

No.

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"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS
WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE
RIGHT HAND OF GOD." COL. 3. 1.

THE PRESENT CRISIS
IN THE LIGHT OF THE PROPHETIC SCRIPTURES.

An Address (revised) at

61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate,

10th August, 1914.

by

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T H E P R E S E N T C R I S I S

I N T H E L I G H T O F T H E P R O P H E T I C S C R I P T U R E S .

An Address by Mr. P. W. Heward,
At 61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate,
Mon., 10th August, 1914.

Zeph. 3. 8-20 and Luke 21. 25-36, read.

It is impossible, beloved friends, to say all one would say. I do hope that, if anything is not clear, on some future occasion there will be an opportunity to make it more clear, for it is so blessed to be brought to oneness of mind as to the things of God. At the outset I want to say several things in which I feel sure those whom the Lord has drawn together, and who know His grace, will already be of one mind. First, in the words of the Book of Daniel, God has His way in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou? When Nebuchadnezzar was humbled that was Nebuchadnezzar's cry, and it needs continual emphasis, for our glorious God says, My counsel SHALL stand, and I will do all My pleasure. Behind the tangle, behind the confusion, there is a Living God with a fixed purpose. In the words of another Scripture, Our God is in the heavens. We may look around, and we may feel perplexed, but God is never perplexed. We may look around, and say, What will happen next? But He declares the end from the beginning. It is a joyful restfulness which God gives His people - to be able to fall back upon Omnipotence and perfect wisdom, and to feel God will exalt HIMSELF. The wrath of man SHALL praise Him, the remainder of wrath will He restrain. We need to realise, furthermore, at the outset that Scripture is given as a Lamp unto our feet, and a light to our path. A lamp must be in front of us, if it is to give us light. A lamp 20 miles off is of no avail to us, and the expressions that are used of Scripture as

a Lamp, imply that it is not simply a light like the sun in the firmament, but a Lamp to be in our hands. A lamp ~~is~~ to be near to us, a lamp to be personally valued by us. Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet. I wonder how many of us can say this is our DAILY EXPERIENCE:- that we want Scripture for everything. I think I am right in drawing the inference from what I know of a fair number of God's dear people that they feel they must have God's own guidance in every action of life. Ah, you say, the Bible is so short. It depends how you read it. Many who would tell us that the Bible is short and contains very little to guide them, have never read it through, though it is so short. But those who by the grace of God know what it is to expect God's leading through Scripture will find that every page of it is a book, that every command has hundreds of suggestions. It is surprising, and I believe every intelligent believer can bear witness to this, - it is surprising how God sometimes brings a most unlikely Scripture, as men would count it, to guide, when there is a little problem in the mind, so that some of the verses which the critic would say are unnecessary are JUST the verses to lead, in a circumstance as remote as possible from the circumstance for which they were first written. A word comes in front of a believer in this passage, or that passage, and he says, God's guidance is here for me. May I illustrate what I mean from personal experience? Where God has given to us a name for any day of the week, "the first day", or "the Lord's day", I feel a conscientious responsibility to employ that name. Consequently, except where it would not be understood, I personally should feel a believer was unwise in using the UNscriptural term "Sunday". God has given us two names for the day, why should we put them on one side, and adopt a third? But how about the other days of the week? They are NOT specially marked out by names. The names that we employ in English are sadly suggestive of the worship of idols. I suppose a goodly number of Christians, have at some time in their experience, felt,

"I do not want even to mention the name of idols more than I am compelled". That wonderful Psalm, the 16th, bears a testimony in this connection, and a believer may feel, Is it right to speak of Monday and Tuesday? God has not given us special names for these days. Shall we simply characterise them numerically, or shall we call them by their ordinary name? I recollect some time ago how there came in front of me the word that is used for part of the work of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. We read of "interpretation". Now that word "interpretation" is a word taken, in the original Scripture, from the name of a heathen idol. Of necessity, with a certain contrast, but it is nevertheless taken from the name of a heathen idol, and I well recollect how this fact brought before me a certain guidance in this matter, that where God has not given a name we may use the ordinary words, - although, I believe, we should feel in our hearts far more often than we do, the sad fact that idolatry is even entwined in the ancient names of the days of the week. But yet we may use the words, since Scripture itself has adopted words that are derived from the names of idols. Now a little point of this character may seem small, but when a believer is exercised before God, he wants something from God to guide him, and nothing else will do, and every brief verse and every word of Scripture has a wealth of instruction for thousands of possible, and almost seemingly impossible, circumstances. No man could have fore-written such a book. If a believer is in doubt upon this matter, let him cast himself upon the Lord, let him refuse to be guided by customs, and opinions, and when perplexity comes, let him depend on God to teach through the Scriptures. Some Scripture will surely apply, and apply with force, and that force will indeed be a blessed experience of the working of the Holy Spirit, Who NEVER works against Scripture, although, alas, oftentimes many seem to conceive that it is so. At least, their actions imply this.

