniel saw four beasts emerging from the troubled waters of the sea, but did not realize the significance of the things disclosed to him. The angel, therefore, came and interpreted the meaning of the revelation, saying "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, that shall arise out of the earth" (Dan. 7:17). According to the 23rd verse of this same chapter the fourth beast is "a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces." According to these statements a beast when used symbolically signifies a civil government. Since it is evident from the context of Ezekiel 38:13 that the young lions are used symbolically, we know that they refer to nations which will be working in close conjunction with Great Britain. What countries can, therefore, be indicated by this prophecy? The answer in all probability is that the democracies of the Western World are meant. This, of course, includes the United States of America, since she developed out of English colonization in the New World. Of course, all of those nations that are included in the British Empire or the Commonwealth of Nations are referred to in this passage. It is needless to say that it embraces all those countries which are more or less closely allied with England.

From the facts which we have already noted, the nations foreseen by the prophet in this vision will be divided into two great groups. For want of better

terms, we designate them, because of their positions geographically, as the Great Northeastern Confederacy and the Western Democracies.

#### IV. ISRAEL IN THE LAND OF THE FATHERS

"After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, that is gathered out of many peoples, upon the mountains of Israel, which have been a continual waste; but it is brought forth out of the peoples, and they shall dwell securely, all of them" (Ezek. 38:8).

The mountains of Israel referred to in this quotation are none other than the hills of the land of Palestine. According to the last clause of verse 12 of this chapter, Palestine is "the navel" or the middle of the earth. The Lord selected this country as the home for His People because of its pivotal position with reference to the civilization of the ancient world and because of the strategic location which it will have in the end of the age as well as in the Millennium. He, therefore, deeded it to His Chosen People in perpetuity. This is seen in Deuteronomy 32:8. Israel, therefore, was placed upon this, "the bridge of the nations," in order that she might hold aloft the torch of God's Revelation to the heathen nations as they passed to and fro through the Land in their commercial relations and military operations. Across its borders many of the great conquerors of antiquity led their mighty armies. Its soil from time to time has been drenched with the lifeblood of the dying. The caravans, the silent ships of the desert, have, from times immemorial, borne the rich treasures of the ancient empires along its highways to the marts of the world. Palestine therefore, has been and will continue to be the most important of all lands. It will yet be the stage upon which the final scene of the world drama will be enacted.

What is meant by the statement: "In the latter days thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword"? This prophecy has been variously interpreted. Light is thrown upon it by the clause which follows: "that is gathered out of many peoples." The clauses, "that is brought back" and "that is gathered out," modify the word *land*. In what sense, therefore, can the country be said to be brought back from the sword? The literal land cannot in any way be spoken of as being brought back. It is possible that this expression might mean that the country has been delivered from the sword; that is, been granted cessation from hostile military operations. While such a meaning is a possible one, it is altogether highly improbable. The parallel clause, "that is gathered out of many people," seems to indicate what is meant; namely, that the peoples who have been subjected to the sword in

other nations have been brought back into their own land. In this event, the language is an illustration of metonymy or synecdoche. In all probability this is the correct signification. The people are spoken of in terms of the country which belongs to them. This land is said to have remained in a state of continual waste. That is just what was to be expected. God foretold through Moses that, if Israel should be disobedient to Him, He would scatter her among the nations (Lev. 26; Deut. 28). Moreover He declared that in this period of her sojourn among the Gentiles the land would be permitted to enjoy its Sabbaths, which thing was not true while she dwelt therein. Furthermore, the passage in Leviticus 26:33-39 tells us that the land is to be desolate during this period of time. A visit to Palestine makes plain the significance of this prophecy. In both 1937 and 1939 I had the privilege of visiting Palestine, spending three months there both times. During my first stay in the land I had the privilege of going throughout its length and breadth. Also a missionary group which I joined traversed Transjordan from the Gulf of Akabah to the Syrian border. The traveler sees waste and desolation on every hand. Through mismanagement and a lack of scientific methods of farming, the country is now in the state described by Moses.

The one who has spiritual discernment can see the hand of Providence in allowing this condition to develop and continue, for, had there been a dense population in the country throughout the centuries, much of the historical data found in the ruins of the land would have been destroyed. Out of the tells or the mounds of Palestine have been dug up many material evidences which corroborate and confirm the Biblical narratives. For all of this assuring testimony, we give thanks and praise to God.

Both Moses and the prophets promised Israel that God would gather her from among the nations and would establish her in her own land. This, they affirmed, would come to pass in the latter days. For this testimony see Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 4:25-33, and chapter 28. The passages just referred to speak of the final and complete regathering of Israel as it will be accomplished at the beginning of the Millennial Age of our Lord's reign. But the gradual and methodical restoration of the Jews to the land of their fathers is set forth in that marvelous vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezekiel 37:1-14). In this revelation, the prophet saw a valley overspread with dry bones—human bones. At the command of the Lord, he, in the vision, spoke to them, and there occurred a great earthquake and a terrific noise. Then the bones automatically started to come together—bone to its bone. Next, sinews began to appear, connecting each bone with its neighbor. Then flesh and skin commenced to appear; but there was no breath in them until the prophet called to the Spirit of God to breathe into them the breath of life. When He did

that, these lifeless corpses sprang into life and became an exceedingly great army. This pictorial representation, presented to the prophet in vision, sets forth in a most graphic and dramatic manner the gradual and methodical restoration of Israel to the land of the fathers. Without a doubt the earthquake and the great noise, which caused the bones to move and take their proper position to form the skeleton, symbolized some great horrifying event in the history of Israel which makes the discordant elements come together. The vision, as we shall see, pertains to Israel at the time that she says, "Behold, they say, Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off" (Ezek. 37:11). This attitude in heart is a modern one in Israel. Only in the last half century have any considerable number of them assumed this outlook. What great calamity has affected the Jewish nation during this period that could be properly symbolized by an earthquake and a terrific noise, and that has thus brought unity to it? The answer is at hand: The World War with all of its atrocities and persecutions. A study of the Jews during that great catastrophe and its effect upon them is positive evidence of this proposition.

From a close study of this marvelous prediction, one can see there is to be a gradual return of the people of Israel to the land of their fathers. The last thing to take place with them nationally is the coming of the Spirit of God into the entire race and the bringing of life from God to them—the conversion of the nation to her Messiah and Saviour. Since new life is imparted to her only by the Spirit of God, this oracle can refer to nothing but her conversion.

The time of the vision of Ezekiel 38 and 39 is spoken of as "in the latter years." This is a phrase with great latitude. Its exact meaning in a given context must be gathered from the facts found in its connection. In the vision the prophet sees Israel gathered back and dwelling in the land of the fathers. Since the regathering of God's Chosen People is to be a gradual process as has just been seen from the vision of the valley of dry bones, and since, as we shall see later, this revelation presents a picture of this people before the final and complete regathering has occurred, we know that only a portion of the race will be in the land at the time that this vision has materializes—when the hordes of Gog invade the land. This point will be made very clear in chapter III. For the time being, however, we shall assume that which is there proved.

## CHAPTER II

### THE EVENTS OF THE PROPHECY

A casual glance at this prophecy of Ezekiel shows conclusively that he foresaw and invasion of Palestine by the forces of the countries mentioned, the identification of which we have seen in the preceding chapter. The ancient synagogues interpreted this passage as a reference to the land of the peoples living north of Palestine. Modern commentators among the Gentiles, likewise, see in these chapters an invasion of Palestine by the same forces. Since there can be no dispute about the import of the prediction thus far, we must pass on to consider the objectives of the nations of the Northeastern Confederacy.

#### I. THE INVASION OF PALESTINE

##### *A. The objective*

"Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: It shall come to pass in that day, that things shall come into thy mind, and thou shalt devise an evil device: 11 and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled village; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates; 12 to take the spoil and to take the prey; to turn thy hand against the waste places that are now inhabited, and against the people that are gathered out of the nations, that have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the middle of the earth" (Ezek. 38:10-12).

From this quotation it is quite evident that the supreme motive leading to this invasion is a desire to acquire the wealth of the Jews who have gathered back in the land. Throughout history we see that from time to time the more powerful nations have sought quarrels with smaller ones in order to have an excuse for invading their territories and seizing their goods. Unfortunately, this practice has never ceased. It seems to be in evidence in various parts of the world today.

At the present time what wealth is there in Palestine—a very small country 150 miles long with an average breadth of 50 miles, which has been devastated with incessant wars throughout the centuries? On account of unscientific methods of agriculture the land has become exhausted, more or less, and is in a rundown condition. Prior to the recent influx of Jews there was little commerce and industry. There was nothing known that could prove to be such a powerful magnet. This passage presupposes that there is great wealth in the land sufficient to induce these mighty nations to take up arms and to send a force of occupation there in order to seize the country and its wealth.

During my six months' stay in the land upon my two visits, I have literally traveled from Dan to Beersheba, going the length and breadth of the country. In addition to this, I have traveled throughout Transjordan, going as far as Aqaba at the northern end of the gulf of the same name. Turning north I have gone throughout Gilead, the Hauran district, and into Jebel Druze Mountains. I have gone to Damascus, Baalbek, Beirut, Tripoli, and the Cedars of Lebanon. Having friends among the Jews and Arabs, I have had the peculiar privilege of coming in firsthand contact with the conditions which exist throughout the land.

In 1937 the Jews had purchased 7 per cent of the total acreage of Palestine. This information was procured at the Zionistic Headquarters in Jerusalem. The 93 per cent of the country is, therefore, in the hands of the Arabs and foreigners. The Fellahin, the villagers, cultivate the land around their little towns. The Bedouins raise sheep, cattle, camels, and donkeys. Certain of the Arabic population in the vicinity of Jaffa especially are engaged in the citrus fruit industry.

According to reports which I received when I was there at the beginning of 1939, the Jews have something like 250 colonies scattered throughout the land. In the coastal plain the agricultural population is engaged largely in the citrus fruit industry, which has been improved very greatly since the Jews began returning to the land. They also grow fruits of all varieties and all kinds of vegetables suitable to that climate. In the great Plain of Esdraelon they have many flourishing colonies and settlements engaged in agricultural pursuits. They also have some in the Jordan valley just south of the Sea of Galilee. About 1936 the Jewish National fund purchased 57,000 dunams of land in the Huleh district, north of the Sea of Galilee. Their purpose is to drain these swamps and to establish colonies in this section of the country. There are a few settlements in the mountainous regions, but they are small and lack the opportunities of those established in the great plains of Sharon and Esdraelon. Where the Jew has settled, by the aid of science and a determination to restore the land, he has wrought marvels.

According to reports which I heard in the Land, Palestine exported around 12,000,000 cases of oranges during 1939. This is the total sum, grown and shipped by both Jews and Arabs.

In Tel Aviv and surrounding country and in Haifa and community, the Jews have established factories making various commodities. Thus has begun, in a limited way, the production of goods for foreign commerce. Before the troubles in 1936, the Jewish communities were rapidly moving forward in their industrial development. Though progress along this line has been retarded for

the last three years, industry has nevertheless forged forward under serious and great handicaps and has made marked advance.

All manufactured goods, fruits, and vegetables exported from the land are as nothing in comparison with the mineral wealth of the Dead Sea. Throughout the centuries, dating back at least to the days of Abraham and Lot, God has been pouring into that mysterious sea a fabulous amount of wealth in the form of mineral salts. All travelers have observed that life, both animal and vegetable, is not possible in its briny water. So far as I know, no one ever attempted to discover its mineral content until the Jews began their return to the Land. The analysis shows that the value of the chemicals in the Dead Sea is \$1,270,000,000,000. It has been stated that this staggering sum is equal to the combined wealth of America, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Italy. Many of the most valuable minerals used in industries of today are to be found there in abundance. Likewise those chemicals that are vital to the manufacturing of war materials are stored up there, awaiting the coming of those who worship the god of war.

To the Palestine Potash, Ltd., the concession for extracting these minerals from the Dead Sea has been granted for a period of 99 years. It has a very large plant at the northwest end of the Sea and likewise another one at the southwestern corner—near Jebel Usdum. The minerals from the latter plant are brought by boat to the main works at the northern end. Caravans of large modern trucks make two trips daily from Jerusalem to the dead Sea hauling tens of thousands of tons monthly from this inexhaustible supply of vital minerals.

The method adopted by this company for obtaining these minerals from the water is the simplest and least expensive. In fact, 1500 acres have been made into pans or vats by digging three or four feet into the hard clay, which is characteristic of this section of the plain. The water is pumped from a certain depth out of the Sea into vats on the highest ground of the plain west of the plant. The intense heat at this low level, which is 1292 feet below the Mediterranean, causes rapid evaporation. In order to hasten this natural process, certain chemicals are put into the water, which accelerates it by 40 per cent. Since the chemical content of the water is about 22 per cent, as evaporation continues, the water left, of course, increases in specific gravity. At a certain point in the process it is allowed to flow from this upper level to a lower pan where evaporation continues. After a certain amount of evaporation has taken place in this pan, the solution is allowed to flow to a basin on a lower level. This work continues until the maximum evaporation has taken place. By this time the water has been conveyed to the vat nearest the chemical works. This solution is pumped out of this last pan into the plant

where the final stage of the operation takes place and the chemicals appear in the form of a whitish substance like pure salt.

These chemicals are sacked and shipped to factories which separate the salts one from another and produce the marketable goods.

Nowhere else on earth is there such an inexhaustible supply of the necessary chemicals for modern life as in the Dead Sea. When the powerful nations of the Northeastern Confederacy think that they can invade the land and can have access to this fabulous wealth, they will do so. That they will do this very thing is evident from the verses quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

According to verse 13 the Western Democracies will understand why the Northeastern Confederacy has sent its armies into the land, for they ask, "Art thou come to take the spoil? Hast thou assembled thy companies to take the prey? To carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take great spoils?" The principle upon which these nations send their armies into the land is that might is right. Such will be the political philosophy of these countries. Such will be the political philosophy of these countries.

Man is free to do as he chooses. God never forces or coerces the will of anyone. It is true that in answer to believing prayer He brings all moral and spiritual forces into operation in order to influence one to choose the right and to do that which is just and correct. Nevertheless in His overruling providence He always halts at and never crosses over the threshold of the individual's personality lest He destroy such a one's will.

At the same time He providentially overrules the actions of men and causes them to do that which will promote His cause and will bring blessings to humanity. No philosopher or theologian has ever been able to harmonize the seeming contradictory theses of man's freedom and God's sovereignty. Nevertheless, the Scriptures assert both. Though we, while we are in the flesh, may never be able to explain satisfactorily these two great fundamental teachings of the Christian faith, when we see and know fully as we are known, we shall see how God can leave man free and yet overrule everything which he does and make it contribute to the forwarding of His divine plans and purposes.

As we have seen, Gog with all of his confederates will go into Palestine for the one purpose of taking the spoil, ignoring human rights. Nevertheless we know that God overrules and actually brings these aggressors into the Land. In order that we might see this point most unmistakably, let us read Ezekiel 38:14-16:

"Therefore, son of man prophesy, and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: In that day when my people Israel dwelleth securely, shalt thou not know it? 15 And thou shalt come from thy place out of the uttermost parts of the north, thou, and many peoples with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army; 16 and thou shalt come up against my people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land: it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring thee against my land, that the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.

Let the reader note the latter part of verse 16: "It shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring thee (Gog with his forces) against my land (Palestine), that the nations may know me, when I am sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes." Here God affirms that it is He who brings Gog and his hordes against Palestine. About this position there can be no question—for the one who is willing to let the Bible deliver its message.

