

CHAPTER III

The Millennium--Related Events

In connection with the inauguration of the Millennium, it is revealed that (1) a final personal Antichrist shall appear near the close of the present age who will become master of the world and will be destroyed by Christ at His coming, (2) a period of great tribulation for Israel is to transpire under Antichrist's oppression, from which deliverance will be provided by Christ at His coming, and (3) the closing days of the present age shall witness the restoration of Israel to the land and the conversion of the nation, to be followed in the Millennium by the fulfillment of the Old Testament covenant promises distinctive to that nation.

Before I write further, may I beg the indulgence of any of my brethren who may read this with some disappointment over what may be omitted from the list of things commonly believed among us. What of the Rapture of the church, the great Apostasy, the Seventieth Week of Daniel, etc.? Why in discussing events which are said to be connected with the inauguration of the Millennial reign of Christ are these not mentioned? Once more, attention is called to the purpose of this section of the book--to set forth the basic tenets of all orthodox Premillennialism with their general Biblical basis. To elucidate my own views on some of these things and then describe my views as essentials held by *all orthodox modern Premillennialists* would immediately bring upon me the unwanted charge of bigotry. W. G. Moorehead, C. A. Auberlen, S. P. Tregelles, Nathaniel West, A. J. Gordon, A. C. Gaebelien, H. A. Ironside, Robert Anderson, David C. Cooper, Edward Bickersteth, Joseph A. Seiss, and other of modern Premillennial writers, held in repute, disagreed on some details of these questions. To insist that some of these were true to essential Premillennialism while others were not is not mine to say. I think they all were sound in the faith and true to the basic teaching of the Scripture on eschatology. So at this point I am not treating some of these doctrines, deeming them not distinctive features of Premillennial eschatology.

Later in these pages I intend to show how the Premillennial system alone satisfactorily explains the Book of Daniel. In process of doing so I intend to take my stand on some of these questions--not as an arbiter of orthodoxy, but as an interpreter of Scripture. I shall explain what I think some plain, and some rather obscure, passages of Scripture have to say on these subjects. But, at the same time, I will not deny the possibility that some others who take contrary views, and yet maintain the essential framework, are quite as true to Premillennialism as I. Of course, I will not think they are as accurate in their interpretations as I; otherwise I would join them.

Now, to address attention to our threefold final proposition, consider first, that

(1) A final personal Antichrist shall appear near the close of the present age who will become master of the world and will be destroyed by

Christ at His coming.

This particular proposition will not require extensive treatment--not because there is any paucity of Biblical material on the subject; indeed, the very contrary is true, but because it is not a matter of *necessary* disagreement among the various schools of Biblical Eschatology. That is, while it is an essential feature of Premillennialism and, I think, receives its best exposition in Premillennialism, it is not peculiar to Premillennialism. On the other hand, the view stated here is not common to all exponents of Christian theology. In all branches except the Premillennial there are those who disagree.

In general, there have been four diverse views of the doctrine of Antichrist. There has been what we may call the "*Principle of Evil*" view. Advocates of this view propose that Antichrist is only an ideal personification of the evil powers of the world, always till the end in opposition to the Kingdom of God among men. At different times in the past this has been associated with or identified with many current movements.

"*Institution of Evil*" is an appropriate name for the view that some institution, as the Roman Empire, is the "Man of Sin" or Antichrist. This is common among "Praeterist" commentators on the Revelation. Another is the "*Person of Evil*" (not personification) view. Advocates of this view hold that Antichrist is a person. However, throughout the present age Bible interpreters have identified many different persons with Antichrist.

Still another view combines portions of these two views into what I call an "*Organic View*." This is that since the fall of man both good and evil have had their representatives and have been manifested in two lines of development, always in opposition. It is further believed that each reaches an ultimate manifestation in a member of the human race, the one in Christ, the other in Antichrist. These shall meet in final conflict at the close of this present age, our Lord slaying Antichrist at His *parousia*.

Not uncommon among unbelieving critics is the view that at the time of the writing of the New Testament there was a belief current among the Jews and Christians that a final personal Antichrist would appear. But, contend advocates of this "Popular Fallacy" view, the current view was false, and John in his first epistle made reference to it only to try to correct it.