We come, therefore, to God's Book for guidance as to our attitude to-day, as to our attitude amid this sad war, and confusion, which our All-wise God has permitted. But before we consider

particularly our attitude, we have to ask the question, Has Scripture referred to the present circumstances and affairs? The question is easily asked, but to answer it we must turn over the pages of God's precious Book. In these matters, let us never consider time wasted in the rustling of the leaves of the Bible. Oh, beloved friends, if this war is regarded by many as a war of life and death for nations, let our consideration of the Scripture concerning this war, and THAT TO WHICH IT WILL LEAD, be a matter of the most intense and earnest study. Some who are present with us will, I know, readily agree that Scripture does not prophesy chronology particularly with respect to the present dispensation. We have chronology with regard to many of the events of days gone by, but we do not have special chronology as to the whole period during which God is taking out of all nations a people for Himself. In Dan. 9, we have the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and then after the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the resultant fall of Jerusalem 40 years later, we do not have a mention of years or of periods until just at the end of this dispensation when the Lord is about to set up the kingdom, chronology comes in once more. The present period is one largely separated from chronology. It is the period to which the Lord Jesus Christ referred in connection with its beginning when He said, Upon this Rock (meaning Himself) I will build My church. It is the period inaugurated at the Day of Pentecost and will terminate with the coming in glory of our blessed Lord and Saviour. The believer is kept, I will not say in suspense, but with holy expectation throughout that period, and I venture to say that there is never any time during the period in which believers are told NOT to expect the coming of their Lord during their lifetime. Throughout the whole of this present age believers are instructed to live in the position to which 1 Thess. 4 refers, - WE which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord. THAT is to be the continual attitude. Moreover, if anyone is to expect to die,

this is so unusual that we find in two cases, the Lord specially told the individual he WOULD die. I refer to the case of Peter and to the case of Paul, the prophecy made to Peter in John 21, and to Paul in 2 Tim. 4. The normal condition of a believer in the present time is to be looking for that Blessed Hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. The normal condition? Alas, is it normal? I do not mean that we are to ask ourselves the question, Do believers SAY they are looking for the Coming of the Lord? Rather, ARE they looking? There is too much hypocrisy with us all. We often state how we believe this, or we believe that, when the belief affects our life very little. A head belief is a dangerous thing to an unsaved man, and a head belief is also a dangerous thing to a child of God. There is a real need that we should be affected by everything which our heart believes. Do we live in the expectation, the quiet, calm, enjoyable expectation that the Lord Jesus Christ will return in our lifetime? If not, there is something wrong with our experience. One description of those without Christ is "The nations that forget God". When the Lord Jesus left this world He said to His disciples, "This do with a view to My remembrance" and we may be sure that in so saying He knew that even His loved people would have bad memories. Beloved friends, we need a continual reminder, - not only a feeling we ought to remember, but a feeling we do remember, - the Lord in the glory and His soon-return. But though chronology is not particularly dealing with the middle of this dispensation, and though the return of the Lord Jesus Christ is never to be beyond the period of a generation, yet there are certain prophecies as to the present dispensation which it is incumbent upon believers to weigh. Scripture makes evident what the signs of the last days will include. There will be a vast amount of pleasure loving. Pleasure loving even among nominal and professing Christians, - this is being illustrated day after day. Oh that God's dear people might be exercised in heart to afford a CONTRAST with this; not that I mean children of