A case similar to this one may be seen in Isaiah 10:5-19. A few verses from this quotation will demonstrate this principle:

"Ho Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation! 6 I will send him against a profane nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. 7 Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few ... 12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, that, when the Lord hath performed His whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. 13 For he hath said, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I have understanding: and I have removed the bounds of the peoples, and have robbed their treasures, and like a valiant man I have brought down them that sit on thrones: 14 and my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the peoples; and as one gathereth eggs that are forsaken, have I gathered all the earth: and there was none that moved the wing, or that opened the mouth, or chirped" (Isa. 10:5-7,12-14).

The Assyrian here addressed is doubtless Sennacherib. Note the fact that God spoke of him thus: "the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation!" Moreover, the Almighty declared that He would send this proud Assyrian against a profane nation, which is none other than Israel. God would send him to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. Howbeit the Assyrian had no intention or thought of carrying out the divine will: Neither did it enter his heart that he was simply a tool in the hands of God Almighty. On the contrary, it was in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few. Israel had sinned and had to be punished. The Lord used this heathen king and his forces in order to chastise His disobedient people. According to this prediction when God had used this proud monarch to carry out His purpose, He would then punish him. This is seen in verse 12 of the quotation given above.

In the same manner God used the Pharaoh of old when Israel was in Egyptian bondage. In a similar way He caused Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to execute His will regarding Israel. On a higher plane, however, He used Cyrus, king of Persia, who, not conscious of doing the divine will, issued a decree for Israel's return to the land of the fathers after the Babylonian captivity. For the full prediction of how God used Cyrus, see Isaiah 44:24-45:13. That he did not know God is evident from 45:4: "I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me."

The object which the Lord will have in mind in bringing Gog with his associates and all of their hordes into Palestine is stated in these words: "I will bring thee against my land, that the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes." From this verse we learn that God has as His object in bringing Gog with his forces into Palestine this high and holy purpose; namely, that He might be sanctified in Gog before all nations in order that they might know Him as Jehovah the Almighty. What does this prediction mean? A comparison with this prediction and verse 23 may enable us to see. "And I will magnify myself, and sanctify myself, and I will make myself known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am Jehovah" (Ezek. 38:23). When this verse is read in the light of its immediate context, it becomes apparent that God will be, in the thinking of the peoples of earth, set apart from all others and will be recognized as Jehovah, the Supreme Being. A thought similar to this one is found in Ezekiel 28:22: "Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against thee, O Sidon; and I will be glorified in the midst of thee; and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I shall have executed judgments in her, and shall be sanctified in her."

A parallel case to Gog and his hosts and the judgment which will fall upon them is to be found in that which came upon Pharaoh and his hosts. Read Exodus 9:13-16.

"And Jehovah said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. 14 For I will this time send all my plagues upon thy heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth. 15 For now I had put forth my hand, and smitten thee and thy people with pestilence, and thou hadest been cut off from the earth: 16 but in very deed for this cause have I made thee to stand, to show thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."

God gave Pharaoh power and authority, strengthened by material prosperity and wealth. In fact, he was the mightiest sovereign of his day. The Omniscient Creator knew from the beginning the type of character he was; He, therefore, brought him to the throne that He might demonstrate in his case His mighty power by overthrowing him. The Lord, therefore, drowned the

Egyptian forces in the Red Sea, while Israel enjoyed a marvelous deliverance. As a consequence, the report was noised abroad throughout the neighboring countries that the God of the Hebrews was the supreme God of heaven and earth. Hence fear and consternation gripped all alike. In this sense God was sanctified in Pharaoh. In a similar manner, He, as Ezekiel 38:16 declares, will be sanctified by Gog and his hosts. The Lord makes even the wickedness of man to Praise Him.

Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee:  
The residue of wrath shalt thou gird up on thee (Psa. 76:10).

#### *B. This Invasion Distinct from that Foretold by Joel and Daniel*

As we have already noted, Ezekiel's prediction foresees an invasion by Palestine by the Northeastern Confederacy. Joel the prophet, in chapter 2 of his book, foretold the invasion of Palestine by a northern army. Before the coming of this mighty host the land of Palestine is as "the garden of Eden" (Joel 2:3). After that event it is like a desolate wilderness. In verses 4-11 is a vivid description of the onward march of this force. When the language is allowed to speak for itself and deliver its message without modifying it in any way, it is abundantly evident that this is a mechanized army. Only such an interpretation will meet the demands of the passage.

In the following paragraph, verses 12 to 14 the prophet pleads with those of Israel who will be living at the time to turn to God, assuring them that it is not too late for them to repent. In the event they do so the Lord in lovingkindness will accept them. Following this passage, in the next paragraph, verses 15 to 17, are the words of Joel calling upon the people to proclaim a day of national prayer, fasting, and confession. Though he did not state definitely, in so many words, that they would do so, his language implies this, for in the following paragraph, verses 18 to 20, God sees that they really and truly do repent. In compassion and mercy He then has pity upon them. In answer to their cry He gives them the following promise:

"And Jehovah answered and said unto his people, Behold, I will send you grain, and new wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith; And I will no more make you a reproach among the nations; 20 but I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive it into a land barren and desolate, its forepart into the eastern sea, and its hinder part into the western sea; and its stench shall come up, and its ill savor shall come up, because it hath done great things" (Joel 2:19,20).

The Lord promised to remove far from them, in answer to their prayer, the northern army. This army is divided, as the prediction shows, and is removed from the country into a land barren and desolate. The forepart is driven into the eastern sea and the hinderpart into the western sea. The

marginal rendering in the Revised Version of the word rendered "into" is "toward." This translation is to be preferred to the text rendering, since the promise states definitely that this great host is driven into "a land barren and desolate." This fact shows that it does not perish in the Land of Palestine as do the hordes of Gog. In the light of this fact we may assert with all boldness that Joel was speaking of an invasion entirely different from that of Ezekiel. Immediately after this promise, he foretells that the Lord will restore to Israel all that they have lost and will give them the early and latter rains, together with all blessings. This latter paragraph is a prediction of the great Millennial Age when the curse will be lifted and the glory of God will encircle the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Daniel speaks of an invasion of Palestine, which we know from the context will occur in the middle of the tribulation. In Daniel 11:36-39 appears a forecast of the willful king who is none other than the world dictator at the end time. Some have concluded that this person is a Jew. This deduction is arrived at from an inference drawn from the facts of verse 37, which states: "Neither shall he (the willful king) regard the gods of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all." This is a possible inference, but not a necessary one. When this willful king thus takes a determined stand against all gods and magnifies himself above them, he promotes to honor those who acknowledge him. At that time he will divide the land of Palestine for a price. When this is done, the king of the south will contend with him. Who is the king of the south? Many Bible interpreters see in him the sovereign of Egypt, but since that country is in alliance with England, the British sovereign is supposed by many to be the one referred to. Since the evidence is not conclusive, it behooves one to be very careful and to hold his judgment in suspense, awaiting further light.

When the king of the south strikes at the world dictator, the king of the north will come like a whirlwind against him. Thus he will be besieged by two forces. At that time he enters the glorious land which is none other than Palestine. As the conflict rages, tidings from the north and east reach the dictator's ears. By force of circumstances, he pulls up stakes and leaves. The country now known as Transjordan is not invaded at that time, although Palestine west of Jordan is. The world dictator, or willful king, will have authority over Egypt, Ethiopia, and Libya, but he can not carry his banner east of the Jordan.

At that time, Michael, the archangel who stands for the Hebrew people, will champion their cause. These events will usher in the period of the greatest suffering and distress that the world has ever seen. These mighty catastrophic judgments and wonders will continue for a time, times, and a half time (Dan.

12:7). When, therefore, all the facts set forth in Daniel 11:36 to 12:13 are examined, it is evident that the invasion mentioned in this passage occurs in the middle of the 70th week of Daniel 9.

Is the invasion of Palestine, as foretold by Ezekiel, the same as that which is predicted by Daniel and Joel?

At this stage of our study, we shall have to assume that which will be proved in chapter III. The invasion foretold by Ezekiel 38 and 39 occurs before the tribulation; the one revealed by Daniel comes in the middle of it. Daniel, therefore, was speaking about an invasion different from that of Ezekiel's prophecy. But what invasion does Joel have in mind? This prophet speaks only of a northern army, whereas Ezekiel mentions a group of nations, which we have already designated as the Northeastern Confederacy. When all three passages are studied, it appears quite likely, though one may not be dogmatic on this point, that Joel was foretelling an event which occurs in the middle of the tribulation, and which is mentioned by Daniel.

There is to be a third invasion of Palestine in the end time, which will be by the nations of the world at the close of the tribulation. This fact is foretold by Zechariah 14:1-8. As I see the situation, Ezekiel foretold an invasion by the armies of the Northeastern Confederacy before the tribulation. Joel and Daniel spoke of one which will occur in the middle of the tribulation. Joel mentioned only the northern army, whereas Daniel spoke of the armies of the north and the king of the south. At that time the world dictator likewise enters the glorious Land, Palestine. This invasion is undoubtedly in the middle of the tribulation. But the third and last one is, as we have seen, to be at the end of the tribulation when the armies of the world will be gathered against Jerusalem to battle. At this time the Lord Jesus will descend from heaven and deliver His ancient and beloved people.

## II. THE PROTEST BY THE WESTERN DEMOCRACIES

When the powers of the Northeastern Confederacy send their armies into Palestine, the governments of Sheba, Dedan, and Tarshish (England) together with the young lions thereof (The younger Western Democracies) issue a protest; for they say, "Art thou come to take the spoil? Hast thou assembled thy company to take the prey?" etc. The language of Ezekiel 38:13 indicates clearly that these Western Democracies send only a protest—a very mild one. It comes in the form of a question. All who have been noticing the events in Europe for the last four or five years can understand what a protest by one nation to another is. When Germany sent her troops into the Rhineland to

occupy it, France and England simply sent protests. The same thing was true with reference to the conquest of Austria. Turning from Europe and looking at the Far East, we remember that the powers sent one protest after another to Japan for her warring against China. Ignoring these protests, the aggressors went forward in their campaigns. The matter, in each of these instances, seems to have been dropped after diplomatic representation was made to the government involved. Such is what the prophet Ezekiel said would occur when the Northeastern Confederacy sends its gigantic armies to seize and occupy Palestine.

### III. A STROKE OF CATASTROPHIC JUDGMENT

Is there a war foretold in Ezekiel 38 and 39? In answer to this question some most excellent prophetic students answer in the affirmative. Others, to the contrary, are very emphatic in their denials. Hence, consecrated Biblical students are of different opinions on this question. It behooves us to examine this prediction very carefully and ascertain the facts set forth in the text.

The prophet, speaking for the Almighty, addresses Gog and asks him this question: "Art thou he of whom I spake in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, that prophesied in those days for many years that I would bring thee against them?" (Ezek. 38:17). This historical question implies that he is the one of whom God had spoken on former occasions.

#### *A. The Wrath of God*

When Gog leads his forces down into Palestine against the defenseless Jews, God's wrath will be kindled, for He declares: "And it shall come to pass in that day, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah, that my wrath shall come up into my nostrils" (Ezek. 38:18). No one can do an injustice to the Hebrew people or to an individual of that race, because he is a Jew, and go unpunished; for God distinctly declares: "I will curse him that curseth thee" (Gen. 12:3). Again through Zechariah the prophet, God warned men against mistreating His people, "for he that toucheth you (the Hebrew people) toucheth the apple of his eye" (Zech. 2:8). A casual glance at the history of the nations that came in contact with Israel and mistreated her reveals clearly the fact that God does avenge Himself of all who persecute the Jew. Egypt, which was the mightiest empire of the day was cast down into the dust of humiliation and reduced to the basest of all kingdoms because of her persecution of Israel. The Assyrian adopted the same attitude toward God's people. In wrath He cast that mighty and cruel empire into the oblivion of annihilation. All that remains of her ancient power and

glory are the rubbish heaps of Mesopotamia and the regions round about the Tigris river. The same thing is true with reference to Babylon. In medieval times certain nations arose and persecuted the Jews. God who said, "I will curse him that curseth thee," continually watches over that warning of His word. In the past He punished every type of anti-Semitism, is still doing it today, and will continue to avenge Himself of everyone who is guilty of this unreasonable sin.

Along with the threat of punishment for all persecution of the Jews, God made the marvelous statement that He would suit a special blessing to those who will bless Abraham and his seed. The Lord is just as faithful in the fulfillment of this promise as He is in carrying out His threat against the anti-Semites. Many are the lovers of Israel who can witness truthfully to God's making this promise good in their own experience. I personally can testify that He has richly and abundantly blessed me because of my having given my life and strength in an effort to be a blessing to Israel. My life is dedicated to the task of giving the truth of the Gospel to her and in combating anti-Semitism.

The prophets and psalmists constantly looked out into the future and gave us word pictures of those nations that persecute the Jews, and that enter their land for the purpose of despoiling them and of blotting out the name of Israel from the face of the globe. In all these predictions we can see that a catastrophic judgment of God always is foretold as coming upon those who persecute Israel. In the light of these many passages, we can see and understand why it is that God says, "My wrath shall come up into my nostrils," when Gog leads his forces into Palestine to take the spoil of the Jews and to persecute them.

One should not be surprised, nor be startled, when God says that His wrath will be stirred to its depths by this invasion of Palestine. The Lord is not only a God of love, but also a God of vengeance and one who has righteous indignation every day. No one can appreciate His revelation as found in the Scriptures unless he is thoroughly conversant with His own statement of His own character, which is:

"And Jehovah passed by before him, and proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness and truth; 7 keeping lovingkindness for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and upon the children's children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation" (Ex. 34:6, 7).

Since there is unrighteousness and injustice practiced every day, the God of righteousness and justice, of necessity, has indignation every day.

God is a righteous judge,  
Yea, a God that hath indignation every day (Psa. 7:11).

### B. *An Earthquake*

"For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; 20 so that the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground" (Ezek. 38:19,20).

According to this quotation there is to be a great shaking in the land of Israel. The land of Israel can be none other than Palestine. As to whether or not it includes Transjordan, as we understand it today, is not certain; but it is absolutely beyond question that it refers to the territory west of the Jordan. That this shaking indicates an earthquake is clear from the effects of it as they are described in verse 20: "And the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground." Without a doubt this statement foretells an earthquake which will shake the entire land, causing rocks and soil to roll down the mountainsides, which will be destructive to life and property. Everyone who has gone through the length and breadth of the Holy Land can understand this language, because with the exception of the coastal plains, the Jordan valley, and the plain of Esdraelon the country is mountainous. There was, evidently, a terrific earthquake which rocked Palestine in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and Jereboam II king of Israel; for Amos the prophet spoke of it (Amos 1:1). Zechariah the prophet likewise mentioned this quake and other terrific destructions (Zech. 14:5).

Earthquakes have been used of God at various times in forwarding His plans and purposes. For instance, when Israel crossed the river Jordan, there probably was an earthquake and another which shook down the walls of Jericho. The evidence which was unearthed by Professor Garstang and Sir Charles Marston confirms this position. There seems to be a reference to just such a occurrence as that found in Psalm 114:5,6:

- 5 What ailest thou, O thou sea, that thou fleest?  
Thou Jordan, that thou turnest back?
- 6 Ye mountains, that ye skip like rams;  
Ye little hills, like lambs?

The Lord, in answer to the question as to what would be the sign of His coming and of the consummation of the age, warned against accepting false messiahs and drawing erroneous conclusions with reference to some conflict that might break out. He declared that wars would occur all during His absence. They indicate nothing with reference to the end of the age. Hence,

whenever one should occur, the disciples were not to draw the conclusion that the closing of the age was at hand, for, declared our Lord, the following international upheaval must first come to pass: "For nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines and earthquakes in diverse places, but all of these things are the beginning of travail" (Matt. 24:7,8). This passage points to a world war, famine, and earthquakes in diverse places as constituting the sign of the end of the age and the coming of the Lord. Thus earthquakes are to figure prominently, declared our Lord, in connection with a world war, famines, and pestilences, which united are "the sign of the end of the age," the first birth pain (Matt. 24:8). (For a full discussion of the Olivet Discourse, read my volume *Future Events Revealed* according to Matthew 24 and 25.)