The Premillennial view is the Organic View. Amillennialists, agreeing as they do with Premillennial teachings concerning the course of the present age, also frequently agree in general with this view of Antichrist.¹ Postmillennialists naturally find such a doctrine embarrassing, but not infrequently admit belief in such a doctrine. Deane, in Ellicott's *Old Testament Commentary*, gives a Postmillennial interpretation of the prophecy of the image and the stone in Daniel 2, yet, in commenting on the conduct of the little horn of Daniel 7:25, says, "It appears that the little horn, the

¹ St. Augustine, for example, believed in a final personal Antichrist, whom he thought would reign three years and six months at the close of this present age (*City of God*, XX, 13).

Antichrist of the last days, or the beast, will be successful for a time in his blasphemies and persecutions, but in the end he will be destroyed." Charles Hodge, whose lucid expositions of Christian doctrine are justly famous, labors hard to make Antichrist other than a final person who is victorious over the people of God in the period just before the coming of the Son of man. That he is not completely satisfied with his own efforts is manifest, and he rather despairingly says in comment on one of the passages, "We do not pretend to be experts in matters of prophecy" (*Systematic Theology* III, 825).

Dr. A. H. Strong was a strong advocate of the Postmillennial view in his day, and his *Systematic Theology* is still a standard. He summarizes his view of the Millennium as follows:

Through the preaching of the gospel in all the world, the kingdom of Christ is steadily to enlarge its boundaries, until Jews and Gentiles alike become possessed of its blessings and a millennial period is introduced in which Christianity generally prevails throughout the earth. (*Systematic Theology*, p. 1008.)

Yet, in spite of this postmillennial doctrine of a Christianity steadily expanding to final triumph, he adds:

There will be a corresponding development of evil, either extensive or intensive, whose true character shall be manifest not only in deceiving many professed followers of Christ and in persecuting true believers, but in constituting a *personal Antichrist* [italics mine] as its representative and object of worship (*ibid.*, p. 1008).

This writer is ready to admit that this is an entirely too brief and limited survey of the views of Antichrist to give a complete picture. There is far more diversity of opinion even among Premillennialists (some of whom have believed that the papacy is the Antichrist) than it is possible to treat fully here. Yet I think it has been made sufficiently clear that our doctrine of Antichrist is well enough grounded in the Bible itself so that many serious students of all orthodox eschatological schools have taught in effect that "a final personal Antichrist shall appear near the close of the present age who will become master of the world and will be destroyed by Christ at His coming."

The cornerstone of the doctrine we teach is II Thessalonians 2:1-12. Many other passages speak of Antichrist, but the ones which precede this important passage in holy Writ awaited the information therein for their full explanation. Just as Revelation 20 is the cornerstone of the doctrines of resurrection and of judgment, so is II Thessalonians 2 the cornerstone of the doctrines of Antichrist. The passage reads as follows:

Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; 2 to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is just at hand; 3 let no man beguile you in any wise: for *it will not be*, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, 4 he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is

called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only *there is* one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming; 9 *even he*, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: 12 that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness (II Thessalaonians 2:1-12 A.S.V.).

An examination of these verses, as they appear before us in the American Standard Version (much to be preferred to the A.V.), yields the following information about Antichrist:

(a) A notable evil person called "the man of sin," and "the son of perdition" (v.3) and "the lawless one" (v.8) shall some day "be revealed" (v.3).

(b) The revelation of this Man of Sin is to take place before "the day of the Lord." This is presumably quite shortly before the day of the Lord.

(c) Associated with his revelation as the Man of Sin will be "the falling away." This falling away can be interpreted only as an apostasy from true religion as the unmistakable testimony of the lexicons and the testimony of the New Testament and Septuagint uses of the Greek word *αποστασια* require.

(d) The Man of Sin will oppose God, exalt himself, demand divine honors (v.4), and in a general way consummate in himself a full embodiment of opposition to God and His Christ.

(e) The coming of the Man of Sin will be the fruition of the working of evil forces, called "the mystery of lawlessness," now in operation (v.7).