God should be doleful. "In Thy presence is fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore". And if we are made near to God by the blood of His dear Son, and know what it is to be accepted in the Beloved, we are the only people in the world who have a real RIGHT to joy, and that Joy is a joy which no man or power of the evil one can take from us, for the joy is above all the changing circumstances of life. It is above all the storms, it is a joy above the sun, and therefore FAR beyond the clouds, which come across this earthly scene. This joy is because of the anchored hope within the veil, whither our Forerunner is for us entered, as the pledge that many sons shall be brought into glory, and that none of them shall fail with regard to an eternally secured inheritance.. Another sign of the last days, marked out in Dan. 12, is that many will run to and fro and knowledge will be increased. Scripture does not say that wisdom is increased at the present time, but knowledge, Dan. 12. 4. Please distinguish wisdom and knowledge. Verse 10 of the same chapter says, Many shall be purified and made white and tried, but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the WISE shall understand. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Many have plenty of knowledge at the present time, and yet despise the Lord. Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased I suppose, though the passage goes much further, it indicates the locomotion, which is such a sign of the last days. It is not surprising, moreover, when we are told how the VERY last days will show the special power of Satan, that in these years that lead up to them we find a special stress on the air, for not only in the Book of Job do we find Satan specially working in the AIR, but his name in Eph. 2. 2, is "The prince of the power of the AIR". I take it, therefore, we can infer from the stress on the work of Satan that there will be in these last days a far greater use of the air, to carry out man's civilisation than has hitherto been the case. A word about civilisation ere we leave this topic. Civilisation is usually exalted, but is civilisation of God? Is civilisation

on the lines of God's will at the present time? I think if we read the Scripture carefully we shall see that man's boast in civilisation is prophesied in Scripture linked with great commercial aggrandizement, but associated with the climax of evil, and with the proud glorying of self-satisfied man. The book of Ecclesiastes records that there is nothing new under the sun, that one generation goes and another follows in its place, and that men introduce fresh things and imagine they are fresh, but there are things of days gone by which were as wonderful, and men have forgotten these things. Past years are buried from the memory and man always thinks he has something fresh. Have you not had this experience in minature in your own lives? I know I have. I have thought I have found out something fresh I did not know before, and have discovered that I knew it before, and had forgotten it, And the history of the world is oftentimes the history of a forgetful child. We boast of our greatness, and in MEASURE knowledge is increased, but with all men's greatness there is often the advancing in the circle which comes back to the same place again; and how can we expect that civilisation will tend to the glory of God when we are distinctly told the end of this age will be, that when the Son of man cometh He will not find ^{THE} faith on the earth, and that Satan is ^A THE GOD OF THIS AGE who is honoured and exalted by men?

With these thoughts in mind we come to glance back on past history. History has wonderful lessons. We see the rising up of empires and the falling down of empires. Kingdoms wax and wane, the things of earth are unstable, there is no dependence on man. Egypt exalts itself, and Egypt falls. Assyria rises, only to be swept back again in the course of Events. Babylon takes the sovereignty of the world by God's permission. The first great WORLD power, for it is noteworthy that the times of the Gentiles are associated with the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's dominion. It is notable that at the beginning of Dan. 1 we have a special stress on the time when God took the sovereignty from Israel and gave it to Nebuchadnezzar, and as soon as Nebuchadnezzar was the ?

conqueror of JERUSALEM the four great world powers of which Dan. 2 and Dan 7, speak, began. Now that gives to us some idea of the great stress which God has placed upon the history of Israel. Assyria's power was mighty, but Assyria is not one of the four world powers. The first is Nebuchadnezzar, "THOU art this head λ $\frac{2}{3}$ of gold" is the Divinely-given interpretation. Why is it that Assyria's greatness is not counted in that vision brought before the king, or in the vision subsequently brought before the prophet?