At the end of the first quarter of the great tribulation (Rev. 6:12-17) there will be a great and mighty earthquake, which will cause havoc throughout the world. In the middle of the tribulation an earthquake will rock Jerusalem and will destroy one-tenth of the city (Rev. 11:13). At the end of the tribulation the mightiest earthquake that has ever occurred will shake the earth so very violently that every city upon the face of the globe will be destroyed (Rev. 16:17-21). Thus the forces of nature will be used of God to forward His plans and purposes. This is in perfect harmony with the general outburst of praise set forth in Psalm 148:6-13:

- 6 He hath also established them forever and ever:  
He hath made a decree which shall not pass away.
- 7 Praise Jehovah from the earth  
Ye sea-monsters, and all deeps;
- 8 Fire and hail, snow and vapor;  
Stormy wind, fulfilling his word:
- 9 Mountains and all hills;  
Fruitful trees and all cedars;
- 10 Beasts and all cattle;  
Creeping things and flying birds;
- 11 Kings of the earth and all peoples;  
Princes and all judges of the earth;
- 12 Both young men and virgins;  
Old men and children;
- 13 Let them praise the name of Jehovah;  
For his name alone is exalted;  
His glory is above the earth and the heavens.

When this great shaking occurs in the land of Israel, according to Ezekiel's vision, it will be so very severe "that the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the heavens, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground." In order to understand this prediction, we must remember that this wreckage is in the land of Israel; that is, in Palestine. The things mentioned must be understood as being in the territory where the earthquake occurs. Since it is said to be in Palestine, we must understand that all life affected by it is in that area. What sea is referred to in the phrase "fishes of the sea"? Does it mean the Mediterranean Sea, or the Sea of Galilee? It cannot indicate the Dead Sea because there is no life in it. Since the Sea of Galilee is in the land, it is quite likely that reference is made to it, although it is possible that it might signify the Mediterranean Sea, because it washes the western coast of the Holy Land. The birds, the animals, and the creeping things "upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth" certainly must be understood to refer to the earthquake zone, Palestine.

### *C. The Sword of the Lord*

"And I will call for a sword against him unto all my mountains, saith the Lord Jehovah: every man's sword shall be against his brother" (Ezek. 38:21). When one hostile nation invades the territory of another, the government of the latter country calls to its man power to wield a sword against the aggressors. Such a procedure has been practiced throughout the annals of history. In this instance, as foretold by the prophet, however, God does not use men to combat the aggressors, but rather calls to His mountains for the sword. His calling to the mountains for weapons against the invaders is but a graphic, pictorial way of saying that He will slay these armies by tumbling rocks and landslides as they crash into the valley from the heights of the mountains above. Walls and buildings likewise will topple to the ground during this mighty earthquake. It is a well known fact that usually the casualties resulting from an earthquake are indeed very great. For instance, the recent one which rocked central Turkey caused the death of more people, according to reports, than have been caused by modern weapons during the four months of the European war.

When this earthquake occurs, those who are not killed by it will be thrown into utter confusion, for we are told, "every man's sword shall be against his brother." What is the significance of these words? The meaning becomes apparent in the light of such a passage as Judges 7. Here we find a record of the overthrow of the Midianite hosts which had invaded Israel, and which were

encamped in the plain of Jezreel between the Hill of Moreh and Mount Gilboa. There were between 120,000 and 135,000 of the enemy. When they lay asleep in camp, Gideon with his company of three hundred men threw them into consternation and stampeded the entire army with their shouts of praise to God and the waving of the torches together with the blowing of their trumpets. The Biblical writer describes the event in the following words: "And they blew the three hundred trumpets, and Jehovah set every man's sword against his fellow, and against all the host; and the host fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abelmeholah, by Tabbath" (Judges 7:22). Being thrown into utter confusion and being unable to see who was near him, each soldier drew his sword and slew the man next to him—every man's sword was against his brother. A situation somewhat similar to this one is found in I Chronicles 20.

It is altogether possible, though no one would dare to assert, that this earthquake which brings about such a catastrophic judgment upon the forces of Gog as they will be encamped in Palestine will be at night. If this supposition be allowed, one can easily see how these forces will be stampeded. With an earthquake of any proportion there is always a rumbling, roaring noise. It is altogether possible that some may interpret the rocking of the land, the roaring caused by the quake, and the rolling of the stones down the mountainsides, as the result of aerial bombardment. Of course this is a mere suggestion. It is not put out as a statement of fact.

#### D. *Pestilence*

The next judgment that falls upon these forces of the invader is a pestilence from the Lord. Throughout the predictions of the Old Testament we constantly see that a pestilence is mentioned in connection with war and famine. What form this judgment will take, no one at the present time can know. From Zechariah 12 and 14, we learn that there will be pestilences or plagues from God, both upon the men and upon their horses. As to whether this pestilence, which comes upon the forces of Gog and his associates, is in the form of these mentioned by Zechariah to occur at the end of the tribulation, no one can say. It is sufficient, however, to believe that there will be such pestilences, which will reduce materially the number of those who survive the earthquake and the fighting that will be between every soldier and his neighbor.

#### E. *Floods*

"And I will rain upon him, and upon his hordes, and upon the many peoples that are with him, an overflowing shower, and great hailstones." When Joshua and his forces together with the Gibeonites fought against the armies

of the Amorites, chasing them from Gibeon down the pass of Beth-Horon and through the valley of Ajalon, "It came to pass as they fled from before Israel, while they were at the descent of Beth-horon that Jehovah cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more who died with the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword" (Josh. 10:11). Thus the Lord caused hail to destroy many of the opponents of Joshua and the Israelites. Hail as a rule is accompanied by rain, and it is quite likely that there was a terrific cloud-burst at that time.

When Deborah and Barak fought against Jabin king of Hazor, whose forces were led by Sisera, the Lord sent a downpour of rain which aided the Israelites in their fight against their enemy (Judges 5:19-21):

- 19 The kings came and fought;  
Then fought the kings of Canaan,  
In Taanach by the waters of Megiddo:  
They took no gain of money.
- 20 From heaven fought the stars,  
From their courses they fought against Sisera.
- 21 The river Kishon swept them away,  
That ancient river, the river Kishon.  
O my soul, march on with strength.

According to the prediction of Ezekiel there will be a terrific downpour of rain together with hail at the time of this earthquake, which will shake the land of Palestine from center to circumference.

#### F. *Fire*

At the time of this disaster the Lord will rain fire from heaven. He did it when Moses and Aaron, appearing before Pharaoh, brought the seventh plague upon Egypt in the form of a thunderstorm. The rain came, the hail fell, "and fire ran down unto the earth; and Jehovah rained hail upon the land of Egypt" (Ex. 9:23). From this historical reference, it is clear that the fire refers to lightning. Thus, in the future overthrow of the enemies of Israel, the storm and all of its attending destructive agencies will be brought into operation to slay the invading army.

#### G. *Brimstone*

According to Ezekiel 38:22 brimstone likewise will be rained down from heaven upon this army. What is the meaning of this prediction? A clear understanding of this passage may be obtained by reading the account of the overthrow of the cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the cities of the Plain found in Genesis 18 and 19. The passage having a special bearing upon this event is Genesis 19:23-25:

"The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot came unto Zoar. Then Jehovah rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven; 25 and he overthrew those cities, and all the Plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground."

According to these verses the Lord Jehovah rained brimstone and fire from heaven upon the doomed cities. God, who created the universe and has sustained it throughout its existence, is able, as He declares He will, to rain fire and brimstone upon the forces of Gog in concluding this catastrophic judgment. He who believes the Bible can by faith see that this prediction will be fulfilled literally as it has been uttered.

Not only will the Lord rain down fire upon the invaders of Palestine, but according to Ezekiel 39:6, He will send forth fire on "Magog, and on them that dwell securely in the isles; and they shall know that I am Jehovah." Magog, the land of Gog, which is Russia, is in view in this passage, together with the lands of those "that dwell securely in the isles." Not only will there be an electrical storm, if this is a proper name for it, in connection with the overthrow of the hostile forces in Palestine, but there will also occur similar ones in Magog, Russia, and in those countries whose population dwells securely. The words in the original translated here as "isles" literally mean "coast lands." It does not necessarily signify a small portion of land surrounded completely by water. It is a nautical term, the viewpoint which is that of the sailor as he approaches the shore of a given country. In some instances it does refer to an island, but the word in and of itself does not inherently connote such an idea. Other facts must give us this information. It is synonymous with countries. Such is the only significance that it can have in many different places. In the passage under discussion it refers to nations which at this future time will be dwelling securely. As to what is connoted by this expression of security, I am unable to say. What nations were in the prophets view is impossible to determine. We may be sure that certain nations will dwell securely at that time and that upon them this fire will fall, bringing havoc and chaos everywhere.

#### IV. THE WORLD IN CHAOS

Thus far in this investigation, we have seen that the forces of Russia, Germany, Turkey, Persia, Ethiopia, and Cush and Put with all their allies and associates will be destroyed with one catastrophic blow of the Almighty after they have invaded the Holy Land. Such a stroke of annihilation of these vast armies will cripple those nations and will throw them into utter consternation. The fire that will fall from heaven upon Russia and those countries that are secure will completely annihilate the civilization and the material wealth of the

same. Thus nothing but chaos and havoc, in those special sections of the world, will be in evidence on every hand. Those nations, therefore, will be rendered powerless and become a ready prey of their enemies. Such conditions as these prevailing all over the earth, Rome will have an opportunity to become a world empire as is foretold in Daniel 7:23. This question, however, will be dealt with in a later chapter.

#### V. GOD MAGNIFIED BEFORE THE NATIONS

"And I will magnify myself, and sanctify myself, and I will make myself known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am Jehovah" (Ezek. 38:23).

By the complete overthrow and annihilation of this invading army, God the Almighty will become known among many nations. It is not without significance that the two outstanding nations, whose leaders have largely turned away from God, are the ones that are completely overthrown by this catastrophic stroke of divine justice and judgment. It shall be as it was at the time when Israel was delivered from Egyptian bondage. The Lord manifested his presence and power in such a way that no thinking person could avoid the conclusion that Almighty God had miraculously intervened and delivered Israel. At this future time, the Lord will burst forth through the natural order and will easily be recognized, figuratively speaking, by all who have eyes to see. The overthrow of these armies will be of such a nature that it will be utterly impossible to explain what has happened to them apart from direct intervention from Almighty God. Although the evidence will be crystal clear, there will be those who, not desiring the truth, will not recognize the supernatural element which will manifestly characterize the entire situation. Men become wedded to naturalistic theories to the extent that is utterly impossible for them to see and to recognize such divine intervention.

The principle enunciated in John 7:17 will find an illustration in these future events, although it is applicable at all times and under all circumstances. The import of this verse becomes very evident when studied in the light of the facts of the context. Jesus went up to Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles, as we learn in the first paragraph of that chapter. Upon His arrival in the midst of the Feast, he taught the people. The Jews marveled at His wisdom saying, "How knowest this man letters, having never learned?" It was indeed a mystery to them that Jesus, who had not attended any of the rabbinical schools, could teach as He did. In reply to them, the Lord said, "My teaching is not mine, but His that sent me. If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from

myself." The Jews could not understand the source of Christ's information. Thereupon Jesus affirmed that, if anyone desired to do God's will—God's will, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else—he would have the spiritual insight and could know whether He was speaking simply as a man, giving forth His own conclusions with reference to life, morals, and the spiritual life, or whether He was speaking as a messenger from God Himself. When the Lord thus signally overthrows all these armies by employing natural means such as the earthquake, floods attended by lightning, and hail, and the supernatural elements such as the raining of brimstone out of heaven upon them to complete the annihilation of these hostile armies, these events will be such a demonstration of divine interposition that it will be impossible for anyone who will look at the facts to avoid the conclusion that this is nothing less than the judgment of the Almighty upon these godless hordes. Moreover, when the Lord sends fire, not only upon Russia, but upon all that dwell securely in the isles, all thinking people will likewise recognize the fact that this is divine interposition—a call from God for men to repent and to turn to Him.

As a rule God hides Himself and works in an obscure and unobservable manner; that is, unnoticed by the average person. When a crisis arises, however, He comes out boldly into the open, figuratively speaking, and performs His mighty acts in a manifest way, which we call miracles, in order that men's attention may be arrested and that they may have no excuse for continuing in a godless life.

"And my holy name will I make known in the midst of my people Israel; neither will I suffer my holy name to be profaned any more: and the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel" (Ezek. 39:7). As the result, or one of the results, of this miraculous interposition, a revival will start in Israel. Such is the force of the prediction contained in this verse. The mighty overthrow of these confederated enemies of God and man will be correctly interpreted by those in Israel who have a thirsting and a hungering for the Lord. Thus there will begin at that time a mighty revival among God's Chosen People.

In this connection, however, let us not think that the working of miracles, such as were wrought at the time Israel was delivered from Egyptian bondage or those performed by our Lord during His personal ministry, can sustain faith, for such is not true. On this point the Lord spoke unto Moses saying. "How long will this people despise me? And how long will they not believe in me, for all the signs which I have wrought among them?" (Num. 14:11). Miracles call attention to God's presence and actions, which can be explained only by the statements found in the Word. When one thus recognizes God's presence and His overruling providence in the affairs of men, when his attention is centered

upon the word of God and when he reads it to know and to do the will of God, his faith is sustained. "So belief cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17). On this point our Lord declared concerning the rich man who lifted up his eyes in Hades, being in torments, that his five brothers who still remained in life would not believe, even though one should arise from the dead and deliver a message of warning to them. They had Moses and the prophets. If they would not read and believe, neither would they accept a message from one who had come back from the dead. The ability to see and recognize the presence of God and His overruling providence in any event is always conditioned upon one's thirsting for God and having a heart yearning to do His will.

God never forces any man's will. Wherever He, figuratively speaking, bursts through the natural order and performs miracles working through any of His servants, He always allows Satan to operate through his own children of disobedience and to perform similar miracles. This may be seen in the case of the magicians of Egypt who up to a certain point duplicated the miracles of Moses and Aaron, but beyond this point, which was set by the Lord, these servants of Satan were powerless. God does allow Satan to perform, in a measure, similar miracles in order that there might be a margin for the exercise of the faith of the one who has a yearning and longing for righteousness and for the will of God.

Notwithstanding the fact that the evidence crystal clear, proving beyond a doubt that this overthrow of the hostile forces is divine interposition, the majority of men will explain the unusual phenomena upon a naturalistic basis and thus count God out of His universe. The average person living then, being imbued with the spirit of the anti-religious philosophy current in our day, will explain every phase of the judgment upon a natural basis. By this materialistic philosophy, the force of the evidence of the miracle will be largely counteracted.

Notwithstanding the delusions of Satan relative to this catastrophic overthrow of these armies, there will be those who have eyes to see, and ears to hear, and hearts to understand. These will step forth upon the promises of God and take their stand upon His Word. They will begin a mighty revival which will eventually sweep the Jewish nation, bringing her, to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. And eventually through saved Israel the world will be brought to the foot of the cross. That there is to be such a revival which begins in Israel before the great and terrible day of the Lord is affirmed by the prophet (Joel 2:28b-32). There cannot be any revival of the Biblical type apart from the preaching of the Word. The Lord has always approached man through his natural faculties—the seeing, hearing, and touching. Whenever the Lord

wanted His Word delivered to His people, He did not thunder His message from on high, but inspired some faithful servant of His to deliver it, speaking to man in his own language. Hence, He raised up a long succession of prophets who proclaimed His Word to His people. John the Baptist broke the silence of four centuries by proclaiming that the time was fulfilled and that the kingdom of heaven was at hand; men, therefore, were called upon to repent and believe in the Gospel. After the resurrection and before the ascension, the Lord charged His disciples to go forth into all the world and to proclaim the Gospel to every creature. Men cannot believe on another of whom they have not heard, and they cannot hear without a messenger. (See Romans 10:1-16 for the proof of this proposition). In keeping with this declaration is a statement that God is seeking to save those that believe through the foolishness of preaching (I Cor. 1:21). Paul affirmed that God has committed unto men the message of reconciliation (II Cor. 5:18,19). In view of these statements, and many others that might be quoted, it is evident that the Gospel must be preached in order that there may be a revival. God has always used this method. When this revival, therefore, starts in Israel after the destruction of these armies of the Northeastern Confederacy, we may be assured of the fact that the awakening and turning to God among His Chosen People will be directly the result of the preaching of the Word.