(f) The coming of the Man of Sin is being stayed by a certain *thing* "which restraineth" (v.6) that his coming may be "in His own season." Just what this thing which restrains is, the passage does not explain, but it is clear from the language ("and now ye know that which restraineth," etc.) that the Apostle Paul expected his readers to understand. Verse five relates that Paul had informed the Thessalonians orally while he was with them. Oh, that we might have a record of those discourses! How many problems of eschatology it might settle!

Before discussing this further, note:

(g) The coming of the Man of Sin will not take place till the removal

"out of the way" of a certain person "that restraineth now" (v.7). (The gender of the Greek participles, *κατεχων*, neuter singular, and *κατεχων*, masculine singular, fully justifies the distinguishing of two restrainers, one impersonal and one personal.)

Now, who are these? Let it be freely admitted by all that to the present time no one has brought forward a fully satisfactory explanation, though many from Tertullian on to the present moment have expressed opinions. The writer has noted at least six different views.

B. B. Warfield writes that he is convinced that the "thing which restrains" was the Jewish state and that the "one who restrains" was James the Just of Jerusalem. The state came to an end and James died in the latter part of the first century, and after that the Man of Sin in the person of the Roman emperors had undisputed power to persecute the church. The Jewish state, while it lasted, did shelter the church. (See Warfield, *Biblical and Theological Studies*, chapter xvii.)

Tertullian, and a host since his time, have felt that the prophecy was fulfilled in the Roman state and the emperors, who as the representatives of human government put a restraint on evil.

Alford, Ellicott, and Riggenbach (in *Lange's Commentary*) are representative of the many who have thought that the restraining thing is human government, in general. The rulers, by this view, are usually determined to be the "person who restrains," or, as in the view of Ellicott, the person is only a verbal personification of government. There is much that commends itself to this writer in this view--it accords well with the disintegration of sovereignty in the rulers pictured in the clay of the prophecy of Daniel (chapter two).

Riggenbach (in *Lange's Commentary, en loco*) lists a number of German and Swiss commentators who held the restraining powers to be religious, rather than political. The Apostle Paul himself, the Apostles generally, the proclamation of the gospel, and the church itself, have all been proposed.

Similar to these views is the conception that the "thing which restrains" is the church of Christ, which by advocates of this view is expected to be taken to heaven by the rapture, before the appearance of Antichrist. Those passages which speak of the Lord's people as the "light of the world" and "the salt of the earth" and various philosophical arguments are marshalled in support. The Holy Spirit, in the church, is then the "one who restrains." Some feel that both the neuter and masculine have reference to the Holy Spirit. In either case the removal of restraint is presumed to come at the time of the rapture of the church. This view is advocated in the Scofield Bible (Introduction to II Thessalonians and note *en loco*). An able presentation of the view is that of Henry C. Thiessen (*Will the Church Pass Through the Tribulation?*). However, even Dr. Thiessen admits that his argument is inferential and cumulative, not based emphatically on a single declaration of Scripture.

Still another view is simply that the restraining thing and the restraining one are the same, and that it is to be identified as the decree or providence of God. By this view, that which chiefly restrains lawlessness and the coming of the Man of Sin is the decree of God which has set the time and circumstances. If this is the correct view, it accords well with the language of Revelation 6:1-7, wherein the going forth of the four horsemen in each case comes only after a divine order to "Go" (A.S.V.).

And now my inquiring reader wants to know what my own opinion is. My "cradle faith" about the question was the doctrine of Scofield and of the host of American Premillennialists of the past generation. I am not now ready to oppose it. I am, however, ready to confess that I feel that the precise relation of the rapture of the church to the coming Great Tribulation has been purposely veiled by the Lord for moral reasons. I have heard and read the arguments of the Pre-, Mid-, and Post-Tribulationists, and have been much impressed by many of them, to say nothing of the evidence of Scripture which I have been bound to survey in the preparation of this book. I have the personally expressed opinion of the heads of at least three Pre-millennial schools of higher learning that any just presentation of this subject by a Premillennialist must recognize these three respectable opinions. This irenic spirit I think will come to prevail. E. S. English's recent series in *Our Hope Magazine* entitled "Rethinking the Rapture" was, I think, a harbinger of more gracious understanding of our differences in matters of this sort.