Why is it that Assyria's greatness is not to the front? Because Assyria did not conquer Jerusalem. It is true there was a victory over some of the tribes, but we remember how outside Jerusalem God showed Himself the Mighty One and nigh two hundred thousand of Sennacherib's soldiers were laid low by the Almighty God. And therefore the history of world powers begins with Babylon. But Babylon's glory was short-lived. In 70 years it was set on one side, the Mediantook the kingdom, and the Persian power was united with it, and became still more prominent, and yet the Persian power lasted for a period between one and two hundred years. I say a period BETWEEN one or two hundred years, for I think considerable doubt must be cast upon the usual chronology of the Persian empire. That is deeply important, for it at once affects all year-day theories which seek to introduce a period of 2520 years, or 7 times 360, (360 being a prophetic period) - 7 times 360 from the year 606. If 606 before Christ came, was not 606, if the Persian empire has been wrongly lengthened by later writers, then there is strong evidence that the theories which assume 606 as the starting point whether for 1260 or for 2520 must themselves falter. It is deeply important to notice this. The evidence is largely affected by the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther; it may be, later on, God will give us an opportunity of considering these together. I am not now, speaking at length of the year-day THEORY. Personally I feel there must be a tremendous stress on the last word, the word "theory". I believe when God speaks of days, He means days, though there are doubtless parallels and illustrations with regard to years and

periods, for God's work in nature and God's work in history is of one marvellous piece, and in one perfect order. If there is arrangement in Scripture, (and there is), - if there is arrangement in nature, there is also arrangement in history, for that which looks to us the rising up of man and the laying low of man is overruled by our God, Nothing is before the time, and nothing is too late, and this gives a quiet confidence to the child of God, in the words of Prov. 1, Whoso hearkeneth to Me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil. Returning to history and noticing Dan. 2, we find that which was future then but is past now. The vision which the king saw was of a mighty man. The glory of earthly kingdoms was thus depicted. The brief summary of it in the interpretation is found from verse 36 onward. Verse 37 says, Thou, O king, art a king of kings, Yes, Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold. (The last words of verse 38). After this shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee. Historically the Medo-Persian empire followed, and another third kingdom of (brass). The brass or copper kingdom following the Medo-Persian was plainly the Grecian power of Alexander, which is more fully described in the later chapters of Daniel, and described so wonderfully that many give an undesigned testimony to Scripture, when they say it must have been after the event. A very excellent testimonial to the truthfulness and fulness and the clearness of the prophecy. Then we are told in verse 40, the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things, and as iron that breaketh all these shall it break in pieces and bruise. Here we have the fourth or Roman power which laid low the Grecian. By Grecian, I need hardly say, I do not mean the district which is round the land which we now call Greece, but the Macedonian Empire which swallowed and controlled the complete Persian power, and extended its sway under the short-lived Alexander. Here then we have brought before us four empires, Every one of them had control of JERUSALEM, therefore they are world powers. We read at the beginning of our meeting Zeph. 3, which

shows how God links all history with Israel. Israel were of old God's chosen people, and He s all yet choose them again, and the references to Israel occupy a tremendous portion of the prophetic Scriptures, and if we leave Israel out of our reckoning, we leave that which God has placed prominently in His reckoning, and we cannot understand what God has declared unless we acknowledge when He says "Jerusalem shall be a praise in the earth", that He does not mean the heavenly Jerusalem, but that He means what He says, **JERUSALEM SHALL BE A PRAISE IN THE EARTH**. So we have these **FOUR**, and four on world powers. The only four world powers which had dominion as to Jerusalem, and all of them were very definitely linked with it. It cannot be said that at the present time there is any great world power which has sway over Jerusalem, consequently certain changes of affairs **MUST** take place in connection with the bringing into prominence of the power that finally has its authority over Jerusalem. But we notice that the fourth kingdom is described as being longer than the others, inasmuch as the legs of the image portray it. Strong as iron, it begins with tremendous force to break everything and the iron yoke of Rome is here aptly set forth. I need hardly say that those who object to the prophetic Scriptures because they are so exact, and who declare they must have been written afterwards, have a very strange dilemma. The prophetic Scriptures always give particulars which go on beyond the period when even the critics say they were written. Hence they would be compelled to make the book of Daniel written in the 20th century if they wanted it to come after **ALL** the events that it so graphically describes. Thus there is no loophole. The particulars here given show the Master hand of the Almighty God, and the believer can well rest content, rejoicing in the Scriptures in which no proved contradiction can be found. Many may fail to understand, man may fail to translate, but if we go back to the original language which God used, it will defeat all its enemies, and show how vain and foolish are the changing theories of changing men. But we notice that the legs of the image terminate in the toes. The toes are part of potter's clay, and part of iron. The kingdom