Those who are led to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ in the beginning of the revival in Israel will be added to the body of Christ, if the rapture has not occurred by the time it takes place. If they are thus added to the body, they will be taken out of the world when the Lord comes for His saints (I Thess. 4:14-5:11). One cannot speculate as to how long before the beginning of the tribulation this revival in Israel begins. We only know that it does start among the Chosen People prior to the great and terrible day of the Lord.

After the church has been removed from the earth, a revival will burst forth and will sweep over the world in the first half of the great tribulation period. The facts concerning it are seen from a study of Revelation 7, when this chapter is examined in the light of its context in the Book of Revelation. According to this prediction, there will be 144,000 Jewish evangelists, servants of God, who become the heralds of the cross during the tribulation. The results of their labors will be an innumerable host of saved people who come out of the great tribulation, washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb. These are not the saints of the church age, but are those who hear the message delivered by the 144,000 Jewish evangelists in the first half of the great tribulation, and who accept Christ personally, washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb. We may not understand the "whys" nor the "wherefores" concerning this glorious revival. Our failure to

comprehend this great spiritual phenomenon does not militate against the fact that it is to be. God clearly states that such is the case. We who are willing to take His Word at its face value must accept this fact.

A study of the Book of Revelation shows that, notwithstanding the fact that the revival which sweeps the world during the first half of the tribulation is put under the ban and is outlawed in the middle of that time of distress, it will go on in a concealed and silent way, even during the latter half of the day of the Lord.

The smoldering flames of this mighty revival in Israel will break forth into a great conflagration of soul saving at the end of this period of Jacob's trouble—when all Israel living at that time will turn to God.

When this occurs, the Lord will use converted Israel in bringing the entire world to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Her turning to God and accepting her long rejected Messiah are, as all Bible students recognize, at the very end of the tribulation period. We are told that Israel in the person of her leaders will have to declare, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," before the Lord Jesus Christ will return to this earth to reign. Hosea informs us that they must acknowledge their offense, which they committed against Him at His first coming, and seek His face earnestly before the Lord will arise from His seat at the right hand of the Majesty on High in order to return to earth. But she will do this someday. When she invites Him to return, He will do so. Israel will be converted in a day. Then she will become the missionary nation and bring about the conversion of the world.

The prophet (Ezek. 39:7), therefore, by the Spirit of God viewed the future world-wide revival as beginning in Israel, moving forward by stages among the Chosen People, and finally resulting in the conversion of the world.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE TIME OF THE INVASION OF PALESTINE

Thus far in this discussion we have seen that God has clearly foretold in the prophetic word the invasion of Palestine by the forces of Germany, Russia, Turkey, Persia, Ethiopia, and all their hordes. Furthermore, it has been learned that, when this great army of occupation moves into Palestine to take possession of the land given to the Jewish people by divine decree, there is no battle fought. The western Democracies, according to the prediction, only make a protest. There is no further need of human action, because God by a mighty stroke of divine judgment overthrows these vast forces, annihilating them completely. The God of the universe who created all things and in whom we live, and move, and have our being, can cope with any situation. All the nations are "as a drop in the bucket, and as the small dust of the balance."

"Behold, the nations are as a drop in the bucket, and are accounted as the small dust of the balance; behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. 16 And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. 17 All the nations are as nothing, and vanity" (Isa. 40:15-17).

Hence the combined peoples of the earth, with all their material resources, are but as a drop of a bucket and the small dust of the balances; the armies of these nations mentioned, though mighty and powerful, are less than a drop in the bucket. The Lord, therefore, can deal with them practically and efficiently in a moment of time. He can thus wipe them from the face of the globe at will if He desires to do so.

In this connection it is well for us to remember that no king is saved by a multitude of a host. The deciding factor in every conflict is God. The marvelous statement found in Psalm 33:16-19 throws a flood of light upon this question.

- 16 There is no king saved by the multitude of a host:  
A mighty man is not delivered by great strength.
- 17 A horse is a vain thing for safety;  
Neither doth he deliver any by his great power.
- 18 Behold, the eye of Jehovah is upon them that fear him,  
Upon them that hope in his lovingkindness;
- 19 To deliver their soul from death,  
And to keep them alive in famine.

In this connection it is well for us to ponder the words of the youthful David as he went against the mighty Goliath, the champion of the Philistines, who were the enemies of God and His people.

"Then saith David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a javelin: but I came to thee in the name of Jehovah of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. 46 This day will Jehovah deliver thee into my hand; and I will smite thee, and take thy head from off thee; and I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day unto the birds of the heavens, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, 47 and that all this assembly may know that Jehovah saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is Jehovah's, and he will give you into our hand" (I Sam. 17:45-47).

Having been strengthened by the power of God and enabled to slay a lion and a bear on two former occasions when they pounced upon his flock, David discerned clearly that numbers do not count in a conflict, but that God is the determining factor in every controversy. Being conscious of the fact that the honor of God had been challenged by Goliath and the Philistine forces, which he represented, and being aware that Israel was the Chosen People of God, David, by the special illumination of the Spirit of God and by faith, uttered these memorable words. God always, at the psychological moment, steps in and vindicates His people who are in fellowship with Him and upholds His reputation in the sight of men. This He has done on many occasions.

When this invasion of Palestine occurs, and these anti-Semitic forces strike at Israel to despoil her of all her earthly possessions, it will be preeminently time for God to step in and intervene. As proof of this fact note the following statement:

It is for Jehovah to work  
For they have made void the law (Psa. 119:126).

Since this prophecy speaks of such an epoch-making event, it is of the highest importance that we study most minutely and accurately what the Scriptures say as to the time when it occurs. This prophecy occupies one of the chief positions in the prophetic word. A failure to recognize the time element in this prediction throws the entire program for the future into disorder. It is utterly impossible for one to understand the events just ahead of us in relation to the tribulation unless this prediction is located properly. With the utmost care and diligence, therefore, we must investigate all the data.

## I. THE FOUR THEORIES ADVANCED

Various answers are given by different schools of thought as to the time when this invasion occurs. Since the prediction is so very definite and is given in detail, it is utterly impossible for all four of these hypothesis to be correct.

Of four contradictory propositions only one can be right. In some cases when such a predicament arises, even all explanations may be wrong. On the other hand, only one of the four opposite conclusions can possibly be right.

Since the time element is probably one of the most important items of this prediction, it behooves us to be most definite and accurate in our statements. All the evidence possible must be presented for each position in order that the reader might understand the situation and weigh all the facts.

Regardless of what position the reader might accept, he is in good company, because excellent, God fearing men hold different views. It is needless to say that each one is honest and conscientious in his interpretation of the fact. Of course, being Christian, we never think of drawing a line against a brother who does not see eye-to-eye with us on every point.

#### *A. Before the Tribulation*

There are born again people who have a fairly accurate knowledge of the Scriptures and who believe that the events of this prophecy occur before the tribulation. Those taking this position locate the fulfillment of this prediction as coming before the tribulation, because the prophets said that Israel would be dwelling securely in the land of their fathers, living in unwallled villages. This time foretold by Ezekiel is a period when the Jews are partially gathered back to their own land from the nations among whom they have been dispersed through the centuries. According to Jesus (Matt. 24:37-39) and Paul (I Thess. 5:3) there is to be a period of peace and prosperity preceding the day of the Lord. Since the invasion occurs when Israel is dwelling securely in unwallled villages in the Land, these students conclude that Ezekiel's prophecy will be fulfilled during a period of peace immediately preceding the tribulation.

#### *B. At the Conclusion of the Tribulation*

Those taking the position expressed in the heading of this subdivision identify this invasion of Palestine as the one that is foretold as occurring at the end of the tribulation. It is identified with that mentioned in such passages as Zechariah 14:1-8:

"Behold, a day of Jehovah cometh, when thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. 2 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3 Then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. 4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the mount of Olives shall be cleft in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there

shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. 5 And ye shall flee by the valley of my mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azel; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah; and Jehovah my God shall come, and all the holy ones with thee. 6 And it shall come to pass in that day, that there shall not be light; the bright ones shall withdraw themselves: 7 but it shall be one day which is known unto Jehovah; not day, and not night; but it shall come to pass, that at evening time there shall be light. 8 And it shall come to pass in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea: in summer and in winter shall it be."

A similar forecast is presented in Zechariah 12:1-9. Identifying Ezekiel's prediction with those found in such passages as the ones just mentioned, these brethren interpret Ezekiel's prophecy as a forecast of what is usually termed, "The Battle of Ar-Magedon." This conclusion is reached because the prophet in chapter 39 speaks of Israel's being settled permanently in the land of the fathers. At the end of the tribulation Israel acknowledges her sin of rejecting King Messiah and accepts Him. Then she is reinstated into the favor of the Almighty and resides there throughout the kingdom age. According to these brethren the end of the tribulation seems to fit all the circumstances. They, therefore, see in this prediction a forecast of "The Battle of Ar-magedon."

### *C. In the Beginning of the Millennial Age*

Some excellent brethren, rejecting the interpretation given above, are convinced that this prophecy refers to events which occur at the beginning of the Millennial Age. The reason leading them to accept this position is that Israel is dwelling securely in her own land when the aggressors march into the country. Being convinced that there is no battle foretold in the prediction, and knowing that Israel is dwelling securely in the land at the time of the invasion, they locate this event as occurring in the first part of the Millennial Age, after our Lord has returned to earth, has delivered Israel, and has set up His Kingdom.

The suggestion has been made that, since the Russians are the leaders in this great aggressive movement, this is the result of the seeds of atheism and ungodliness which are now being sown in that country, and which will find expression in this diabolical, satanic invasion of Israel. Since Christ, according to the present theory, will be reigning in Jerusalem as Israel's Messiah King, they see in the prediction a prophecy of a stroke of divine judgment which annihilates the onrushing hordes.

### D. *After the Millennial Age*

Some scholars, rejecting the three explanations just mentioned, see in Ezekiel's prophecy a prediction of an invasion of Palestine which occurs after the great Millennial Age. Their proof of this position is seen in the following passage:

"And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down out of heaven, and devoured them. 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beasts and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev. 20:7-10).

According to these scholars there is no necessity for our attempting to locate this prophecy at any time other than after the Millennial Age, because, as they assert, John has given us the divine interpretation of Ezekiel's prophecy. Emphasis is laid upon the fact that he even states that "Gog and Magog" gather their hordes for the purpose of overthrowing the government of Christ at Jerusalem. They, therefore, go up against the Holy City and the camp of the saints to match swords with the strong Son of God—after He has reigned in righteousness, power and glory for a thousand years.

I have given the theories and have called attention briefly to the reasons leading the various schools of thought to accept these different explanations. It is now for us to examine most minutely all the facts in the case in order to determine who is right, and what is the truth in the matter.

## II. EXAMINATION OF THE THEORIES

It is necessary for thinking people to formulate theories regarding various matters when they are far removed either in time or space from the events, and when the data is meager and fragmentary. Straws show which way the wind is blowing. In like manner incidental remarks and circumstantial evidence often point in the direction of truth and facts.

That theory which does not contradict any of the evidence of data, and that is in perfect alignment with the known facts is to be accepted as correct, when only one explanation is possible. This is the basic principle underlying our judicial system, which seeks to identify and to punish the guilty and to liberate and exonerate the innocent.

In the preceding section the theories attempting to locate the time of the fulfillment of the prediction were listed according to the chronological order of

the dating; but in investigating and expounding these theories I wish to begin with the fourth and test them in the reverse order.

#### A. *After the Millennial Age*

As was shown in the preceding section, one school of thought holds to the opinion that Ezekiel 38:1-39:29 is speaking of the invasion of Palestine which occur after the reign of Christ on the earth for a thousand years. Will the evidence support such a theory?

In the prediction of Ezekiel 38 we saw that there is a coalition of nations, which might properly be called the Northeastern Confederacy. This alliance of peoples consists of Germany with all its hordes, Russia with its mighty hosts, Turkey, Persia, Ethiopia, and Somaliland. We are informed definitely that these peoples will send their armies into Palestine. On the contrary there is another group of nations which in a previous chapter was designated as the Western Democracies, and which issue a protest against such a movement. Thus it is evident that there are two opposing camps into which the nations are divided, or a great number of them, at the time of this act of aggression. From this position there can be no retreat from the one who is willing to accept the record at its face value. Is this the revelation that is set forth in Revelation 20?

Satan, as we learn from Revelation 20:1-6, is bound and is cast into the pit of the abyss during the thousand years' reign of our Lord. At the conclusion of this period of time Satan is released from his confinement in the infernal regions and is permitted to come forth and to deceive the nations that are upon the face of the earth.

"And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down out of heaven, and devoured them. 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Rev. 20:7-10).

From verse 8 of this quotation it is clear that Satan moves upon the hearts of the people of all the nations who are living in the four corners of the earth, and that there is a mighty host from the various peoples, tribes, tongues, and languages, who yield to his subtle influence, and who make a march against Jerusalem.

Because of the lack of a better name I call this "A Youth Movement." My reason for thus naming it is that no person who has been genuinely and really born-again would ever join such a diabolical movement as the one set forth in this passage. We, therefore may be certain that this company of people are all unregenerated individuals.

Will there be unsaved people in the Millennial Age? Of course there will be. God never conscripts recruits for His ranks; neither does He force the will of anyone. He has made man a moral agent and permits him to exercise the freedom of choice at all times. This has been true ever since man was created and will continue to be so throughout the history of this world, even in the Millennial Age. The Lord will not coerce anyone. He will then, as now, use all moral suasion and all legitimate means in order to influence people to accept the right and to serve Him faithfully. But He never crosses the sacred threshold of any man's personality in order to force His will.

During the Millennial Age, the population of the earth will increase most rapidly. This is a natural consequence of the lifting of the curse. The pain and the dangers of childbirth, which characterize this age, are the result of the curse of which we learned in Genesis 3. The infantile mortality list throughout the centuries has been terrifyingly enormous. Not so will it be in the Millennial earth when the curse is lifted.

"There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed" (Isa. 65:20).

According to this promise everyone who is born into the world in the kingdom age will live to be at least one hundred years old. During this time the Gospel will be preached by Israel, who alone will be the ministers of our God (Isa. 61:4-6). Then everyone will have an opportunity of redemption through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Every possible effort will be put forth in order to influence each person to accept the mercy extended to him through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ in order that he might be saved.

Notwithstanding all the marvelous and unprecedented opportunities that the people at that time will enjoy, there will be many who will postpone their acceptance of Christ, or will in a mood of deliberation reject the Saviour. In spite of their willful rejection of Him, or negligence in accepting Him, they will be allowed to live to the good ripe age of one hundred years. If upon their reaching that age they have not accepted Christ, they will be smitten with death as indicated in the passage quoted.

Under the ideal conditions which will obtain in the Millennial Age the population of the earth will increase enormously. Innumerable will be the generation that is born in the last century of that era. Without doubt the majority of the rising generation of that time will accept the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour and be accepted in the Beloved. On the other hand, there will be an innumerable host of those who do not accept Him and who will come to the end of the thousand years reign of our Lord without having been regenerated. These are, in my judgment, the ones who compose that mighty army of "the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war." Of these John in Revelation 20:8 speaks, emphasizing the fact that they are a countless number. He asserts that "the number of whom is as the sand of the sea."