I have mentioned these last two facts (f and g), not because they are essential to maintenance of the Premillennial view of Antichrist, but because they appear in this foundational text and cannot be ignored in such a treatment. Our position neither stands nor falls upon the particular interpretation given them. They have been and will probably continue to be moot among Premillennarians.

(h) The success of the Man of Sin shall be accomplished by means of Satanic power and divine providence (9-12). It has always been Satan's intention to organize all humanity against God. It shall be the purpose of God in the time of the Man of Sin to permit him to do so.

(i) The Man of Sin shall not prevail forever, but he shall be slain by Christ "with the breath of his mouth" by Christ's own "manifestation" at his "coming" (*parousia*, v.8).

One could easily wish that Paul had added the information to which he refers when he says, "Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" (v.5). Then we might know for certain what the thing which now restraineth, and the person whose removal shall permit the Man of Sin to rise, will be. We know enough, however, to gain a grasp of the general doctrine of the Man of Sin.

It is not necessary at this point to develop the doctrine further. It is enough to affirm that the same doctrine is found with reference to one called "The Antichrist" (I John 2:16), "The Beast" (Revelation 13:1 ff.) in the New Testament, and "the little horn" (Daniel 7:8), the "prince that shall come"

(Daniel 9:26), and "the king" who does according to his will (Daniel 11:36), of the Old Testament. Christ referred to him as one who would come in his "own name" (John 5:43).

The second part of the proposition is that

(2) A period of great tribulation for Israel is to transpire under Antichrist's oppression, from which deliverance will be provided by Christ at His coming.

This doctrine is to be distinguished from the teachings found in Scripture to the effect that the present age is to progress in evil and lawlessness to the end, true as that may be. It is also to be distinguished from the many judgments which have fallen, and continue to fall, on apostate Israel. It is something unique in the history of Israel.

Unlike the doctrine of Antichrist, which is quite fully outlined in one passage of Scripture (II Thess. 2:1-12), this general doctrine is presented in many seemingly detached fragments. Yet there can be small doubt, indeed, that they do relate to one event (or series of events) commonly known as the Great Tribulation.

I shall present the doctrine in relation to (a) testimony to the fact, (b) the special character of it, (c) the agency by which it is brought about, (d) the length of its duration, and (e) the method of its termination.

(a) Testimony to the fact of a great tribulation for Israel in eschatological times:

There are two primary texts which predict the coming of a period of great tribulation for Israel shortly before that period of the consummation known as the day of Jehovah.

The earlier is Jeremiah 30:4-11, the most significant portion of which is verses 4-7, which follows in the American Standard Version:

And these are the words that Jehovah spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith Jehovah: We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child: wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness. Alas! for the day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.

This is sufficient in itself to prove that in Jeremiah's time a period of great tribulation, unique in all their history, was yet ahead for the nation of Israel--both houses included.

That this was to take place in what we now know would be very remote times is also clear. I mean to say that this tribulation can be only that associated with their return to the land in times immediately antecedent to the

establishment of the kingdom of Christ.

First, observe the similarity of language to passages which describe the advent of the Day of Jehovah (cf. vs. 6b and 7 with Joel 1:15; 2:11).

Second, note that the remainder of the chapter describes a restoration of Israel to follow this tribulation, a restoration which is complete and final. This aspect of the problem will receive more complete treatment in the section to follow.

Now, these prophecies of Jeremiah were well known to Daniel (*vide*. Daniel 9:2). So the revelation given to him on the subject of Jacob's coming trouble was not the introduction of a new subject. Observe the clear lines of the second of these references and the advance in detail. This also is cited from the American Standard Version, as follows:

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. 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. And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever (Daniel 12:1-3).

Observe that here, as in the Jeremiah passage, the absolute uniqueness of the coming time of Jacob's trouble (Hebrew *tsarah* is used in both passages). In the one case it is said to be "so that none is like it," and in the other, "such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time." In the first case, it is Jacob's trouble, and in the other, the time of trouble for "thy people," that is, Daniel's people, Israel. It can hardly be doubted that both prophets wrote of the same thing.

