

Ye are My Witnesses

"O children of Israel, you only have I known of all the families of the earth."

To people who are *prepared to think*, the Jew is a subject of endless marvel. In so many aspects of his life and circumstances and history, he is unique among men.

By the term "Jew," we refer to the whole Hebrew race from its beginning. Some may question the accuracy of this application, arguing that "Jew" is a late name and applies only to Judah, but we use it in the same inclusive sense that Jesus did when he said,

"SALVATION IS OF THE JEWS" (John 4:22).

And as Paul did when he said,

"What advantage hath the Jew? Much every way, because unto them were committed the oracles of God" (Rom. 3:1).

The Scriptures speak of mankind as falling into two broad classes—Jew and Gentile. See Rom. 1:16; 2:9.

SUPERNATURAL ELEMENTS

We would like to look at many strange and wonderful things concerning the Jews—things which should convince anyone that there is a large element of the supernatural in their history; that the Jews are, as God has said, His witnesses among men (Isa. 43:10)—witnesses that He *is* God, that *He* is controlling the affairs of men, that He is true, faithful and righteous, a God of judgment, *and that He has a great purpose with the earth and man.*

The Jews have never been permitted to be like other people. From the very beginning, they were picked out by God and were faced with the choice between supreme blessing or supreme suffering. Unfortunately, all through their long history, they have chosen the latter. God said to them, through the prophet, Amos—

"O children of Israel, you only have I known of all the families of the earth" (Amos 3:2).

In Deut. 32, at the time the Jews were about to enter the Promised Land, 3500 years ago, it is recorded, v. 8:

"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of children of Israel" (Dt. 32).

The nations of the earth were distributed at the beginning according to God's foreseen purpose with the Jews. And in Deut. 7:6, Moses declares to the nation of Israel—

"For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God. The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth" (Deut. 7:6).

For 1000 years, God pleaded with them—through His prophets—to obey Him and receive His love and blessing. Then He carried them all away captive into Babylon, and desolated the land. Seventy years later He opened the way for all who desired to return. Immediately again they turned aside to evil.

He bore with them 500 years more, finally sending His Son, whom they killed. Then God brought down His fury upon them to the uttermost, destroying all their cities and scattering them throughout the earth. That was 2000 years ago, and that has been their condition ever since.

The Jews have always been in the forefront of attention, both of God and of man. The very circumstances of their birth as a nation—their deliverance from Egyptian bondage under Moses—were deliberately arranged by God that, as He declares—

"My Name might be declared throughout all the earth" (Ex. 9:16).

And Paul tells us that all the things that have happened to them were for *examples and lessons* to all the rest of mankind.

DIVINE PATIENCE—AND DIVINE JUDGMENT

Just a few moments reflection will bring to mind many well-known respects in which the Jews are unique among mankind. For 2000 years they have wandered homeless, everywhere persecuted and despised, but *never losing their identity*. The Jew is literally *everywhere*. In any town of any size, he will be found—a separate, marked man. Generally speaking, this is true throughout the whole world.

And though without any national unity for 2000 years, he always remains distinct—a strange, undissolvable ingredient in the great human melting-pot. If—under the spell of tolerance and prosperity—he begins to forget his separateness, as in Germany a generation or two ago, he is soon terribly reminded of it in lessons of blood and sword.

The Jews have been a separate people for 3500 years—*more than half of that time without a land or any of the factors that normally hold a people together*. The Jews were an ancient nation centuries before Greece and Rome had their earliest barbaric beginnings. The Jew can trace his story back into the remote past to the time of the almost legendary empires of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Babylonians and the Assyrians, who all disappeared long ages ago. The Jew, unchanging, has watched many civilizations rise and fall.

THE MAN

The man who has had an immeasurably greater effect on the history of the world than any other—the man about whom probably more has been written than of all other men together—the man who is the foundation of everything that is good and decent in modern civilization—was of the *Jewish race*. And, stranger still, this greatest of all Jews, though accepted (at least *nominally*) by the Gentile world, has always been bitterly rejected by the Jews.