shall be divided, but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. Verse 43 still further explains this, showing without controversy the rise of democratic government. Here is the mixing of iron of the Roman power with the clay of the people, which is being illustrated continually in the growth of socialism in varied lands and by the surprising changes which are suddenly found in such nations as China and Portugal, to name those which are far distant, the one from the other. The tendency of the days is to illustrate that which is here brought in front of us, and to illustrate it very exactly, and Scripture marks out that whereas the iron will not disappear, yet there will be a large amount of clay in the toes of the feet: - but if the toes of the feet are proportionately to a great extent of clay, the whole image is rather insecure. It is not FINISHED till the toes, part of iron and part of clay, are reached. God has set forth the dominions of the different kingdoms, but you will notice there is no kingdom after the Roman, because when the Lord Jesus came at the time of the Roman kingdom, He desired to make clear how after that, after His death, believers were to live expecting, not another dominion, and another lengthy period, but to live expecting Him in their lifetime, though willing, if it pleased Him, that they should be laid in the grave until the resurrection morning when the dead in Christ shall rise first. You will notice too we find that in the days of those kings, the toe-KINGS, (thus there will be SOME of the iron still remaining), in the days of those democratical kings, popularly chosen, or popularly limited kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people. It is plain that has not yet taken place. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, but we cannot say that the Gospel breaks in pieces and consumes all these kingdoms. Here we have brought before us a dominion over the earth, with tremendous sovereignty, marked out in the image by a stone cut out without hands, which smites the FEET of the image so that the whole

of this colossal image falls, and crumbles and becomes as chaff of the summer threshing floor. Scripture makes evident that the earlier sphere of Babylon, for instance, should still remain and be embraced in the later powers. You will see that the head is not destroyed TILL the feet are destroyed. The WHOLE is destroyed at once. This HAS taken place, as far as we have gone in the world's history. The Medo-Persian power absorbed the Babylonian, and extended it. The Grecian took the same sphere and the Roman at its widest extent grasped the same and enlarged it much. But the ten toes are part of the ROMAN power. If, therefore, the kingdom of mighty force, even God's kingdom, has not yet been set up, the days of these kings has not yet arrived. Then Scripture prophesies that there will soon be a tenfold kingdom of earth. Other Scriptures corroborate. Dan. 7 bears its witness. Therein we have another view of four powers, and be it noticed they are all around the GREAT Sea. Four wild beasts, says verse 3, come up from the sea, even the Great Sea (or the Mediterranean Sea) of verse 2. The first, the lion, is Babylon. The second, the bear, is the Medo-Persian empire. You will notice it raises itself on one side, one dominion is higher, as the margin puts it, for the PERSIAN Authority eclipsed the Median. The leopard that follows, with the four wings of a fowl, pictures Alexander's dramatic swiftness. The beast has four heads, four, the Kingdom of Alexander was divided at his death into four divisions. The FOURTH beast again is Rome, and this one is described at greater length, and we find at the end of verse 7, "And it had ten horns". Among these horns there rises up a little horn before which other horns are at first plucked up. This little horn is plainly the Antichrist of Rev. 13, and other Scriptures. There is no room for TWO such mighty kings at the end of this dispensation. Plainly this little horn is the one who wars against the Lord, is the king understanding dark sentences of Dan. 8, who rises against the Prince of princes, and as there is not room for two, we must draw the inference that this is the great personal Antichrist. Hence, we see that Antichrist will have ten kings associated with him. Revelation, though with

different figures, in both the 13th and 17th chapter bears a concurrent testimony. Thus all Scripture agrees, and no Scripture contradicts. But, beloved friends, mark how in this chapter we are distinctly told in verse 11 that this beast is slain, his body destroyed and given to the burning flame, but in verse 12, the rest of the beasts are not so destroyed. They have their dominion taken away, but their lives are prolonged. This coincides with the vision of the image, for the gold and the silver and the brass are not destroyed till the Roman power is destroyed on its feet. When Babylon was conquered, Babylon still remained a city, and this is evidence that Jer. 50 and 51, were not fulfilled when Babylon was overrun by the Medians. There are various prophecies which show that these wonderful words concerning Babylon MUST still have a future realisation, for example, we read that God will deal with Babylon in such a way that none shall dwell there, and that the building materials shall not be taken for other buildings. But the building materials of Babylon have formed cities and villages which cannot be counted, and there has always been a certain amount of dwelling on the site of ancient Babylon. To this day a village is there and at the time after the Median conquest there was a sufficiently important town for Alexander to approach it and think highly of it, as a central city. Babylon has never yet been destroyed as God said it would be destroyed, Consequently we must draw the inference that Babylon will be rebuilt, and THEN will be destroyed. Zech. 5 makes clear that commerce will be taken largely back to the east, and every confusion of European nations MUST TEND IN THIS DIRECTION. Zech. 5 gives the vision of an ephah, and the ephah is borne by two women having the wind in their wings to the land of Shinar, where it shall be established upon its own base. The land of Shinar is the land of Babylon, and the base there is the city of Babylon, and so we see Scripture prophesies that Babylon must be rebuilt, otherwise the words of God would not be fulfilled. (See also Rev. 18).