Though the armies of the nations mentioned in Ezekiel's prophecy are vast, they seem to be inconsequential in comparison with the vast hordes of those mentioned by John in the Revelation passage. In view of this fact I cannot believe that Ezekiel and John are speaking of the same invasion. The facts and circumstances in each case are different. It seems, therefore, gratuitous to identify these two predictions as relating to one and the same event.

Another consideration confirms this conclusion, which is set forth in this passage:

"Be thou prepared, yea, prepare thyself, thou, and all thy companies that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them. After many days thou shalt be visited" etc. (Ezek. 38:7, 8).

According to this prediction Gog is to prepare himself and lead his hosts into the land. But he is informed that "after many days" he is to be punished. From this fact it is clear that the punishment is to be many days after the offense. In order to understand this phrase, we must examine a like one found in a similar prediction presented in Isaiah 24:21, 22:

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that Jehovah will punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. 22 And they shall be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison; and after many days shall be visited."

These verses are followed by one that speaks of the glorious reign of Christ upon the earth.

The first twenty verses of this chapter describe most graphically the horrors of the great tribulation and conclude this narration with a prediction concerning the rocking to and fro of the earth like a hammock. At that time the hosts of high ones on high (Satan and his servile spirits) together with the

kings of the earth will be gathered together as prisoners are placed in a pit where they are confined for a long period of time. After many days they shall be visited in the sense of being punished, as the marginal note indicates.

When we compare this passage with Revelation 20:1-10, we see that this is a prediction of the casting of Satan and his hosts into the pit of the abyss at the beginning of the 1000 year reign of Christ. They remain there during that time. At the end of that period they are brought forth and punished. The 1000 years are in this passage referred to by the expression, "After many days." The same phrase upon the lips of Ezekiel when studied with this parallel passage as a guide is seen to connote the same period. Gog's invasion of Palestine is, in the light of these facts, before the 1000 year reign of Christ. After that era he will be punished—after the many days.

But, does not Ezekiel speak of "Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal"? And does not John speak of "Gog and Magog"? This is true; but it seems that the circumstances connected with each of these prophecies are so very different that it is impossible to interpret the two passages as referring to the same event. Why then did John speak of the hosts which he in vision saw as "Gog and Magog"? This question is easily answered: Because this usage is a type of language which is employed every day. Wellington the English general, fought with and conquered Napoleon at Waterloo. The latter had terrified all Europe and the Mediterranean world for approximately two decades. Finally, on the battle field of Waterloo Napoleon was overwhelmingly defeated. This victory of Wellington delivered Europe from the scourge of aggression by which she had been plagued periodically in that generation. People today when speaking of someone who has been successful in his career, but who meets some reverse fatal to his plan which has been hitherto unchallenged, say that this one has met his Waterloo. No one misunderstands this type of language. Frequently today we hear people who are familiar with the general trend of political events speaking of "The Red Napoleon." From the drift of the conversation or the context of the article, whenever such language is used, it is evident that the writer or speaker is talking of or referring to Stalin, the dictator of Russia, or some future successor of his. Since, as we have already seen, the circumstances and the facts that are mentioned in the two prophecies show conclusively that these two men of God saw different visions, and since John refers to the hosts which he saw as "Gog and Magog," it is most highly probably that he speaks of the invasion of Palestine which occurs after the Millennial Age with its recruits gathered from all parts of the world in terms of the similar invasion foretold by Ezekiel as occurring before that time. Since these hordes of the two predictions march into Palestine, and since they both suffer a like overthrow

by a divine stroke of judgment from the very throne of God, it was quite natural for John to speak of the leader and the hordes of this latter invasion in terms of the former one.

When all the facts, therefore, of the prophecies are taken into consideration and every allowance is made for the moral, natural use of language, one is forced by the facts of both passages to conclude that they are two distinct invasions, and that John speaks of an event which occurs after the millennium.\* Because of its similarity with the first one he speaks of it in the terms used by Ezekiel.

### B. *In the Beginning of the Millennial Age*

The next theory which we are to consider is the one which states that this invasion of Palestine occurs in the beginning of the Millennial Age. As stated above, those taking this position are led to do so because they see that Israel is dwelling safely in the land when these forces march into the country. They do not see any hope for her having any rest or quietude in the land until after she is reestablished there by her Messiah, which condition will obtain after

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\* Some scholars have great difficulty in accepting the prediction of the invasion of Palestine and the revolt against Christ's authority after He has reigned for 1000 years in the city of Jerusalem. To them it is unthinkable that there could be such a rebellion after this earth has enjoyed 1000 years of the righteous reign of our Lord. Some have told me in most emphatic terms: "Such a thought is inconceivable." They, therefore, cannot believe that this language is literal and should be taken at its face value. Consequently they place a figurative or metaphorical meaning upon it.

Is such an interpretation inconceivable in the light of all the facts? Let us examine it. When we remember that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked and there is no foretelling what an unregenerated man may do (Jer. 17:9), when we remember that God does not force men's wills but allows them to exercise the freedom of choice, and when we remember that the generation arising in the last century of the Millennial Age will not accept Christ by the time of its close, we can see how these unregenerated souls can be deluded by Satan and can be led into an insurrection and revolt against Christ. Such an event likewise becomes luminous in the light of the historical record concerning Satan's original revolt against God. The Almighty created, not only the material universe, but also an innumerable host of angels. It seems that Satan was the anointed cherub, the first of the creation of God (Ezek. 28:11-18). One-third of the angels, it appears, were seduced to join the insurrection and to stage a formidable rebellion against the Most High (Rev. 12:4). From the paragraph in which this verse appears, it is evident that John, in speaking of the future, foretold what Satan will do against Israel and showed that in doing this he will simply be carrying out his revengeful purpose against the Almighty which he began when he instituted this original revolt among the angels.

If, before there was any sin or curse, Satan, this anointed cherub, basking in the sunlight of God's eternal love and favor together with an innumerable number of holy, created beings, could persuade himself and others, and they with one consent did find it in their hearts to revolt against God, and could persuade themselves to do so, as we know they did, it is not unreasonable to believe that unregenerated men at the conclusion of the Millennial Age when they are deluded by Satan may, as John has foretold, be led blindly to institute a revolt against Christ and His righteous reign.

Christ comes and is seated upon His throne. If we know positively, without any doubt, that there would be no peace for Israel in the land until the Messiah comes, then we would be driven irresistibly to this conclusion. But there is no evidence whatsoever that Israel may not have a short period of peace there prior to the beginning of the Millennial Age.

There are several reasons why I cannot accept this position. In the first place, we are told in Ezekiel 39 that, when this force has been overthrown, there will be a period of seven months during which men assigned especially to the task of hunting for the bodies of the slain will be engaged in this special work. Wherever they find a body, a skeleton, or bones, they set up a stake indicating that fact. Thus those burying the dead will go throughout the length and breadth of the country for seven months, working in connection with others, in order that the land might be freed from the ceremonial defilement caused by the dead bodies of those slain by the judgments which fall upon them. It is impossible for me to believe that, for seven months after our Lord has come and has established His reign upon the earth in Palestine, the Holy Land will be defiled. Such an idea as this is not in harmony with my conception of Christ and His glorious reign—when the glory of God shall encircle the earth as the waters cover the sea.

In the second place, we are told that the weapons brought by the invaders will be used for firewood for a period of seven years and that there will be no necessity of one's going to the forests to procure fuel. It is likewise hard for me to conceive of the idea that during the first seven years of the Millennial reign of Christ, the people in Palestine will be dependent upon the use of wood that is brought in by the invading army. Somehow this idea does not fit into the Old Testament conception of the glorious and wonderful reign of our Lord.

In the third place, we may note the fact that when Christ returns, He will slay all the wicked. That this proposition is correct is seen by the following quotation:

"This saith Jehovah of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great tempest shall be raised up from the uttermost parts of the earth. And the slain of Jehovah shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered nor buried; they shall be dung upon the face of the ground" (Jer. 25:32,33)

Without doubt God will know where the wicked are and He, by the brightness of His coming, will slay all of them. That He will destroy the wicked from the face of the earth is spoken of again and again by the Psalmists. From this consideration we can see that it is very highly improbable that this invasion could occur after God has destroyed all the wicked.

In the fourth place, when the Lord returns He will gather those peoples who survive the great tribulation before the throne upon which He will be seated. Then He will divide them as the shepherd separates his sheep from the goats. The basis of this judgment is not for the condemnation of wicked men; on the contrary, it is one which is founded upon the principle of the extension of mercy for the performance of good works, by those judged, to the Lord's brethren according to the flesh. From this passage it becomes evident that there will not be those of a wicked nature who will be left, and who will attempt to match swords with Christ.

And fifthly, since the Lord upon His return to this earth will demolish all the weapons of war, as we are told in Isaiah 9:4,5, we may conclude that there could not be an armed force, equipped as we see these armies, at any time during the Millennial Age.

And in the sixth place, we see from Isaiah 2:1-4 that when our Lord returns, all the usable material of the weapons of warfare will be converted into agricultural implements. There will be no more war; neither shall they learn war any more. That the reader may see this glorious picture, I will quote these verses:

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2 And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. 3 And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. 4 And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2:1-4).

For these reasons it is utterly impossible for me to believe that such an invasion as this could occur after Christ has returned and has taken His seat upon the throne of David and has established His righteous reign over the earth. This prediction, therefore, cannot refer to an event which will be in the beginning of the Millennial Age.

### C. At the End of the Tribulation

Still another group of scholars are thoroughly convinced that Ezekiel was speaking in this prediction concerning what is usually termed "The Battle of Ar-Magedon."\*

As we have already seen in Chapter II there is no battle nor war foretold in Ezekiel 38:1-39:16. All that is seen in this prediction, as we have repeatedly observed, is the invasion of the land of Israel by the armies of the Northeastern Confederacy for the purpose of taking the spoil. The Western Democracies issue a protest. Before any action can be taken by them, the Lord by a divine stroke of judgment blots out the armies of these aliens. On the other hand, at the end of the tribulation we know that the armies of the world will invest Jerusalem with the idea of exterminating the Jewish race. This seems to be reflected in such passages as Psalm 79 and is clearly set forth in Zechariah 14 and parallel passages. If for no other reason than that set forth in the preceding paragraph, one cannot identify the prediction of Ezekiel 38 and 39 as a forecast of "The War of the Great Day of God the Almighty." There are, however, other weighty reasons for rejecting this position.

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\* The term, "The Battle of Ar-Magedon," is a household word in prophetic, premillennial circles. By this expression one means the battle at the final siege of Jerusalem described by Zechariah 14 and Revelation 16:12-16:

"And the sixth poured out his bowl upon the great river, the *river* Euphrates and the water thereof was dried up, that the way might be made ready for the kings that *come* from the sunrising. 13 And I saw *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, as it were frogs: 14 for they were spirits of demons, working signs; which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. 15 (Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.) 16 And they gathered them together into the place which is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon" (Rev. 16:12-16).

John, by the Spirit, told us that the three demons, mentioned in the quotation above, at the pouring out of the sixth bowl of the wrath of God, go forth and stir up the kings of the whole earth to gather them together unto the "war of the great day of God, the Almighty." Verse 15, which follows this quotation, is a parenthetical expression sounding a note of warning to those who will be living upon the earth at that time. Verse 16, therefore, takes up the thought dropped in the last expression of verse 14, which has just been quoted. "And they (these three spirits of demons) gather them (the kings of the whole earth) together into the place which is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon." According to this prediction the kings of the earth will gather together at the place which is called Har-Magedon; they come together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty." In the light of all the facts it seems to be the thought that the kings of the earth gather together at the place called Har-Magedon for conference concerning the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. In other words, this is a convention, the delegates of which are the kings of the earth, called for the purpose of laying plans for the war of the great day of God the Almighty, of which conflict one reads in Revelation 19:11-21.

In view of the facts it seems that it would be more accurate for one to speak, not of the battle of Ar-Magedon, but of the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. It is always wise to speak of Biblical things in terms of the Scripture when possible.

When this invasion occurs, these armed forces as has already been seen, are destroyed by a direct judgment from God. There is no intimation that all the wicked throughout the whole world will be destroyed when these armies are overthrown. We have already seen that, at the time of this future crisis, not only will fire rain down from heaven upon these forces gathered in Palestine, but also upon Magog—Russia—and upon them that "dwell securely in the isles" (Ezek. 39:6). Thus we are told exactly where the judgments fall in the case of this prediction. On the contrary, we are informed in Jeremiah 25 that upon the coming of our Lord at the conclusion of the tribulation all the wicked throughout the entire world will be slain. In view of these facts it seems impossible to identify Ezekiel's prophecy as a forecast of "The War of the Great Day of God the Almighty."

A third reason for my being unable to identify this prediction as referring to the conflict at the end of the tribulation is this: When Israel is thus invaded, the Jews will be dwelling securely in Palestine. This is seen in the following quotation:

"After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, that is gathered out of many peoples, upon the mountains of Israel, which have been a continual waste; but it is brought forth out of the peoples, and they shall dwell securely, all of them ... 10 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: It shall come to pass in that day, that things shall come into thy mind, and thou shalt devise an evil device: 11 and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates; 12 to take the spoil and to take the prey; to turn thy hand against the waste places that are now inhabited, and against the people that are gathered out of the nations, that have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the middle of the earth ... 14 Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: In that day when my people Israel dwelleth securely, shalt thou not know it?" (Ezek. 38:8,10,11,12,14).

From these verses we can see clearly and unmistakably that, when the invasion occurs, the Jews will be dwelling in unwalled villages and resting securely in the land of their fathers. About this position there can be no question in the minds of those who accept the Word of God at its face value. Will those who shall be in the land at the end of the tribulation be dwelling securely and at rest? Everyone who is familiar with the Scriptures will answer in the negative.

From Daniel 9 we learn that the world dictator will enter into a covenant with Israel for a period of seven years. After three and one half years he will ruthlessly renounce his treaty obligation and will launch a campaign against God and all who recognize Him. At that time he will assume the position of God and demand that he alone be worshipped. This prediction is found in II Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 13.

The prediction found in Psalm 2 seems to fit into the situation that arises in the middle of the tribulation as it does at no other place in the entire prophetic scheme. The portion of the psalm that deals with the point under discussion is verses 1-3.

- 1 Why do the nations rage,  
And the peoples meditate a vain thing?
- 2 The kings of the earth set themselves,  
And the rulers take counsel together,  
Against Jehovah, and against his anointed saying,
- 3 Let us break their bonds asunder,  
And cast away their cords from us.

This prediction foretells the calling of an international, atheistic, anti-Semitic, anti-Christian, politico-religious convention. It will be an international gathering because the delegates are the kings of the earth and the rulers. It will be atheistic because it will be against "Jehovah." It will be anti-Semitic in that it will be against the Almighty who revealed Himself to Israel as Jehovah, and who has throughout the centuries called Himself the God of Israel. It will be anti-Christian in that it will be "against His (Jehovah's) Messiah"—anointed. It will be political in that men who are simply politicians will be the delegates. At the same time it will be a religious convention, in that it is called to settle the question of religion—to replace the worship of God and Christ with that of the beast, the world emperor. This convention, therefore, is called to put all religion under the ban and to require the worship and the service of all humanity. In the light of these facts it is evident that Paul was speaking of this same monstrous, blasphemous act of the man of sin who exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped in that he takes his seat in the temple of God (rebuilt in Jerusalem by the Jews), setting himself forth as God. From this point of view it is quite obvious that there will be launched against the Jews, as well as against all the followers of God, a campaign of compulsory worship of the man of sin, or of extermination.