THE BOOK

The book which has admittedly had more influence on the world than any other—the book that has consistently, year after year *for centuries*, remained the unchallenged best-seller, pouring forth endlessly in hundreds of millions of copies—is a *Jewish book*, taken over *without change* by the proud Christian world from the despised Jew.

With the decline in the recognized authority of the Bible during the past 100 years has come the decline of all standards of morality and decency and human relationships. This is not just a private opinion. George Washington said,

"It is IMPOSSIBLE to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible."

Pres. Grant said,

"To the influence of this book we are indebted for ALL the progress made in TRUE CIVILIZATION."

And Pres. Wilson said,

"A man has deprived himself of the best there is in the world who has deprived himself of this."

These are not quoted as authorities, but simply to show how even men of the world recognize the uniqueness of this *Jewish* book.

THE LAW

T. H. Huxley, the noted evolutionist partner of Darwin, admitted (and he was simply stating a provable fact):

"DOWN TO MODERN TIMES, no State has had a constitution which the interests of the people are so largely taken into account as in DEUTERONOMY and LEVITICUS."

How did it happen that the Jews were thousands of years in advance in social legislation? Moses declared,

"What nation is there that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this Law?" (Deut. 4:8).

Huxley continues,

"NOWHERE is the fundamental truth that the welfare of the State in the long run depends upon the RIGHTEOUSNESS of the citizen so strongly laid down AS IN THIS LAW.

THE LESSON

And, it may be added, nowhere is that truth *more tragically demonstrated* than in the history of this unhappy people! The Bible gives an unvarnished picture of prolonged pleading by God and prolonged wickedness by Israel, until at last they were all cast out from His presence into the long night of misery that only now, just begins to brighten into dawn. Yet *still* they guard and cherish (though they do not study and obey) this Book that condemns and exposes them.

And during all their wandering, they have dreamed of returning to Palestine, but have had to watch for 2000 weary years while that land gradually—through abuse and neglect—sank to barrenness and desolation.

THE BIBLE TRUE—THE KINGDOM SURE

Our desire is to use the Jew to prove two things:

1. The divine, infallible truth of the Bible, and
2. That God will establish a universal kingdom of righteousness on earth.

All we have said or will say is solely with these two things in mind. As we shall see, the remarkable facts concerning the Jew's with which everyone is familiar *have been in the prophetic*

record from this people's earliest beginnings—undeniable evidence of God's foreknowledge and power.

And—on the second item—Palestine and the Jewish people are great, FACTUAL links that bind the coming Kingdom of God and Age of Righteousness firmly to the earth in its future glorified state. They are inescapable, literal facts, and the prophecies concerning them, when fairly examined, will be seen to be inescapably literal.

And there is a third great lesson in the background that we cannot fail to see. Surely it must impress us indelibly as we contemplate this people. That is—*how sad and foolish it is to reject God's favor and provoke His anger!*

Let us then turn to the Scriptures to see how God's Word concerning the Jews has been so marvellously fulfilled, and to see what still lies in store. There are 7 heads into which the matter we desire to treat conveniently falls:

1. THE PRESERVED, CONDEMNING WITNESS OF THE WORD

It is prophesied that the Word of God, entrusted to the Jews, *would endure for ever*, and that the Jews would preserve these records as a witness for God and against themselves.

(We shall quote from the *Jews' own modern version*, put out by the Jewish Publication Society of America. It can easily be followed in the Auth. Ver., from which it varies very little.)

In Deut. 31 it is recorded that, as their first great God-given leader Moses was about to die, God said through him (vs. 19-26):

"Write ye this Song for you and teach thou it the children of Israel. Put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for Me against the children of Israel.

"It shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are come upon them, that this Song shall testify before them as a witness, for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouth of their seed.

"Take this Book of the Law, and put it by the side of the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee" (Deut. 31:19, 21, 26).