That it is something final, to take place in eschatological times, I regard as completely demonstrated by the context following. Observe the connection between the last part of verse one and verse two. Having just mentioned the coming time of trouble, Daniel continues: "*And at that time* [italics mine] thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book. 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." Here are all the main events of eschatology--a resurrection of the righteous and of the unrighteous, a judgment when the books are open (*vide*. Rev. 20:12,15) is set, and rewards both for good and for evil are given out (cf. further Daniel 12:3). Now, all this is joined *in time* (it is one of the clearest revelations about time in Old Testament prophecy) with the time of Jacob's trouble. "*And at that time*" (*uvaeth hahi*) clearly fixes this tribulation period in that portion of Israel's history which is yet future--and, incidentally, is sufficient proof in itself that God is not yet through with His people Israel, as a people.

(b) The special character of Israel's Great Tribulation.

Israel's suffering will not be without purpose--it will be the infliction of divine wrath upon the apostate nation, a final "indignation" which will be the means of eliminating the unrepentant and of bringing about the very repentance of the repentant.

Both Isaiah 26:20 and Daniel 11:36 speak of a coming time of divine "indignation" *zaam* which is presumed to be something which all men will suffer. Yet Isaiah 26:20 (cf. also Jer. 10:10) also speaks of how God's people (Israel) will be spared and of how the inhabitants of the earth will suffer the wrath of God.

Other passages in the Old and New Testaments predict hard times for men in general immediately before and during a part of the Day of the Lord.

How can these facts--that Israel shall both suffer and be spared--be reconciled?

I think the answer is to recognize that the Bible presumes a restoration of Israel to their ancient land while still in unbelief, that in their land they will suffer the same distresses which all men in that dreadful day of God's indignation will suffer, that for Israel it will be a peculiar refining process by which the incorrigibles will be removed and those willing to be saved will be gathered in to God. Some such transaction will be necessary to bring about the conditions necessary for a restored Israel to enter the kingdom of Christ in the Millennial age.

Now, just such an interpretation of the indignation on the nations of mankind, an indignation which becomes a tribulation for Israel, is set forth in Ezekiel 20:33-44. There are some admittedly obscure statements in this passage. I have never felt I understood just what is to be the order of time in the events described as related to other events of the end-time. There is some palpable conflict with our faith that Israel shall be restored to the land while still in unbelief and the statement in verse 38, the "rebels...I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter unto the land of Israel." I am confident that the fulfillment will make clear the seeming difficulty. Neither do I understand the reference to "the wilderness of the peoples," where a part of the judgment is said to transpire. Yet I do know that several other prophecies predict that God will have transactions with Israel in a wilderness in the end-time. So I am prepared to expect an unraveling in spite of the difficulties. The difficult portions of the prophecy do not do away with the fact that some of it is very plain. Moses predicted that prophecy would be like this (*vide*. Numbers 12:6-8). That God will bring Israel into tribulation issuing in a separating judgment is clear. The most significant part of the passage follows:

As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, surely with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I be king over you. And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with

an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face. Like as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I enter into judgment with you, saith the Lord Jehovah, And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; and will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah (Ezekiel 20:33-38 A.S.V.).

A divine judgment coupled with a spiritual transaction which will remove the rebels and bring the rest into spiritual harmony with God by means of a covenant is predicted. It will be something just as striking and significant as that at Sinai in the "wilderness of the land of Egypt." Nothing of the sort has been in Israel's history since Ezekiel's prophecy; it awaits a future day.

(c) The agency by which the tribulation of Israel shall be brought about.

The passage in Ezekiel 20 to which reference has just been made lays emphasis on one aspect of Israel's tribulation which can be brought about only by God in Christ as the judge of all men (cf. John 5:22). But the Scripture leads us to believe that most of the peculiar suffering of Israel during this time of the indignation of God will be brought about by a great evil king of a Gentile nation, as in the days of old.

Zechariah 12:2 ff. implies a general Gentile war against Israel in the end-time. Zechariah 14:1 ff. describes the spectacular conclusion to it. Daniel 11:36-45 reveals how the leader in this opposition at the last will be the great final Antichrist who will vex the inhabitants of "the glorious land" of Israel. But the passage that definitely connects Israel's last agony with the Antichrist is the prophecy concerning the little horn of Daniel 7:8,11 and 19-22. I shall treat this passage somewhat at length in proper season. Here I wish only to call attention to the fact made clear therein, that the same final and last of all Gentile kings, who shall be destroyed utterly by Christ at his second coming, will also oppress the saints of God. Viewed in the contextual connection, those saints can be none other than God's ancient people Israel.