Passing on to Dan. 8, we find a parallel with part of

Dan. 7. Here we have two kingdoms, one of them, the ram, in verse 20, with the TWO horns describing the Medo-Persian Empire; the next, the rough goat, picturing the king of Grecia. The great horn between his eyes is Alexander, that horn being broken there are four kingdoms which stand up, namely, the kingdoms under the leaders associated with him, - Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy and Seleucus. So we have an exact fulfilment in history of all that is prophesied in Scripture, but mark the added words of verse 23, "And in the latter time of their kingdom when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance and understanding dark sentences shall stand up". "The latter time of their kingdom". Whose kingdom? The four kingdoms of verse 22, Where are they now? Has this been fulfilled? Scripture says, this mighty prince will stand up against the Prince of princes, THAT is future. Christ has not yet shown Himself as the Mighty Conqueror, but He will! He came the first time to die, He comes the second time to reign. If this, then, is future, the latter time of their kingdom is future. Consequently we have here four out of the ten toes of the image. Now these four kingdoms are in the EASTERN half of the Roman empire, that is to say, one of them included Egypt, another one includes part of the east of Europe, and the others are Asiatic. Four kingdoms, therefore, MUST have a latter time, four important kingdoms in that district, and the old divisions are to be brought up once more. Is this in accord with the tenor of Scripture? Yes. Jerusalem shall be REbuilt. Babylon, as we have seen, shall be REbuilt, upon her own base. A city often is not built upon its own base, Jericho was rebuilt some little way off from the old city. But Jerusalem is to be established on her own foundation as Jeremiah plainly tells us. Tyre is to become a prominent city in the future, and other cities are to be revived for we read just before the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, of the might of Edom, Moab and Ammon. So it is quite in accord with Scripture to expect that HISTORY WILL REPEAT ITSELF, and that these eastern powers must rise up. Consequently we are not surprised that there should be disturbances in the east. The recent war was associated

with this very district. It was near the place where Philip of Macedon rose into prominence, the father of Alexander the great. Further, one of these very kingdoms includes the Servia which is so associated with the apparent beginning of that solemn and tremendous war which surrounds us at the present time. Scripture has therefore marked out, how there must be a revival of kingdoms in the east, in the district round about Turkey, and Egypt and Servia. It is therefore in accord with Scripture and in accord with the nearing fulfilment of these Scriptures, to find turmoil and confusion THERE. I do not say those kingdoms have yet arisen, but these are just the stepping stones we should anticipate during this period of God's gracious forbearance that will lead up to those few years of tremendous climax. Do not be surprised when I speak of this mighty change taking place in a very brief period. I suppose one of the most remarkable things of the last fifty years is that people are becoming accustomed to rapidity. If a war begins, it assumes a colossal size, or has many unexpected surprises in it, with a suddenness, and everything in that nearing day of tremendous conflict will be with amazing suddenness. Everything around us, therefore, points the leading on to the prophesied arrangement of earth, though it is plain that these things are not yet being fulfilled, and therefore we CANNOT say that these Scriptures are NOW exactly illustrated in the crisis, but circumstances are so manifestly tending in that direction, that we feel more fully for what God's people should be looking, not simply for events, but for HIM Whose near coming is beyond all events, and Who is the joy and delight of their heart as well as of their mind. I have referred to Zech. 5 and Jer. 50, time forbids that I should ask you to look at them now, but I would commend them to the prayerful study of all who love the Lord, at home. Nor can we spend time on Christ's prophecies in Matt. 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, those prophecies which begin with declaring what would happen with respect to the siege of Jerusalem. Matthew distinctly says, These are the beginning of sorrows, and then there comes a long gap. Afterwards we have the time of the end, with the abomination