Today, *3500 years later*, the Jews still jealously preserve this Book of the Law, with this song. It is regularly read to the people in the synagogues.

2. CONTINUAL WICKEDNESS: FORETOLD AND RECORDED

The second item is their continual wickedness. We desire to draw attention to it from two points of view. First, as a matter of fulfilled prophecy, for this was written from the very beginning of their history; and second, the remarkable fact that—*unlike any other people*—the national records of the Jews are one continuous catalogue of national condemnation, explaining in the most humiliating terms the reasons for their long degradation. Moses continues in this chapter (Deut. 31:29, still from the Jewish version):

"For I KNOW that after my death ye will deal corruptly and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you, and evil WILL befall you in the end of days, because ye will do that which is evil in the sight of the Lord."

And in the Song of Witness referred to here and recorded in the next chapter (Deut. 32), we find,

"A generation crooked and perverse. Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? For they are a nation void of counsel, and there is no understanding in them. If they were wise they would understand this—they would discern their latter end.

"Their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter.

"Their wine is the venom of serpents, and the cruel poison of asps" (Deut. 32:5, 6, 28, 29, 32, 33).

For 3500 years they have preserved, as their *greatest national treasure*, a book that constantly speaks of their wickedness, abominations and rebellions. Time and time again, it warns them of the misery that would be sure to befall them if they did not repent. Wherever we turn in all their Scriptures, the testimony is the same. The prophet Jeremiah, 800 years after Moses, records—

"Since the day that your fathers come forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, though I have sent unto you all My servants the prophets, yet they hearkened not unto Me, nor inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff" (Jer. 7:25,26).

And chapter 32, vs. 30-31:

their "For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil in My sight from youth. This city hath been unto Me a provocation of Mine anger and of My fury from the day that they built it even to this day."

And God through Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets, 200 years later, says (Mal. 3:7, 9):

"From the days of your fathers ye have turned aside from Mine ordinances and have not kept them. Ye are cursed with the curse, yet ye rob Me, even this whole nation."

The 106th Psalm, and Neh. 9, are samples of the way their long history of evil is documented in their national records. But—if we read any *modern* Jewish newspapers, or any *secular* history of the Jews by a Jew, we find it the same as any other national history—self-defence, self-pity and self-glorification. *The Bible is obviously not a human production.*

3. THE EXPECTED, REJECTED MESSIAH-PRINCE

All through the Scriptures is woven the expectation that some day a great deliverer would arise to save the Jews from all their troubles and enemies, and rule them in peace and glory.

See Gen. 49:10; Psalms. 72; Isa. 9:6; 11:1; 21:1; 42:1-7; 49:6-9; 52:13; Eze. 21:27; 37:22; Mic. 5:2-5; Zech. 3:8; 6:12-13; 9:9-10.

And yet all through there is the strange parallel foreshadowing that when this long-expected Savior should come *they would REJECT HIM AS AN IMPOSTER*. How could they fail to understand the 53rd chapter of Isaiah?—

"He was despised and we esteemed him not. We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted" (Isa. 53:3-4).

The context of this and the previous chapter makes it clear that it is the great promised Deliverer that is the subject—see Isa. 52:13 to 53:12. There are several similar references which, when put together and compared with the life of Jesus Christ, give marvellous evidence of divine foreknowledge. Some are shadowy and figurative, but many are crystal-clear—

the stone the builders rejected made chief cornerstone (Ps. 118);
the stone of stumbling to both houses of Israel (Isa. 8:14);
the exalted servant abhorred by the nation (Isa. 49:7);
the bruising of the woman's seed by the serpent power (Gen. 3);
the treacherous betrayal by the trusted friend (Ps. 41:9);