(d) The length of the Tribulation's duration:

Several passages lead us to believe that the tribulation is of divinely limited duration.

The first passage, in order of presentation, if not of importance, is Matthew 24:22, which reads: "And except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (A.S.V.). There are two reasons why this certainly refers to the tribulation of Israel at the end-time. The first is that verse 21 clearly identifies it with that end-time tribulation described in Daniel 12:1, to which reference has already been made (see (a) above). Jesus says, verse 21, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until

now, no, nor ever shall be." This identification is clear and unmistakable. The other reason is that this tribulation is set at the time of "the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet" (Matt. 24:15, cf. Daniel 9:27, 12:11). This same abomination is selected for further treatment by Paul (II Thess. 2:1 ff.) and there plainly related to the times of the Antichrist of the end.

So we are fully justified in relating these words of Matthew 24:22 to the time of Israel's great tribulation. The statement that "those days shall be shortened" is admittedly difficult. That the length of each individual day should be less than our usual twenty-four-hour day seems manifestly *a priori* out of the question. The only possible meaning, it seems to me, is that God already has set definite limits on the *number* of days it shall last.

The precise number of those days is given to us (as was recognized as early, at least, as Augustine) as 1260 days, also given as forty-two months, and as three and one-half times (years). The passages are Daniel 7:25, Revelation 11:2 and 12:6,14. The first (Dan. 7:25) reveals that Antichrist (the little horn) "shall wear out the saints of the Most High...and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time." That this must be three and one-half times is evident. Keil writes (Commentary, *in loco*), "The plural word *iddanim* (*times*) standing between time and half a time can only designate the simple plural, i.e., two times used in the dual sense, since in the Chaldee the plural is often used to denote a pair where the dual is used in Hebrew." In Revelation 12:14 the exact Greek equivalent of "time, times and half a time" is used with reference to the persecution of Israel in the end-time. Revelation 12:6 specifies 1260 days and Revelation 11:2, forty-two months. There are those who will controvert the Revelation passages, insisting that they have no reference to Israel's end-time tribulation. I think my view can be sustained, but even granting that it could not be, the evidence from Daniel 7:25 remains, and is conclusive.

(e) The terminal events of the Great Tribulation:

It might satisfy the requirements of this treatise to ignore the question of how the period of Israel's great tribulation begins. There is some disagreement among Premillennialists on the beginning events of the tribulation of Israel. This is by reason of the fact that all do not accept the same view of the Book of Revelation. However, the way in which the period closes is in no question whatsoever. So necessity is upon me to treat its conclusion, and it seems best at least to suggest what seems to be the best information about its beginning.

Two events, it appears, will signalize the beginning of the Tribulation. One is a divine permission delivering Israel into the hands of Antichrist (Dan. 7:25). The other is the beginning of a final persecution of Israel, to be led by Antichrist. This will take the form of a requirement of worship of Antichrist as God, with severe sanctions against disobedience (Dan. 7:25, II Thess. 2:4). I have no doubt, personally, that this will take place in Israel's land in a restored Jewish temple of God which will at that period of time be owned by God as His own (Rev. 11:1 ff.). I recognize that some of my

Premillennial brethren do not agree on this point, and I do not press it now.

A third event, which seems evident to me will happen at this time, will be a standing up of Michael, the Archangel, to fight on behalf of God and His people Israel against Antichrist. It seems to me that this takes place in a spiritual realm, and may well be quite invisible to living men on earth. At any rate, both Daniel 12:1 and Revelation 12:7 speak of such an occurrence in this connection.

Those who find an outline of end-time events in the prophecy of the seventieth week, Daniel 9:27, find these events introduced by the breaking of Antichrist's covenant in the midst of the week.

(3) The closing days of the present age shall witness the restoration of Israel to the land and the conversion of the nation, to be followed in the Millennium by the fulfillment of the Old Testament covenant promises distinctive to that nation.