of desolation set up in the temple, - accordingly the temple must be rebuilt at Jerusalem, and there must be a sad covenant made by Israel, as Dan. 9. 27, shows, with Antichrist, the last great Roman emperor, who will, reviving the powers of Europe in the last days, set himself forward as greater than past Caesars, and rise up against the Prince of princes. Now it is remarkable that the same break is found in Luke. In Luke we have Jerusalem compassed with armies, and then Jerusalem is trodden down with the Gentiles, that is "A.D.70." Then we have a break, the passage goes quickly on to declare the last days with signs in the sun and moon and stars. Why this sudden break? Because in the interval God's people are taught to LIVE LOOKING for that Blessed Hope and the appearing of the glory of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ. But though we cannot turn to those passages we must just look at Dan. 11. In this we find a circumstantial account of certain Northern and Southern kings. Verse 2 introduces the passage speaking of the Persian kings that followed Cyrus, - Cambyses, Pseudo Smerdis, and Darius Hystaspes, and leading on to Xerxes who stirred up all against the realm of Grecia. Then we have a break in time and the mighty king of Grecia that has just been mentioned stands up, even Alexander, and his dominion is divided in verse 4. His children did not have it, nor did his generals have the same power as himself, but the king of the south, the family of the Ptolemies was strong, and then we have the description of the northern rulers, and the continual warfare between them. The king of the north is plainly a reference to the power of Seleucus and his successors and leads on to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes whose actions are so definitely marked in verse 21 and onwards. Then we find in verse 33 a very interesting prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ and of His people, "And they that understand among the people shall instruct many, yet they shall fall by the sword, by flame, by captivity, and by spoil; days." The 34th verse goes on to give a very sad view of the flattering attachment to nominal christianity of a large number. But there ever were and are still some who are persecuted for truth, and so the 35th verse

adds, "And of them of understanding they shall fall to try them, and to purge and to make them white to the time of the end". You will notice this cannot be a prophecy of the Maccabees, inasmuch as there is no thought of taking the sword, but simply a thought of instructing. Here then is the prophecy of the present period and it is not dated. Then suddenly there arrives before us in verse 36, **THE** king, not only a king, but **THE** king, even Antichrist who does according to his will, who speaks marvellous things against the God of gods. If all prophecies of glory point to Christ, almost all prophecies of evil lead up to Antichrist. Dan. 2 leads on toward the period of his dominion, Dan. 7 particularly mentions him, Dan. 8 shows him as the king understanding dark sentences, Dan. 9 describes him as the prince that shall come, and Dan. 11 finally brings him before us as **THE** king, **THE** king that does according to his will, who honours the god of forces, and is associated with the devil very definitely and very closely, as both Rev. 13 and Ezek. 28 make evident. Then we have the display of Antichrist's power in connection with the king of the south, (verse 40) It would appear therefore that Antichrist will have a certain opposition from this king of the south, but that he will overthrow the same. We have already seen in Dan. 7 that when he rises up he throws down three monarchs. It is not surprising he has further opposition but lays it low, and sweeps almost everything before him, until the last few days of his career, the climax of which will be found in his subjugation, yea his judgment, yea, his sending away from the presence of the Lord, when the Lord shall consume him with the Spirit of His mouth, and bring to nought with the brightness of His coming.

Now this Scripture bears its testimony quite **PARALLEL** with other passages. It shows the present time is one for believers to be men of understanding, to suffer and to wait, until He shall come Whose right it is to reign. As soon as we have the mention of Antichrist and of the setting aside of Antichrist, and the throwing down of Antichrist, Dan. 12 goes on to speak of the glorious first resurrection, as Rev. 20. The order is the same,