the smiting of the shepherd and scattering the sheep (Zech. 13);
 the smiting of the Judge of Israel on the cheek (Mic. 5:1;
 the abuse detailed in Isa. 50:6;
 the reproach, gall and vinegar of Psa. 69:19-21;
 the detailed crucifixion picture of Psa. 22, referred to by Christ as he hung upon the cross (see vs. 1, 6-8, 14-18);
 his soul's (body's) deliverance from hell (sheol-grave) in Ps. 16;
 God's deliverance of him from the strivings of his own people (2 Sam. 22:44);
 the prophecy that, at their final regathering, they shall look on him whom they pierced, and mourn (Zech. 12:10);
 the atonement for sin, CUTTING OFF THE MESSIAH, destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple—all associated in Dan. 9:24-26, where the VERY DATE is given in a symbol whose meaning is simple and obvious;

Is there any other explanation than that their own Scriptures give?

"Make the ears of this people heavy and shut their eyes lest, seeing and hearing, they return and be healed" (Isa. 6:10—See Matt. 13:13-4).

—*divinely inflicted blindness* because of long devotion to evil.

4. SCATTERED, DESPISED AND ABUSED

The fourth item of fulfilled prophecy is that they should be scattered into all nations and be everywhere persecuted and despised. We have seen how Moses told them they would be continually disobedient and bring great punishment on themselves. In Deut. 28 he tells them in much detail what that punishment would be. A few sample verses, still from the Jewish version:

"The Lord shall scatter thee among all peoples, from one end of the earth, even unto the other end of the earth . . .

"And among these nations shalt thou have no repose, and there shall be no rest for the sole of thy foot, but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart.

"And thou shalt grope at noonday, and thou shalt not make thy ways prosperous, and thou shalt be only oppressed and robbed alway, and there shall be none to save thee.

"Thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all the people whither the Lord shall lead thee away" (Deut. 28:64, 65; v. 29; v. 37).

Remember—that is a *3500-year-old extract from their own records*. It would be practically impossible to completely catalogue the vast range of cruel, inhuman regulations that have been inflicted down through the ages upon this unhappy people by the Gentiles.

They have been treated and regarded for centuries as something entirely different from all mankind. A host of crushing taxes, restrictions on where they could live, their travel (even over the shortest of distances), their possessions, their occupations, their marriages, their religious ceremonies, whom they could employ, their dress with its compulsory yellow badge—in short, every aspect of their existence has been hampered and twisted *by nations who considered themselves "Christians."*

Every possible contrivance has been devised to degrade and harass them. There is hardly a nation (and this even includes England) that has not—at one time or another—ruthlessly expelled them from its borders. For centuries they had no political rights, no protection or redress at law. Within the last 20 years we have witnessed one more gruesome chapter being added to this terrible story that has been going on for 2000 years, *in fulfilment of prophecy*—see also Deut. 4:27; Lev. 26:33; Jer. 9:16; Eze. 12:15; Luke 21:24; Amos 9:4.

5. UTTER DESOLATION IN THE LAND

The fifth item is the remarkable prophecy that Palestine, this once goodliest and fairest of all lands—highly fertile and well-wooded—was to become utterly barren and desolate. The Scriptures give us a picture of bed-rock desolation that only centuries of deliberate abuse could accomplish. In Lev. 26:32, God says:

"I will bring the land into desolation, and your enemies that dwell therein shall be astonished at it" (Lev. 26:32).

Such a state of desolation that *even the enemies* who had been a party to it should be astonished at it! In answer to *how long* the divinely inflicted judicial blindness of the Jewish nation should last, Isaiah records (6:11-12):

"Until the cities be waste without inhabitant, and houses without man, and the land become utterly waste, and the Lord have removed men far away, and the forsaken places be many in the midst of the land."

The U.S. Govt. soil expert, Walter Lowdermilk, recently wrote,

"The decline of Palestine began with the first Arab invasion during the 7th century. However, several centuries were to elapse before the state of UTTER DESOLATION was reached.

"The decay of Palestine reached its darkest stage in the 400 years of Turkish rule, 1517-1918. About 1850, the condition of the land reached its lowest ebb."