It is probably at this point that Premillennialism enters into sharpest disagreement with current forms of Amillennialism. Most of the recent writers of that school (Leupold, Young, Allis, Hamilton, Murray, Pieters) contend that all promises to Israel in the Old Testament which remained unfulfilled after the rejection of Messiah were transferred to the church. In his recent, *The Seed of Abraham*, Pieters contends that the Jew as a racial entity is wholly a fiction at the present time--that the Jew is nothing more today, so far as the promises of God are concerned, than the advocate of the false religion of Judaism.

With this view Premillennial theology clashes--head on. The Scriptural evidence for our view is in itself sufficient evidence also for refutation of this prime negation of Amillennialism.

Postmillennialists have not usually objected to faith in a restoration of Israel. However, they have not usually presented it as so extensive and important as Premillennialists conceive it to be. David Brown, probably the most able defender and exponent of postmillennialism, felt that the nation of Israel would preserve its national identity and that some day all Israelites would be saved (*Christ's Second Coming, Will It Be Pre-Millennial?* pp. 433-437).

The Biblical material on this subject is immense. Many pages could be filled with quotations of Scripture passages which promise or imply the future restoration of Israel. I cannot present all of them. My method will be to classify the evidence under twelve arguments and to present representative strong texts in connection with each. It will not be possible to avoid a certain amount of overlapping between the arguments. Therefore, the reader will be asked to regard the various propositions as steps in one cumulative Biblical argument rather than as distinct and separate. These several steps in development of the Biblical material follow.

(a) There are numerous Old Testament predictions which treat of a

repentance and restoration of Israel in eschatological times which is distinct and separate from that which followed the Babylonian captivity.

Perhaps the most precise text on this subject is Hosea 3:4,5, which reads:

For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifices and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim; afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king, and shall come with fear unto Jehovah and to his goodness in the latter days (A.S.V.).

These words suppose that for a long period of time the children of Israel will be without the symbols used in the true worship. This fits neither the period of the Babylonian captivity nor the period after the restoration, but rather this present age.

A genuine, sincere, and effective return of all the people to the worship of Jehovah, and a cherishing of the Davidic house (if not David himself) is also involved in the prophecy. This provision of the prophecy is quite as foreign to the period of captivity and restoration as the ones mentioned above.

Finally, this return is said to take place "in the latter days." A later discussion of this technical phrase, in the treatment of the prophecy of Daniel 2, in the second part of this dissertation, establishes that the consummation of the affairs of men in eschatological times is always included in the measure of time specified by this phrase. This being the case, it is to be supposed that the same is true here, and that some future final restoration is in view.

Of no less importance is Ezekiel 37. In this chapter (vs. 11-28), Ezekiel prophesies that both the northern and southern divisions of the nation will be brought back (21,22), something which did not take place in the return from Babylon; that the Davidic dynasty will be restored and given dominion over both houses (22-24), that the restoration will be permanent, forever (25); that God will Himself come to dwell with them (26,27), as John prophesies of the coming eternal kingdom (Rev. 21,22); that all the nations will be blessed forevermore in and through this arrangement (28). Such things have never taken place in Israel's past, and when viewed in connection with the last three chapters of the Revelation, can be understood only as taking place after the return of our Lord Jesus Christ in power and glory.

I would be willing to rest my case right here. This evidence is sufficient enough--but there is much more.

(b) The perpetuity of the nation of Israel, in spite of repeated apostasies and restorations after divine chastening, is predicted.

I shall simply present two passages from the Pentateuch and three from the Prophets of the Old Testament, permitting the Scriptures to speak for themselves:

And yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I am Jehovah their God; but I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am Jehovah (Leviticus 26:44,45, A.S.V.).

*For from the top of the rocks I see him,
And from the hills I behold him:
Lo, it is a people that dwelleth alone,
And shall not be reckoned among the nations
(Numbers 23:9, A.S.V.).*

Therefore fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith Jehovah; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be quiet and at ease, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith Jehovah, to save thee: for I will make a full end of the nations whither I have scattered thee, but I will not make a full end of thee, but I will correct thee in measure, and will in no wise leave thee unpunished (Jeremiah 30:10,11, A.S.V.).