This position is confirmed by the message found in Revelation 12. In this passage we see a woman clothed with the sun and with a crown of twelve stars upon her head. She is the one who brings forth the manchild. The dragon is present to destroy him at his birth. A sound sane, scholarly exegesis of this marvelous chapter reveals the result that the woman symbolizes Israel. Accepting this interpretation as correct, we see that the dragon, who is none other than Satan, persecutes the woman for the last three and one half years of the tribulation. At the beginning of this persecution she flees into the wilderness to a place prepared for her by the Lord. From this fact we can see

clearly that Israel during the latter half of the tribulation period is not dwelling in the land securely. In fact, all but the apostate, renegade Jews will flee for their lives from the country into Ammon, Moab, and Edom. From this consideration we are driven to the inevitable conclusion that the prediction of Ezekiel 38:1-39:16 cannot be a reference to the events that occur at the conclusion of the great tribulation period. This theory, therefore, must be discarded in the face of the facts of the prediction read in the light of related passages.

#### *D. Before the Tribulation*

Thus far in this discussion we have seen that it is utterly impossible for one to locate the fulfillment of this prediction after the Millennial Age. It cannot be placed in the beginning of the Millennium, nor at the end of the tribulation. It must, therefore, be located before the tribulation because there is no other place for it to occur since the three other suggested dates are impossible. When, therefore, before the tribulation, does this mighty event take place?

In answer to this question one cannot be dogmatic. This much, however, he may assert with all confidence and boldness: It occurs at a time when Israel is dwelling in unwalled villages and is at rest in the land. From this position there can be no recourse. Since it must come to pass before the tribulation and since Israel will be dwelling securely and at rest in the land when it occurs, we cannot avoid the conclusion that there will be a time before the tribulation when Israel will thus be enjoying security and prosperity in the land of the fathers. During such a period as this the foretold invasion takes place.

As to when this delightful and longed-for period of dwelling in security springs into realization and the exact time when it will come to pass, it is utterly impossible for anyone to say. But I am bold to state, upon the authority of God's Word which presents the facts given in this book, that there will be a time between now and the beginning of the tribulation when the Jews will be dwelling in the Land in unwalled cities and will be at rest. Let us bear in mind, that the rapture of the church will occur before the tribulation. Since God has asserted that such will be the case, we with absolute confidence may look forward to that time. Since no word from God is without power, and since He watches over His word to perform it, we know that this prediction will be fulfilled literally.

At the time of this writing, January 1940, the hostilities, disturbing Palestine since 1936, have somewhat subsided. The enmity between the Arabs and the Jews seems to have been dropped and friendly relationships are being encouraged, according to the latest authentic reports. Whether or not this

happy condition may continue from now on until the tribulation begins, no mortal can tell. It would indeed be unwise for anyone to venture any assertion or prediction along this line. Only when one has an unmistakably clear "Thus-saith-the-Lord" for such a position, can he afford to be assertive and dogmatic.

### III. THE INVASION OF EZEKIEL 38:1—39:16 DISTINGUISHED FROM THAT OF JOEL 2 AND DANIEL 11

#### A. *Prophecy of Joel*

The Scriptures clearly foretell several invasions of Palestine which have never come to pass. As we have already seen in the last section, the prophecy of Ezekiel 38:1-39:16 is fulfilled before the tribulation. Both Daniel and Joel likewise predict an invasion of Palestine which we shall see cannot possibly be the one foretold by Ezekiel. Zechariah, on the other hand, gives us a forecast of an invasion of the land which we know occurs at the end of the tribulation—at the time our Lord manifests Himself in glory. The last invasion of Palestine, however, is scheduled to come at the end of the Millennial Age. Each of these acts of aggression will cause great damage materially and will bring untold suffering to innocent ones—unless we can make an exception of the one at the end of the Millennial Age. We are not told, however, how much damage will be wrought by that one; but as to the other, we are fully informed.

It is necessary for us to determine, if possible, the time of the invasion of Palestine as foretold by Joel and Daniel. In order that we may have the picture clearly before our minds, I will quote that portion of Joel's prophecy which pertains to this special subject:

"15 Alas for the day! For the day of Jehovah is at hand, and as destruction from the Almighty shall it come 16 Is not the food cut off before our eyes, *yea*, joy and gladness from the house of our God? 17 The seeds rot under their clods; the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the grain is withered. 18 How do the beasts groan! The herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; *yea*, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. 19 O Jehovah, to thee do I cry; for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. 20 *Yea*, the beasts of the field pant unto thee; for the water brooks are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

**2** Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of Jehovah cometh, for it is nigh at hand; 2 a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the dawn spread upon the mountains; a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after them, even to the years of many generations. 3 A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; *yea*, and none hath escaped them.

4 The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so do they run. 5 Like the noise of chariots on the tops of the mountains do they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. 6 At their presence the people are in anguish; all faces are waxed pale. 7 They run like mighty men; they climb the wall like men of war; and they march every one on his ways, and they break not their ranks. 8 Neither doth one thrust another; they march every one in his path; and they burst through the weapons, and break not off *their course*. 9 They leap upon the city; they run upon the wall; they climb up into the houses; they enter in at the windows like a thief. 10 The earth quaketh before them; the heavens tremble; the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. 11 And Jehovah uttereth his voice before his army; for his camp is very great; for he is strong that executeth his word; for the day of Jehovah is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?" (Joel 1:15-2:11).

From this passage it is very evident that Joel saw the day of Jehovah, which is none other than the tribulation period. At the time foreseen the land of Israel "is as the garden of Eden before them (the invading armies), and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and none hath escaped them." From these words it is obvious that Palestine at the time of this invasion is in a prosperous condition, for it is as the garden of Eden before these armies march into it. Since the prophet was discussing the day of Jehovah—the tribulation—we can be certain that this invasion occurs either before it starts, or what is more likely, in the middle of it. It is not at all possible that Joel was speaking about the same invasion as that foretold by Ezekiel in the passage which we have been discussing, because Palestine will be in a prosperous condition, as we have seen, at the time the host foreseen by Ezekiel enters the land. Since some Bible scholars identify these two predictions as referring to one and the same event, I shall not be dogmatic. Ezekiel did not link his prediction with the day of Jehovah as Joel did. The prophets usually, though not always, told us that their predictions were in connection with the day of Jehovah, if such was the case. At times they intimated the same without asserting it in so many words. We have already seen that Ezekiel's prophecy must be fulfilled before the day of Jehovah, but Joel's prediction is linked with that time of judgment. These considerations lead me at least to differentiate between the prediction of Ezekiel and that of Joel.

Where can we locate Joel's prophecy? It may be at the very beginning of the tribulation before any of God's judgments have fallen upon the earth. The statement that the land is like the garden of Eden before the invasion rather favors this position, although one cannot be dogmatic on this point. It is altogether possible that the first judgments of the tribulation may not affect Palestine so as to destroy the beauty and prosperity of the land.

A study of Revelation, chapters 6 to 9, gives us a vivid picture of conditions that will exist upon the earth during the first half of the tribulation period. As we learn from Revelation 6, the first judgment coming upon the

earth in the tribulation is the rise of Antichrist to power and his starting on his period of conquest. This is indicated by the rider on the white horse (Rev. 6:1,2). The second judgment is presented under the rider on the red horse, who symbolizes, in his racing through the earth with a drawn sword, a world war. The third judgment is that of famine, signified by the rider on the black horse. The fourth stroke of divine wrath comes in the form of a war and political upheaval which affects one-fourth of the earth. This is set forth in Revelation 6:7,8.

At the breaking of the fifth seal persecution is launched against the tribulation saints (Rev. 6:9-11). The sixth judgment is a general upheaval throughout the material universe. Speaking in terms of the human body, I would say that the whole universe suffers from great convulsions which seem to affect every part of the globe. This last stroke of judgment brings us to the end of the first quarter of the tribulation. If this literally affects Palestine, then it is quite likely that such an upheaval will cause great destruction throughout the country. If this is true, facts almost demand that the invasion mentioned by Joel come before the falling of this judgment, but one cannot afford to be dogmatic on this point.

Chapter 7 of the book of Revelation tells about the world-wide revival that will be conducted in the first half of the tribulation by the 144,000 Jewish evangelists, who, having been given the truth by the people of God before the rapture, will take their stand upon it and will accept Christ when the judgments of the tribulation begin. They will then go forth into every nook and corner of the earth and bring about the worldwide revival in which multiplied millions of people will be brought to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 8 and 9 describe in detail the six following judgments that will cover the second quarters of the Day of Jehovah. The first four of them affect consecutively only one-third part of the earth, the sea, the rivers and fountains, and the heavenly bodies. It is altogether possible, therefore, that Palestine may not be included in the sphere of these plagues. The fifth and sixth trumpets which are the first and second woes, foretell graphically an invasion of this world by hosts of evil spirits that will torment the people without the seal of God upon the earth. The seal and trumpet judgments cover the first half of the tribulation. Having made this brief survey of them, we see how Palestine may be spared the destruction which will be in evidence in many places throughout the earth. It is therefore, possible that Palestine may be brought to the condition that it looks like the garden of Eden before the tribulation and may continue in that state throughout the first and second quarters of this time of judgment—without being destroyed. It is, therefore altogether possible that the invasion mentioned by Joel may come in the

middle of the tribulation. Without being too positive, I am rather inclined to believe that this time is the correct date for it.

When one reads Daniel 9:27 and Mathew 24:15 in their connections together with II Thessalonians 2:1-13 and Revelation 12 and 13, he comes to the conclusion that the beast with all of his forces invades Palestine in the middle of the tribulation. It is altogether possible, therefore, that Joel was speaking of this same thing. We know from various passages of Scripture that the world government, in the middle of the tribulation, will overrun Palestine and do what it can to destroy the Jew. Psalm 74 gives certain details concerning this special persecution which will be launched against the Jews in Palestine. During this time the temple which will be erected by the Jews will be destroyed together with all the synagogues throughout the land. Most of the Jews will have to flee from the country to save their lives. A careful study of this Psalm brings many startling things to light. When, therefore, all the evidence from the Psalm together with Joel's prediction and Revelation 6 to 9 studied in connection with Psalm 2 is taken into consideration, one is inclined most strongly to believe that the upheaval which comes to Palestine as mentioned by Joel occurs in the middle of the tribulation.

### *B. The Prophecy of Daniel*

"And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods; and he shall prosper until the indignation be accomplished; for that which is determined shall be done. 37 Neither shall he regard the gods of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all. 38 But in his place shall he honor the god of fortresses; and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones and pleasant things. 39 And he shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god; whosoever acknowledgeth *him* he will increase with glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for a price.

40 And at the time of the end shall the king of the south contend with him; and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass through. 41 He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many *countries* shall be overthrown; but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. 42 He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape. 43 But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. 44 But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him; and he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to sweep away many. 45 And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the sea and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

**12** And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince who 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. 2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3 And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. 4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words seal the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

5 Then I, Daniel, looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on the brink of the river on this side, and the other on the brink of the river on that side. 6 And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? 7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swear by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and a half; and when they have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished. 8 And I heard, but I understood not; then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the issue of these things; 9 And he said, Go thy way Daniel; for the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end. 10 Many shall purify themselves, and make themselves white, and be refined; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but they that are wise shall understand. 11 And from the time that the continual *burnt-offering* shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. 12 Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. 13 But go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest and shalt stand in thy lot, at the end of the days" (Dan. 11:36-12:13).

Some expositors interpret this willful king mentioned in the passages above as the personal Antichrist, a Jew who reigns over Israel and who enters into a covenant with the Roman dictator, the head of the world empire. Other scholars who have a knowledge of the prophetic word are of the opinion that the Antichrist is none other than the world dictator who rules the Roman empire in the time of the end. Regardless of which position one may take he is in good company—excellent men being on both sides of the question. For a long time I was undecided; but after much study and research, together with prayer and earnest supplication, I have come to the conclusion that the evidence seems to favor the latter position. This willful king, therefore, I understand to be the final world ruler, or the Antichrist.

It is to be remembered that, according to Daniel 7, the fourth beast seen by the prophet symbolizes a fourth empire which succeeded the Grecian, and which continues through the centuries until the time that the Son of Man is revealed from heaven at the end of the tribulation. According to verse 23 of this marvelous outline of the times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24), Rome in the end becomes a world empire, embracing every nation, tribe, tongue, and language. When the world is thus incorporated into one great colossal government, it splits into ten divisions, as indicated by the ten horns of the fourth beast. Among them arises one which symbolizes the man of destiny, who eventually, after being associated with these ten dictators, gradually

seizes all civil powers and becomes the final Caesar. Thus the ten kings with the Antichrist reign, in all probability, during the first half of the tribulation. In the middle of it there is a terrific political upheaval. The king of the south (of Palestine) comes up into the land of Israel. At the same time the king of the north goes down into it. Then this willful king, or the Antichrist, comes against them and pitches his tent in the glorious land. Thus one can see that there is to be a mighty upheaval in the political situation at the time here foreseen.

At what time is this? If the reader has perused carefully the quotation at the beginning of this section, he will see that it occurs at the time that Michael shall "stand up, the great prince who standeth for the children of thy people" (Dan. 12:1). This precipitates great activity, for as we learn in the rest of this verse, "There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that time."

When Daniel wanted to know how long these strokes of judgment would continue, the angel informed him that they last for "a time, times, and a half (of a time)" (Dan. 12:7). This passage read in the light of Daniel 9:27 and our Lord's statement in Mathew 24:15 shows that this great upheaval in the political world, which causes the Antichrist to go to Jerusalem and set up his image in the Jewish temple, occurs in the middle of the tribulation.

From all these facts, as presented in the various passages of Scripture, it is very clear that the invasion of Palestine foretold by Daniel, in the quotation given above, occurs in the middle of the 70th week of Daniel (Dan. 9:24-27).

From this investigation it seems clear that we must differentiate between the invasion which is recorded by Ezekiel and the one mentioned by Joel and Daniel. But we must always bear in mind that the invasion described by Joel cannot be determined with such exact precision as those by Daniel and Ezekiel. As we have seen, the evidence is very clear and convincing that the invasion by the forces of Gog and his associates occurs before the day of Jehovah.

Since Gog marches into Palestine before the tribulation, how does this prediction fit in with the general scheme of events of the end time as set forth in other passages? This question will be answered in my forthcoming book on Daniel 7, which will issue from the press as soon as I have time to finish it. Ezekiel's prophecy fits perfectly into the prophetic outline of things as set forth by Daniel and other prophets.

## CHAPTER IV

### A SECOND VIEW OF THE PICTURE

In Ezekiel 38 the prophet depicted in a most vivid way, the invasion of Palestine by the forces of "The Northeastern Confederacy" under the leadership of Gog, prince of Russia. He revealed the motive prompting this act of aggression and made known to us the reaction of the Western Democracies, expressing itself in the form of a diplomatic protest. He showed us most clearly that Gog leads his hordes not to triumph, but to utter annihilation by a divine stroke of judgment from the Almighty Himself. Thus the chapter has given us a complete picture of this satanic effort to seize the wealth of the Jews when they dwell securely in their own land, residing in unwalled villages—colonies at the present time. The story is told in this chapter in a most effective and thrilling manner. No details are lacking. The picture is complete. The man of God brings us to the climax of his prophecy. We understand thoroughly what will happen and what the outcome will be.

In giving us chapter 39 Ezekiel followed the rule of "The Law of Recurrence." This principle is especially characteristic of the Hebrew prophets. A failure to recognize it leads to confusion and misunderstanding only, whereas a proper knowledge of it enables one to enter into a fuller appreciation of the divine message. What is this law of recurrence? It may be stated in the simplest terms. The inspired writer makes a prediction of a certain event, giving the general outline of the situation and filling in certain details. The story is complete within itself. Though nothing is lacking in his picture, he often covers the same ground. In his second view he calls attention to new elements omitted from the first description and enlarges upon certain details which he mentioned very briefly in his first discussion. In other words, the law of recurrence might be spoken of as a review or another look at the same thing with the attention focused upon different elements.