6. NEVER TO BE DESTROYED

Throughout all their long scattering and continual persecution, the Jews were never to be destroyed, but would always remain distinct as a nation. In Jer. 30:11, God said to them—

"Though I make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee, YET WILL I NOT MAKE A FULL END OF THEE" (Jer. 30:11—Auth. Ver., at this point favors the Jew).

The strong, united victors, dwelling in their own lands, were one by one to pass away—the weak, scattered victims were to perpetually remain. What a reversal of all probabilities! But that is *just what has happened!* Peoples and empires have disappeared, but the Jew goes on unchanged. He has now nearly completed his *fourth 1000 years*, and he is as strong, active and distinct as ever. (Also Jer. 31:35-6; Amos 9:8).

7. FINALLY REGATHERED TO THEIR LAND

The Jew is finally to be regathered to his own land. Eze. 37:21,

"Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations whither they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and will bring them into their own land. I will set My sanctuary in the midst of them for EVERMORE" (Eze. 37:21, 26).

And in Jeremiah 31:10-12—

"He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock. And they shall not sorrow ANY MORE."

It will be seen from the context in both cases that these prophecies have never yet been fulfilled. Now, if it was highly improbable that this one particular nation—or even any nation—should be taken from its own land and scattered throughout the whole world; if it was much *more* improbable that so scattered and separated, they would remain one distinct people; then how

superlatively improbable is the fulfilment of this third prophecy that some day—after ages of homeless wandering—they should *at last return home!*

"NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM!"

Every year for 2000 years the Jews throughout the world have—on the solemn Passover night—raised their hands together in the prayer, "*Next year in Jerusalem!*" The world has long since accustomed itself with callous indifference to this wandering people and their pitiful, age-old dream. And now, after 2000 hopeless years, within our own generation, *before our very eyes*, the strangest chapter of all begins to unfold. The long-locked doors of their ancient home have mysteriously swung open to them, and they have gradually begun to flow back. Could we ask for a more magnificent manifestation of God's limitless power and knowledge?

FIFTY YEARS AGO—HERZL'S "HOPELESS" DREAM

Fifty years ago, as many readers will remember, there were but a few Jews scattered throughout the land, living in poverty and in subjection to the grinding despotism of the Turk.

Before me is a magazine, "The Christadelphian," dated *April, 1896*—57 years ago. It speaks of a young Jew named Theodor Herzl who had just startled and amused the world with the publication of a wild dream about establishing a modern Jewish state in the old, barren, desolate land of Palestine. Herzl said:

"We are One People. We have honestly striven everywhere to merge ourselves in the social life of surrounding communities—it has not been permitted us. In countries where we have lived for centuries we are still cried down as strangers.

"I am introducing no new idea. On the contrary, it is a very old one. And therein lies its power. It is as old as the people which never—even in the time of bitterest calamity—ceased to cherish it. This is the restoration of the Jewish State.

"It is remarkable that we Jews should have dreamt this kingly dream all through the long night of our history. WE SHALL LIVE AT LAST, AS FREE MEN, ON OUR OWN SOIL!"

And he adds, significantly—

"I know full well that I am laying myself open to derision. It will be said that our enterprise is hopeless."

100 YEARS AGO—THE PROPHETIC BEACON DISCERNED

Before me is also another magazine, dated June, 1852—*101 years ago*—nearly 50 years before Herzl's "hopeless" dream. It is a Christadelphian publication entitled "The Herald of the Kingdom and the Age to Come." Therein the editor, John Thomas, on the basis of a study of Bible prophecy, says:

"Before Messiah returns there MUST BE a lifting up of an ensign upon the mountains of Judea. There MUST BE a resettlement of the land by the Jews to a limited extent before the battle of Armageddon, for it is the prosperity of the Jewish Colony that whets the avarice of the Autocrat.

"It will be a sure and certain sign of the speedy appearing of the Son of Man in power and glory. No one need expect that appearing to be manifested until a Jewish Colony be lifted up "as an ensign upon a hill."