and there is always beyond the confusion, the looking for the glorious coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Beloved friends, I am persuaded that if we have met together that those who love the Name of the Lord may pray more and may look more for His return, our meeting together will not be in vain, that if we have seen how everything is tending toward a colossal civilisation, and a great advance of Eastern commerce, and a display of power in the eastern part of the ancient Roman empire, all these things will only cause us to turn aside from the tinsel of earth, and from the attractions of a short lived worldly popularity, that we may look unto Him, Who for the joy that was set Before Him received not a crown when He came the first time, but endured the cross despising the shame, and who has said that His disciples ~~shall~~ are not to be above their Teacher. It is enough that they should be as He was, rejected of men, and with Him outside the camp. Our position is not one of glory, our position is not one of greatness. If we suffer with Him we shall reign with Him, and our prospect is that if we are those who remain under now, He will not be unmindful when He returns, when His reward is with Him to give to every man according as his work shall be. The present state of affairs is plainly that which is *leading up to full democratic manifestations, it is that which is leading up to the development of eastern commerce with greater speed,* It is that which is centering itself around the district of Servia and Macedonia, the ancient Macedonia of Philip and Alexander, it is therefore a sign-post to believers that this age is not for ever, and that this day will not long continue. But we cannot, as newspapers are prone to do, describe the present conflict as Armageddon, there are future events to be reached ere that climax shall come to the front. Rev. 16 makes clear that Armageddon is in Palestine, and that it will be the gathering-place of Antichrist's forces for the final conflict which will extend ~~over~~ over a distance of 160 miles between Bozrah and Megiddo, throughout which there will be rivers of blood. Joel 3 shows how that a large number of nations will be gathered in the valley of Jehoshaphat outside Jerusalem, for Jerusalem is always

God's centre. He does not change His plan. Multitudes, Multitudes, will be in the valley of decision, and the day of the Lord will be near (as Joel words it), in the valley of decision. Ere the time will come when nations shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks there shall be the reverse. Plowshares shall be beaten into swords, and pruning hooks shall become spears, nation will lift up sword ~~against~~ and there will be the vain exaltation of man's greatness, - not only of nation against nation, but of all nations against the Lord of glory Himself. As we look upon all that surrounds us we see that present history is fast running its course; we see that God is fulfilling above all and behind all His perfect plan, we know that His clock is never late, we can leave everything with Him, and entering into the words of Psalm 112 we should be those who are not afraid of evil tidings, because our heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. Nor is it to be ours with the fearfulness of man to say "A confederacy", with those who say a confederacy. In the words of Isa. 8, Fear ye not their fear, nor be afraid: sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself, and let Him be your Fear. We are to turn aside from all earthly arrangements and all earthly schemes and plans, and casting ourselves upon the Judge of all the earth, Who has graciously become our Father, if so be that we have approached Him in our Lord Jesus. Casting ourselves upon Him we are to pray that His will may be done, and to look forward to the time when His kingdom shall have arrived, and when our beloved Lord Who was crucified at Jerusalem shall rule at Jerusalem before His ancients gloriously, and shall have dominion from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth. It is impossible to do more than touch upon a few points that one would like to consider more fully. I have no doubt that there are those present to whom even the suggestion of a revived Babylon seems strange. I have no doubt that some will think it surprising to indicate that Scripture has said there will be a revived Roman empire, but these things cannot be decided by a hurried negative. Search the Scriptures, beloved friends, and see whether these things are so.

I do not say the revived Roman Empire will be limited to the size of the ancient Roman empire. Every previous development has been marked by progress, geographical progress, I do not mean spiritual progress, and therefore the revived Roman empire may be wider, it may extend to certain nations which were not included before. Germany was WITHOUT the old Roman empire, although England was within, but WE cannot say the future limits. All that we can say is that God has marked out that four kingdoms of the eastern Roman empire shall be as they were after the death of Alexander. We can stand on ground that God has marked out with respect to this, but as to other things, we dare not prophesy. All that we can say is if God says no further kingdom before the Lord Jesus comes, there shall be no further great kingdom, and have Jerusalem till there are these ten kingdoms and Antichrist is the great world ruler, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself arrives to throw down the power of man which from its manifestation in the garden of Eden has ever been seeking to rival the power of God, ever been seeking to assert itself against God. "Ye shall be as gods", was the devil's offer then, and that man should forget God and do his own will is ever the human desire. Antichrist will be the world's darling, the world's attraction, the world's glory; and here is a call to believers who are found in all nations while praying reverently and earnestly for kings and for all that are in authority, to hold personally aloof from the strife of tongues, and from political conflict and confusion, that they may be those whose minds are quietly set upon their Coming Lord, Whose kingdom is not out from this world.

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