That is exactly what Ezekiel has done in chapter 39. He has employed "The Law of Recurrence" and given us another view of the picture. In this second look we see things that were not brought to our attention in chapter 38. This new knowledge enriches our knowledge of that which actually will transpire in connection with this epochal event. Let us now examine the picture as we take this second and last look at it.

## I. THE OVERTHROW OF THE FORCES OF GOG

"And thou, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal: 2 and I will turn thee about, and will lead thee on, and will cause thee to come up from the uttermost parts of the north; and I will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel; 3 and I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, 4 Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy hordes, and the peoples that are with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. 5 Thou shalt fall upon the open field; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord Jehovah. 6 And I will send a fire on Magog, and on them that dwell securely in the isles; and they shall know that I am Jehovah" (Ezek. 39:1-6).

In this quotation Gog, the leader of the enterprise and prince of Rosh, only appears in this passage. His associates are not mentioned. Since he is the leading spirit, the flood light is focused upon him.

According to verse 2 the Lord declares that He will turn Gog about and will cause him to go up from the uttermost parts of the north in order that he might invade the land of Israel. This strikes the same note that was sounded in the former chapter. Although this mighty prince is free to exercise his own choices, God at the same time overrules and brings him into the land. Those who believe the revelation of God accept without any qualifications the Scriptural teaching of man's freedom and of God's sovereignty.

The prediction is made in verse 3 that God will smite the bow from the hand of Gog and cause his arrows to fall to the ground. The Lord spoke simply of the leader of the hordes, but we are to understand that this prediction relates to all of his forces. The facts of the context demand this interpretation.

From verse 4 and 5 we learn that the slain multitude will simply be a prey of the ravenous birds and beasts of the field, since they lie unburied for along time upon the face of the ground.

We have already seen that by the catastrophic stroke of judgment which annihilates the forces of the invaders fire and brimstone fall from heaven upon them in the land of Israel. But in the 6th verse of this chapter we see that fire will reign upon Magog, the land of Gog—Russia. It will also come upon "them that dwell securely in the isles; and they shall know that I am Jehovah." A like situation existed when Sodom, Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain were destroyed. Thus it will be in the overthrow of the forces of Gog. The same kind of fire will fall upon the land of Gog and those countries that are embraced in the expression, "that dwell securely in the isles." What nations are referred to in this phrase, no one at the present time can tell. All who believe the revelation of God are convinced that this prediction will be fulfilled just as spoken.

We may be absolutely certain that the complete annihilation of the forces of the Northeastern confederacy together with the destruction of life and property throughout the land of Gog and those countries referred to in the prediction will produce chaos throughout the world. The destruction of the countries forming the Northeastern Confederacy will render those lands defenseless. For the Roman empire these helpless nations will form a most tempting prize, which its leaders cannot resist seizing. Since the fire will fall upon "them that are secure in the isles," these countries thus affected will also be thrown into chaos. From the vast extent of this judgment we can understand how this international disorder and desolation will be the order of the day. The situation will give a most excellent opportunity for the fourth beast of the visions of Daniel 7, which is Rome, to incorporate the entire world within her boundaries as set forth in Daniel 7:23:

"Thus he (the interpreting angel) said, The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces."

## II. THE REVIVAL IN ISRAEL

"And my holy name will I make known in the midst of my people Israel; neither will I suffer my holy name to be profaned any more: and the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, the Holy One in Israel. 8 Behold it cometh, and it shall be done, saith the Lord Jehovah; this is the day whereof I have spoken" (Ezek. 39:7, 8).

According to this prediction God makes His holy name known in the midst of His people Israel by this catastrophic judgment upon the various nations. Since this seems to be the object in view, it is quite likely that these strokes of wrath will fall upon those countries which are the centers of Jewish population. There are, at present, countries where Jews reside in large numbers. God thus intervenes in such a signal way that many of His Ancient People, regardless of where they are, recognize Him as Jehovah who revealed Himself to Israel at Sinai. He does this in order that they might again see the proof and evidence of His supreme power and Godhead.

The latter clause of verse 7 declares "Neither will I suffer my holy name to be profaned anymore: and the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel." In the first part of the verse the Lord declared that He will make Himself known to His people, but in the clause just quoted He asserts that He will see to it that His name is no longer profaned by them. To the casual reader it would appear as if the immediate result of this catastrophic judgment is the conversion of Israel, after which event God's name will

nevermore be profaned among them. We have already seen in a former chapter of this book that this pouring out of God's wrath upon the forces of Gog occurs *before the tribulation*—more than 7 years before Israel's conversion, which takes place at the very end of the tribulation. Since the Word of God never contradicts itself, we must understand this passage in the light of the facts which we have already learned. After the destruction of the forces of Gog, the revival in Israel begins and finally culminates with the conversion of the nation seven or more years later.

God declared to Abraham that in him and in his seed He would bless all nations. The Lord created the Hebrew people to be His special channel for bringing His blessing to the entire world. That He did create Israel for His glory may be seen in Isaiah 43:1-7. Since she has forsaken Him she can never function in this capacity until she is brought back into fellowship with Him. The Lord never abandons any of His fore-announced plans or purposes. It is clearly stated that it is His intention to bless all the world through saved Israel, which thing He will do.

The conversion of the Chosen People is not a spectacular event caused suddenly by the revelation of the Lord Jesus at the conclusion of the tribulation. On the contrary, it is brought about by three, distinct steps or forward movements and it is primarily the result of the proclamation of the Gospel. It is the good pleasure of God to save those who believe by the preaching of the Word. "For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21). God has committed unto men the message of reconciliation.

"But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (II Cor. 5:18,19).

The Scripture declares that, "Whosoever believeth on Him (Christ) shall not be put to shame." Faith cometh by hearing the message of the cross. God is using men, and not angels, to proclaim the Gospel. Hear what the Apostle Paul said on this point:

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 and how shall they preach except they be sent? Even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom. 10:14,15).

From these and many other passages we see that God saves men by the preaching of the Word. Israel is no exception to this general rule.

The three stages of the revival in Israel and her ultimate conversion may be stated as follows: first, the revival which begins in connection with the overthrow of the forces of Gog in Palestine before the tribulation; second, the world-wide revival which will be conducted by the 144,000 Jewish evangelists in the first part of the great tribulation as is set forth in Revelation 7; and third, the conversion of Israel—the entire nation living at that time—at the end of the day of wrath.

In the verses under consideration, Ezekiel 39:7,8, the prophet refers to the beginning of this revival in Israel which culminates in the conversion of the race. This first stage is doubtless that which was spoken of by Joel in 2:28-31. In order that this might be understood properly, one must note that in verses 21-27 there is a clear prediction of the conversion of Israel and the establishment of the Kingdom upon the earth when Jehovah in the person of Messiah will dwell in the midst of the Chosen People. In the first clause of verse 28 of this passage we have these words, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." From the preceding verses we see that the pouring out of the Spirit of God upon all flesh—all nations—is preceded by the conversion of Israel. After that is an accomplished fact, then comes the conversion of the world.

Following this quotation we have these words, "And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions ... the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah cometh." The conjunction rendered "and" at the beginning of this last quotation not only means "and," but also means "but." In hundreds of instances it is thus rendered because the facts of the context demand such a translation. Since the first clause of verse 28 is looking at the conversion of the world after Israel's turning to God, and since the revival spoken of in the quotation introduced by the conjunction "and" is linked with the mighty miracles in the heavens and upon the earth, which occur before the tribulation, we must understand that the revival likewise occurs at the same time—before the tribulation. In view of these facts a perfectly grammatical rendering of this Hebrew conjunction is "but." The verses should read as follows:

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; but your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: 29 and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. 30 And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood,

and fire, and pillars of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah cometh" (Joel 2:28-31).\*

In the first clause of this quotation we see a prediction of the conversion of the world after Israel's turning to God. The second clause of verse 28, beginning with these words, "but your sons and your daughters," constitutes a contrast with the first statement. The revival in Israel which is here mentioned is inseparably connected with the miracles which occur before the great and terrible day of Jehovah. We are of the firm conviction that we may expect this turning to God on the part of many Hebrews before the beginning of the great tribulation.

When Joel's prophecy is laid beside that of Ezekiel's especially the verses under consideration, and is read in the light of the context, it becomes highly probable that Joel is speaking of the same phenomena, not only in the physical realm, but also in the spiritual sphere as was foretold by Ezekiel.

The second phase of this revival in Israel is beautifully set forth in Revelation 7. Some other matters, which constitute the background of this mighty spiritual awakening, must be studied first. According to the teaching of the New Testament, the church of the Lord Jesus—the aggregate of the born again ones—will be taken out of the world prior to the great tribulation. This occurs when Jesus descends from heaven to the air and raises the dead in Christ (I Thess. 4:13-18). All saints, regardless of circumstances, will be taken out of the world at that time. Paul set forth this truth in I Corinthians 15:51,52. When God begins to send His judgments upon the world, the inhabitants thereof learn righteousness. This fact is seen in Isaiah 26:8,9. At the beginning of the tribulation, there will arise a mighty army of 144,000 Jewish servants (evangelists) to whom we who see Israel's place in the plan of God are now giving forth His Word before the rapture, but who, because of the present blindness (II Cor. 3:12-16), do not accept the Lord now. The message in the light of the falling judgments will enable them to see the truth and to accept Christ as their Saviour. They will most enthusiastically take up the banner of Prince Immanuel, which is dropped by the ascending Church,

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\* On the day of Pentecost Peter quoted this passage and applied it to the coming of the Spirit upon the apostles on that occasion. This event was but a partial fulfillment of the prophecy. This position is evident from the fact none of the phenomena in the physical realm mentioned by Joel occurred that day. The prophet's statement affirms that all of these things will come to pass "before the great and terrible day of Jehovah," which is the tribulation period. The events on Pentecost, therefore, were but a partial fulfillment of the prediction. We may expect it to materialize at the time foretold.

and will go forth into every nook and corner of the world proclaiming the glad tidings through Jesus Christ and His shed blood. The result of this mighty evangelistic campaign will be the conversion of multiplied hundreds of thousands of people from every nation, tribe, tongue, and language. That this is the world-wide revival to which reference is frequently made may be found in the writings of the different prophets. It will sweep the world; myriads will be brought to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. During this period of intensive proclamation of the Word every person throughout the world will have an opportunity of either accepting or rejecting the truth.

In the middle of the tribulation the world dictator with all his forces will endeavor to stamp out Christianity. He will wage a terrific fight—a war of extermination—demanding that all worship him as the one and only god. Notwithstanding his might and power, this revival, like a smoldering fire, will continue through the latter half of the tribulation and will burst forth, figuratively speaking, into a mighty spiritual conflagration, which will bring about the conversion of all Israel at the end of the tribulation.

The third and last stage of the revival in Israel is, as suggested, at the conclusion of the great tribulation. The nation of Israel at that time will have learned the facts with reference to the Lord Jesus Christ and His atoning death. Thereupon they will make the confession concerning the tragedy of Calvary as was foretold by Isaiah in chapter 53:1-9. One must recognize that these verses are the penitential oral confession which the nation of Israel in the year 1940 plus will make when she looks back toward Calvary, seeing for the first time the real significance of the crucifixion. At that time all Israel will repudiate the national sin and will accept the Lord Jesus Christ personally as Saviour. When "they acknowledge their offense," the Messiah will arise from His seat at the right hand of the majesty on High and will return, delivering the Chosen People from all their enemies.

The last three days of the great tribulation will indeed be momentous for them as well as for the entire world. The first of these is the one on which the national sin is repudiated, and an official and public recognition of Jesus as the Hebrew Messiah and Saviour is made. During that day and the following one the Jewish people will lie prostrate before God in genuine repentance for the tragedy of Calvary 1900 years ago. At the end of that second day God will pour out upon them His Spirit who will revive them—the nation will then be born in a day. The next—the third day—Messiah will rend the heavens and return. For all these facts, see the following quotation from Hosea 5:14-6:3:

"For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will carry off, and there shall be none to deliver. 15 I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me earnestly.

**6** Come, and let us return unto Jehovah; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. 2 After two days will he revive us: on the third day, he will raise us up, and we shall live before him. 3 And let us know, let us follow on to know Jehovah: his going forth is sure as the morning; and he will come unto us as the rain, as the latter rain that watereth the earth."

Thus at the end of the tribulation the whole nation of Israel will be converted. When she thus comes to a knowledge of the truth and is converted, the Lord's name will no longer be profaned among His Chosen People. Through saved Israel all nations will at that time learn that Jehovah is God and the Holy One of Israel. At that time all peoples will come to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### III. THE WEAPONS USED

"And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall make fires of the weapons and burn them, both the shields and bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall make fires of them seven years; 10 so that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall make fires of the weapons; and they shall plunder those that plundered them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord Jehovah" (Ezek. 39:9,10).

Some Bible students have, upon the authority of this passage, come to the conclusion that the arms which are now used in modern warfare will be abandoned in the future and that there will be a reversion to the use of primitive weapons. From this angle, therefore, these verses are interpreted as literally meaning the return to the old shield and buckler, bows and arrows, spears, etc. In support of this proposition our attention is called to the reported fact that certain rays have been discovered which will melt airplane engines or will cause them to cease functioning. For years wild rumors to the effect that such inventions are already a reality have been making the rounds. It is reported that certain of the European nations possess such instruments of death.

It has been very difficult for me to accept these weird fantastic stories. My reasons for doubt on this point are based upon the fact that the nations which are supposed to have made these discoveries have with all speed been increasing their air fleets propelled by the regular motors. To me it was preposterous to think that they would continue to go to the enormous expense

of building such aircraft if they had discovered rays which would render such weapons obsolete.

It appears to me that if such instruments of death were in existence, they would be used at the present time in the European conflict. The history of war has shown that for every new invention of offensive warfare there has been created a defensive one to counteract it. At this present time there does not seem to be any likelihood of the discovery of new forces which will render all the modern equipment of war obsolete and cause the nations to return to primitive weapons.

Those advocating the position under consideration insist that this passage must be taken at its face value, and that we must believe in the return to primitive methods of warfare. Let us examine this position more carefully.

When one speaks to another, he must use terms with which the latter is familiar. In an effort to impart knowledge concerning something that is novel or strange, one must either use familiar terms which are known to both speaker and hearer, or he must by comparison express his ideas. Even then such analogies must be within the realm of the knowledge of the listener. In view of this principle it becomes very evident that Ezekiel had to speak of the future weapons of warfare in terms of those with which his auditors were familiar. Had he spoken of airplanes or machine guns, he would have had to speak of them in known terms, comparing them with familiar objects, or the Lord would have had to coin names for them, which still would have been unintelligible. This He did not choose to do.

Possibly we may get some light on this subject by examining Isaiah 2:1-4.

"The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2 And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. 3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. 4 And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."

The prophet looked forward to the time of the coming of the Lord when he will cause all wars to cease. There will, therefore, be no need for weapons of warfare. But there will be a great demand for implements of agriculture. Hence Isaiah said that men will beat their swords into plowshares and their

spears into pruning-hooks. Are we to infer from his statement that the processes of manufacturing agricultural implements will be abandoned and that a primitive method of beating the metal into the shape desired will be adopted? Such a thought is preposterous. In the millennium, of which the passage speaks, there will be no occasion for a reversion to primitive methods of manufacturing objects.<sup>1</sup> To interpret this language literally and thus to infer that the methods of manufacturing implements of agriculture now employed will be laid aside and the primitive process of shaping by beating will be adopted is to reduce this sublime prophecy to an utter absurdity. The plain sense, therefore, of the wording of the passage makes nonsense. Hence we must accept that interpretation which will accord with all the facts known, not only of this context, but also of the general sweep of Scripture. Since one must use the language understood by those addressed, we must believe that Isaiah was speaking of the cessation of war and of converting the materials that had been employed in the manufacture of weapons into agricultural implements, putting his message into terms that his audience comprehended. In the same way we must understand Ezekiel to be employing his terms relating to weapons of warfare.