And in the September issue of the same year (1852), he says:

"There will be a pre-adventual limited colonization of the country by Jews, under the protectorate of Britain. The prosperity of this colony, together with the desire to cripple or subvert the British power in the east, will be the cause of the country's invasion by the Russian "Clay," styled Gog, etc., by Ezekiel. I CONSIDER THAT THIS COLONIZATION IS GOING ON WHILE RUSSIA IS ENGAGED IN THE CONQUEST OF THE WEST. "However the colonization be brought about, it will be the sign of the time indicative of the speedy coming (of Christ). There are signs that the practiced eye can already see; but THAT will be a sign which—if men were not stone-blind—NO ONE COULD FAIL TO DISCERN ARIGHT."

That was written 101 years ago, when Palestine was at its lowest ebb of desolation. Today there are ONE AND A HALF MILLION active and enthusiastic Jews in the new State of Israel. A nation that has been politically dead for 2000 years has sprung to life.

Do we realize the tremendous significance of what is happening, or are we among those who must be classed—in the words of our brother Thomas 100 years ago—as "stone-blind"?

BUT FAR MORE IS INVOLVED YET

The *present* gathering is by no means an adequate fulfilment of the *prophesied* great and final assembly of Israel. It is simply the decreed sign that the time for that gathering is at hand. There is *far, far more* to the events attending the latter-day gathering than what we have seen happening so far.

And this is really the heart of our subject. This is way we are so interested in the Jew and his affairs. Let us glance at a few prophecies of this latter-day gathering of Israel, and our meaning will soon become very clear. For instance, in Jer. 23:5-8, we find:

"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and A KING SHALL REIGN AND PROSPER, AND SHALL EXECUTE JUDGMENT AND JUSTICE IN THE EARTH. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely . . . They shall dwell in their own land."

CHRIST'S RETURN AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT

We know this has not happened yet. And we know it *cannot* happen without Christ, for Ezekiel—at the same time as Jeremiah was prophesying—said the throne of David would *remain overturned* "until *he* come whose right it is" (Eze. 21:27).

Apart from the great scope and the specific details of these prophecies, which rule out anything in the past as the fulfilment, we have this stone-wall that they *cannot be fulfilled* before or without the royal and triumphant coming of the great Messiah-Deliverer to rule the earth. Isaiah is filled with prophecies of this glorious time, of which chapter 11 is a good sample,

"And there shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse (Jesse was the father of David—this is another prophecy of Christ on David's throne). With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and REPROVE WITH EQUITY FOR THE MEEK OF THE EARTH . . .

"The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord . . .

"In that day the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people . . . He shall assemble the outcasts of Israel and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isa. 11:1, 4, 9, 11, 12).

LITERAL ISRAEL, AND THE KINGDOM WORLDWIDE

Two things will be noted:

1. We cannot escape the fact that this speaks of literal Israel.
2. It is associated with a WORLDWIDE reign of righteousness.

Zechariah is another who has much to say about this time,

"I will save My people from the east country and the west country, and I will bring them and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem . .

"Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord.

"Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, In those days it shall come to pass that 10 men shall take hold out of all nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we heard that God is with you" (Zech. 8:7,8,22,23).

And in the next chapter (Zech. 9:9-10):

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; Behold, thy King cometh unto thee . . . The battle bow shall be cut off and he shall speak peace to the nations.

"His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth."

Such testimonies could be multiplied many-fold, for this is the glorious message of all the prophets. Note the inseparable connection between the gathering of Israel and the world-wide kingdom of peace in the following prophecies: Isa. 2:1-4; Psa. 47:4-9; Isa. 60:9-14; Eze. 39-21-27, see 38:23; Psa. 102:13-16, 88; Mic. 4:1-8.

THE REASON: GOD'S GLORY AND PURPOSE

There is one point which should be mentioned, as it is another strong factor in pinning down the *literalness* of the gathering of the *literal* Jews, and also it will answer an obvious question arising out of their age-old disobedience to God:

"Thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, BUT FOR MY HOLY NAME which ye have profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them.

"And the nations shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.

"For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land" (Eze. 36:22-24; from the Jews' own version).

That is the reason that God will gather them—to further *His* purpose, demonstrate *His* power, and manifest *His* glory (Psa. 106:8; Rev. 4:11). Ezekiel explains in chap. 20 how the Jews must pass through a terrible latter-day purging and sifting before God can use them.

THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF THE AGES

God's overall purpose is to develop an eternal, holy people for His Name and glory, one by one, individually. His use of Israel as a *nation* is subordinate to this purpose. *Nationally* He uses them as witnesses and instruments to accomplish His ends. His coming 1000-year kingdom on earth over the mortal nations, in which the Jewish nation will have a leading part, is still carrying forward His eternal purpose of individually selecting and developing a holy people.

When the appointed time comes, God will bring peace and blessing and the true knowledge of Himself to the earth through the instrument of the regathered Jews. In Romans 11, Paul says

"If the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?"

"If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?

"And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom. 11:12, 15, 26).

Both their scattering and their regathering are parts of the plan. Paul reasons that if God in His infinite wisdom has brought salvation and hope to Gentiles out of the Jews' disobedience and rejection of their Messiah, how much greater and broader a scope of blessing He will bring out of the promised regathering and Kingdom Age!

THE LONG NIGHT OF GENTILE TIMES

In Luke 21:24, Jesus said, when asked what lay in the future for the Jewish people:

"And they (the Jews) shall fall by the edge of the sword and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).

He is referring to the destruction of the city and temple foretold by Daniel as following the cutting off of the Messiah. It is clear from this that there was to be a long time of waiting—a time during which Jerusalem was to be trodden under the Gentile heel—a period referred to as the "times of the Gentiles."

As long as those times last, there can be no blessing of the nations through Jerusalem—no worldwide divine kingdom of righteousness and peace—and no salvation for God's people, either the watching living or the sleeping dead; for the testimony is that Christ will raise, judge and reward the dead when he comes to set up his kingdom on the earth. We are told, I Tim. 4:1:

"Jesus Christ shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom" (1 Tim. 4:1).

And he himself says, regarding the reward in store for his faithful saints,

"He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 2:26, 27).

That is the part we hope to have in the coming age—the inheritance of the kingdom and ruling the world in righteousness with Christ (Matt. 25:31-34; Luke 14:14). Therefore we rejoice to see the long down-treading of Jerusalem by the Gentile coming to an end, and the long-scattered people beginning to assemble, as the closing scene of the Gentile period begins to take shape—that is, the events leading up to the destruction of the invading hosts of Russia on the mountains of Israel, followed by Christ's subduing of the whole earth, as foretold by Ezekiel, Daniel, Micah, Joel, Zechariah, etc.

Let us, while time remains, heed the great witness that God has given—through the Jews—of Himself, His purposes and His requirements. They are, as Isaiah says (12:2), a people terrible from their beginning hitherto. Never an ordinary people like others, but terrible—strange, marvellous—in their times of favor, and terrible in their times of punishment.

To them were entrusted, for all the world, the priceless treasure of the oracles of God. And from this people God raised up the Savior of all mankind. Jesus said (John 4:22):

"SALVATION IS OF THE JEWS."

Working through this people, God has placed eternal salvation within our reach. He invites us to believe the glorious Gospel of His coming Kingdom on earth (Rom. 1:16; Gal. 1:8-9; Matt. 24:14);

to be baptized into that One True Faith (Matt. 28:19; Gal. 3:27-29; John 3:5; 1 Pet. 3:21); and henceforth to devote our entire lives to His service and glory (Rom. 12:1; Eph. 3:2, 17, 23; 1 Tim. 4:15; Matt. 6:19-34).

To the few from among men who do, there will be a great and endless recompense of reward.

—G.V.G.