This conclusion is likewise confirmed by a careful study of Joel 2:3-11. When this paragraph is studied carefully, it is absolutely certain that the prophet was speaking of a modern mechanized army, such as is used at the present time or may be developed by military science and engineers.

At the time of the final restoration of Israel to the land of her fathers, dirigibles and aeroplanes will be in use, because Isaiah foretold this fact. "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?" (Isa. 60:8). The prophet saw the children of Israel flying as a cloud and as a dove. The flying is literal. For the reason stated above, and others that might be given, I am of the firm conviction that one must take the language of Ezekiel as referring to the weapons that will be used in the future but he expressed his thought in terms with which his audience was familiar. In my opinion there is, therefore, no reference to, nor authority for, one's interpreting this passage as a prediction that there will be a return to the use of primitive weapons.

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<sup>1</sup> It is altogether possible that the primitive peoples who enter the kingdom will still use the methods of shaping utensils and implements with which they and their ancestors have been acquainted. Later they will accept the methods and processes which they learn under Christ's benign reign. Since this prediction is speaking of all nations and since we know that those who do practically all the warring in the end of time use the latest methods of manufacturing goods, the argument above is absolutely true.

#### IV. THE BURIAL OF THE SLAIN

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place for burial in Israel, the valley of them that pass through on the east of the sea; and it shall stop them that pass through: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude; and they shall call it The valley of Hamon-gog. 12 And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying them, that they may cleanse the land. 13 Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown in the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord Jehovah. 14 And they shall set apart men of continual employment, that shall pass through the land, and, with them that pass through, those that bury them that remain upon the face of the land, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. 15 And they that pass through the land shall pass through; and when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog. 16 And Hamonah shall be the name of a city. Thus shall they cleanse the land" (Ezek. 39:11-16).

According to this paragraph certain men will be employed continually for seven months going throughout the length and breadth of the land in search of corpses or bones of the slain. Whenever one is found a stake is to be driven beside it, indicating the location of a skeleton. These will be buried in the place that will be called "Hamon-gog." This will be done in order to cleanse the land ceremonially from defilement of a dead body. The orthodox Jews who are strict on this point will see that this is done.

In great contrast with this gathering up of the bodies and the bones of the fallen of Ezekiel's prophecy is the prediction found in Jeremiah 25, which foretells the destruction of the kingdom of the world and the slaying of the wicked throughout the entire earth at the close of the day of Jehovah. Those who are slain will not be gathered for burial; on the contrary, they will lie upon the face of the earth and become fertilizer. On this point hear what the prophet says:

"Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great tempest shall be raised up from the uttermost parts of the earth. 33 And the slain of Jehovah shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the face of the ground" (Jer. 25:32,33).

The treatment of the slain in the two instances differentiates them most clearly. The passage in Jeremiah is unmistakably talking about the time when Jehovah shall come at the end of the tribulation. Ezekiel's prophecy, therefore, could not possibly refer to the same thing as does Jeremiah's prediction, for in the case of the former slain are denied interment whereas those of Ezekiel's prophecy are hastily buried.

## V. JEHOVAH'S GREAT SACRIFICE

"And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Speak unto the birds of every sort, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh and drink blood. 18 Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. 19 And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. 20 And ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord Jehovah" (Ezek. 39:17-20).

When God's stroke of judgment annihilates the invading hosts of Gog in the land of Israel, He will invite the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the fields to come and literally to eat the flesh of the slain. This has been done in the past and will be repeated at the time of the great day of God, at the end of the tribulation. On this point read Revelation 19:17,18.

"And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid heaven, Come *and* be gathered together unto the great supper of God; 18 that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit thereon, and the flesh of all men both free and bond, and small and great."

## VI. The Glory of Jehovah Among the Nations

"And I will set my glory among the nations; and all the nations shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. 22 So the house of Israel shall know that I am Jehovah their God from that day and forward. 23 And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against me, and I hid my face from them: so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they fell all of them by the sword. 24 According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions did I unto them; and I hid my face from them" (Ezek. 39:21-24).

The Shekinah of Glory dwelt in the midst of Israel. The horizon of Ezekiel's prophecy, in great contrast with former ideas, embraces the entire world. Thus it is said that God will set His glory among the nations. In the light of these facts it is evident that he was speaking of the time that the glory of God shall encircle the earth as the waters cover the sea, when Messiah shall reign in Jerusalem in glory and administer a righteous government. Zephaniah was given the privilege of seeing the same vision as foretold in the following passage:

"Sing, O daughter of Zion; O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem 15 Jehovah hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even Jehovah, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not fear evil any more. 16 In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; O Zion, let not thy hands be slack. 17 Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. 3:14-17).

God will set His glory among the nations by sending Christ back to earth to reign over the world. Then not only Israel, but also all nations of the world will understand fully God's past dealings with the Jews in His punishing them because of their sins and in His scattering them among the nations because of their having rejected Messiah. Furthermore, all will acknowledge that God was righteous and just in His dealing thus with His Chosen People.

## VII. THE MANNER OF CONVERSION OF ISRAEL

"Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Now will I bring back the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for my holy name. 26 And they shall bear their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they shall dwell securely in their land, and none shall make them afraid; 27 when I have brought them back from the peoples, and gathered them out of their enemies lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations. 28 And they shall know that I am Jehovah their God, in that I caused them to go into captivity among the nations, and have gathered them unto their own land; and I will leave none of them any more there; 29 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 Jehovah" (Ezek. 39:25-29).

In the preceding section we got a glimpse of the glorious Millennial Age which will be ushered in, as we have already seen, when Israel repudiates her national sin, accepts the Messiah as her Redeemer, and pleads for Him to return. After giving us the vision of this glorious era, the prophet, in the paragraph quoted at the beginning of this section, foretells that God will gather the whole house of Israel and resettle His people in the land of their fathers. This regathering, of course, is completed after God has purged out all the wicked, punishing them for their transgressions and for their sins.

When Israel is thus converted and restored to her own land, then God will never again hide His face from His chosen beloved people.

They will then become the channel of blessing to the world. Israel then will be a holy race, a royal priesthood. She will be recognized as the ministers of our God.

"And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. 5 And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and foreigners shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. 6 But ye shall be named the priests of Jehovah; men shall call you the ministers of our God; ye shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. 7 Instead of your shame *ye shall have* double; and instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess double; everlasting joy shall be unto them" (Isa. 61:4-7).

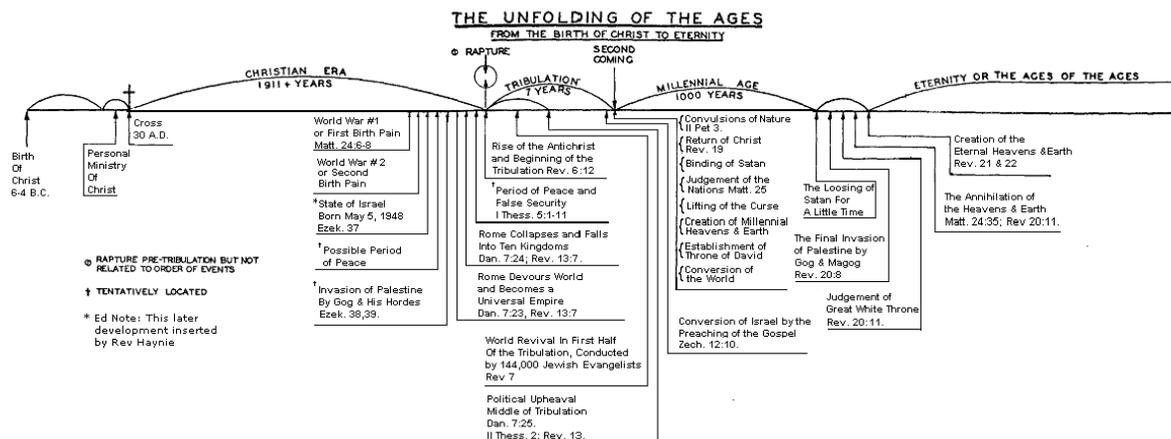
In view of the position to which God called Israel in His "purpose of the ages," it behooves the people of God today to do all they can in spreading the

Gospel among these future ministers of our God. To this end, may the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of all mercies, grant to each reader of this book, a clearer vision of the future, especially of Israel's place in His plan.

May He give each of us grace and strength to work for Him during the yet remaining short time. The Lord be with each one, and His richest blessings rest and abide with all.

## CHAPTER V

## THE UNFOLDING OF THE AGES FROM THE BIRTH OF CHRIST TO ETERNITY



Eternity is divided into three sections: "In the beginning," "Time," and "the ages of the ages." Time, that part of eternity during which the material universe is in existence [for there was a portion of eternity which antedated the creation of the universe (Gen. 1:1) and the time will come when all things physical shall pass away (Matt. 24:35; Rev. 20:11)] is likewise subdivided into prehistoric and historic times. Historic times close with the completion of the millennial reign of Christ. The accompanying chart begins with the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, as can be seen by a glance at it, and covers the personal ministry of Jesus, the Christian Dispensation, the Tribulation, and Christ's reign of a thousand years, which is followed by the ages of the ages of the future.

Having in the preceding chapters determined, by the help of the Lord, the most probable time when the prediction of Ezekiel 38:1-39:16 will be fulfilled—before the Tribulation Period—we shall do well if we relate this momentous event in our thinking to other events of the end time. An accurate idea of the sequence of events of the last days of this age throws a most luminous light upon the times in which we are living.

On opposite page the reader will find a chart entitled, "The unfolding of the Ages from the Birth of Christ to Eternity," which diagram will enable him to see the probable order of events of the end time. Of course, in this short discussion only a few points can be mentioned.

The reader should notice that on the chart there are seven arrows which precede the beginning of the Tribulation Period. [Editor's note: an additional arrow has been added indicating the transforming event of the establishment of the commonwealth of Israel.] Each of these is bent. Upon the horizontal portion of each is given the designation of the event indicated by the arrow. The reader should always bear in mind that I am not dogmatic in thus presenting this sequence of events—although I have arrived at this conclusion after years of hard study and research.

Prior to the first World War, I realized that the event was coming because it was foretold in Matthew 24 and parallel passages. During that conflict I was confident that it would stop, and that it would be followed by a period of peace. Of course I did not know anything as to its length. Yet I knew that there would inevitably be another world war.

If the reader will look at the horizontal portion of the third arrow, he will see these words, "possible period of peace." The sign to the left of this phrase indicates that this period of peace is tentatively located. Since it is bound up with the invasion of Palestine mentioned by Ezekiel in 38 and 39, I will for the moment pass over a discussion of this point to the next one. There we see the prediction of an invasion of Palestine by the forces of Gog and those allied with him. We have already learned in the preceding chapters that this aggressive action, taken by the Powers designated as the Great Northern Confederacy, is, from all the facts of the case, found to occur before the Tribulation. Since it is preceded by a period of peace as indicated in Ezekiel 38—Israel will be dwelling in her own land in unwalled cities and villages securely—it is most likely that at the conclusion of this war there will be a short period of peace. If Satan cannot stir up one nation to cause trouble, he will use another. He will bring forth his man and his associates at the proper time as set forth in the Scriptures. When Palestine is thus invaded and seized, the Lord will destroy all those forces and will at the same time rain down fire upon all them that dwell securely in the isles (nations of earth). With the annihilation of the forces of the Great Northeastern Confederacy and with the general judgments of God raining down upon earth on all of them that dwell securely in the isles of the seas, there can be but one result, universal chaos, not only in the material physical realm, but also in the political sphere. There will be a collapse, in all probability, of practically all civil power and authority at that time.

Such universal wreckage and disorder will pave the way for Satan to bring forth his man and to establish a world kingdom upon the ruins of the former nations. This must be, because men of God have said that it would be. Thus the probability is that there will emerge out of the chaos of the world at this

future time a world empire. It will appear very suddenly and will disappear about as quickly, collapsing and falling into ten separate divisions, over each of which there will arise a king who will seize authority and establish his government therein. The rise of this universal empire upon the ruins of the wrecked world is indicated by the fifth arrow of the series. Its collapse and division into ten kingdoms is likewise shown by the sixth arrow.

According to the inspired Apostle Paul there will be a period of peace in which men will be lulled to sleep with a false security. This era of a fool's paradise will doubtless be a result of the assurance which the man of sin, the Antichrist, will give to the world when he arises after the coming up of the ten kings. According to the Scriptures these kings will yield to him complete authority and power. The Antichrist will be of such a character that he will convince the world that he alone can establish a permanent peace and mete out justice to all. His words will appear so very plausible and appealing that his promises will not be questioned for one second. The world will therefore be talking about "peace and safety." At that time, according to I Thessalonians 5:1-11, the Tribulation, will burst forth upon an unsuspecting world. In this passage it is called the "day of the Lord"—an Old Testament name for it.

When the Antichrist thus arises and makes his covenant with the apostate remnant of Israel in Palestine, according to Daniel 9:27, the Tribulation will begin and will continue for seven years. The Lord has seen fit to give us full details concerning it; although we Christians who are now living will not enter it, because the Lord has promised to save us out of it. God has not appointed us unto it, but promises that we shall be saved from it (I Thess. 5:9).

Evidently the Lord wanted us to know about this period of judgment, for He has devoted Revelation 6-19 to a detailed description of it. It behooves the faithful Christian to study carefully and prayerfully the entire Book of Revelation. Time devoted to a perusal of this portion of the Word is by no means spent in vain.

During the first half of the Tribulation, as we have already seen in the preceding chapter, the world's greatest revival will take place. The evangelists will be the 144,000 men—Jews—to whom we are now giving the Gospel but who do not accept Christ upon receiving it. They will, however, embrace the truth and receive Christ after the church is removed from the world and the judgments of God begin to fall upon the earth. These witnesses who will have been given the truth by those now interested in the Jewish people will step forward and will proclaim the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ throughout the world. They will thus bring about the mightiest of all revivals (Rev. 7).

At the end of the Tribulation the remnant surviving to that time will be evangelized and will accept Jesus as Lord and Messiah. When they do that and plead for His return, He will do so. When this occurs, He will introduce His reign of righteousness upon the earth.

As indicated on the chart, when Jesus comes, there will be many mighty and far-reaching events taking place. These are listed on the arrow which points to the second coming of Christ. All of these events will be world transforming. Christ will, having mounted His throne in Jerusalem, reign upon the earth for a thousand years. This will be the reign of which the prophets and the psalmists sang constantly.

At the end of the Millennial Age Satan will be unloosed from his imprisonment in the pit. At that time he will stir up people in the four corners of the earth who will go up against the Lord Jesus Christ in Jerusalem in an attempt to intimidate Him. When they do this, fire will come down out of heaven and consume them.

Following this event will be the judgment of the great white throne before which all the lost appear—those who have never accepted the Lord Jesus Christ and been regenerated. They will be consigned to their place of everlasting punishment. (For a discussion of everlasting punishment, see the study, "Eternity or the Plan of the Ages," in *The World's Greatest Library Graphically Illustrated*.)

At the judgment of the great white throne the present material universe will pass out of existence in fulfillment of our Lord's prediction found in Matthew 24:35 and John's statement in Revelation 20:11.

The Lord will then create the eternal heavens and the eternal earth which will be the fulfillment of the prediction found in Revelation 21 and 22.

Thus with this little pictorial representation, we can see the place where the invasion of Palestine by the forces of Gog and his associates comes—before the Tribulation.