But fear not thou, O Jacob my servant, neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be quiet and at ease, and none shall make him afraid. Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith Jehovah; for I am with thee: for I will make a full end of the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee, but I will correct thee in measure, and will in no wise leave thee unpunished (Jeremiah 46:27,28, A.S.V.).

Behold, the eyes of the Lord Jehovah are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; save that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith Jehovah. For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all the nations, like as grain is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least kernel fall upon the earth. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, who say, The evil shall not overtake nor meet us. In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up its ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old....And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God (Amos 9:8-11, 15, A.S.V.).

(c) There is at least one Old Testament prophecy which in unmistakable and utterly unambiguous language predicts a national restoration of Israel in yet future Messianic times.

I refer to the prophecy of Isaiah 11:1-12:6, one of the most complete oracles in the whole Bible concerning the future of Messiah and Israel.

The passage begins with a prediction which seems to point primarily to his first advent:

And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah (Isaiah 11:1,2, A.S.V.).

Then there follows prediction in which the first and second comings seem to blend at first, and then the second alone appears.

And his delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins (Isaiah 11:3-5, A.S.V.).

Now, it is perfectly clear after the end of the third clause in this passage, that the *parousia*, that is, the second advent, has taken place. Verses six to nine following describe conditions in that final kingdom of earth's history, the Millennial kingdom. It is a time of universal peace and prosperity among all of God's creatures. Verse 10 adds that the peoples of the earth shall seek Christ, in that day--something, by the way, which can never, and will never, take place during this present age.

After this recitation, clearly a recitation of kingdom (or Millennial) conditions, appears this significant statement:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord will set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, that shall remain, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea (Isaiah 11:11, A.S.V.).

Most writers of every school rightfully regard this as the strongest single text in the entire Old Testament supporting the Premillennial doctrine of the restoration of Israel. Observe:

In the first place, the events described are "in that day," that is, in the day of Christ's *parousia* described in the context immediately preceding.

In the second place, there will be a *second* gathering of a "remnant" of Israel. This can refer only to the fact that just as once before, in the times of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, God gathered His people (the Hebrew means to gather, rather than recover) from the nations in which they had been scattered, so shall He do again. Our Amillennial opponents suppose that this second gathering was the one under Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, and that the first was the bringing up of Israel out of Egypt into Canaan in the days of Moses and

Joshua. Support for this is supposed to be found in verse 16. However, the exodus from Egypt was not a "gathering" out from among nations into which they had been scattered. They were all in Egypt and had grown into a nation there, concentrated in Goshen, not scattered in the nations. Also, the exodus was not the rescue of a "remnant," but the rescue of the whole nation. And, finally, it must be recognized that the "second" gathering, referred to in verse 11, is "in that day," the day of Messiah's appearing, not the day of the heroes of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. The Amillennial objections have not a leg to stand on.

In the third place, this restoration is of a "remnant," after chastening and judgment, described elsewhere in Scripture, not of the entire nation, as was the case in the exodus.

Finally, the remainder of the prophecy (11:12-12:6) describes conditions which have never prevailed either in Israel or in the church (granting that it referred to the church) to the present moment. This must be a future restoration.

(d) The Scriptures speak of a restoration of Israel which will be absolute and permanent.

There are many passages which speak thus; the one now cited is among the clearest.

And I will bring back the captivity of my people Israel and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink of the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given to them, saith Jehovah thy God (Amos 9:14,15, A.S.V.).

This is clear unequivocal language. No straightforward, literal, objective treatment of the passage can derive any meaning from it contrary to the one advocated in this paper. Israel is to be restored to the land, and the covenant promises of material and spiritual blessings to that nation, as a nation, are yet going to be fulfilled.

(e) Jesus predicted events in the future which presuppose the restoration of Israel to Canaan and the re-establishment of the ancient tribal organization of the nation.

Peter had just reminded our Lord that His followers had remained with Him during the years at great personal cost. And He responded by telling Peter: "Verily I say to you, that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judgment the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28). Jesus makes mention of the "regeneration," Greek *Palingenesia*. It is an unmistakable reference to the new order of things on earth after the second advent. Now, in this era, the twelve apostles will sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Our opponents hardly know what to make of this text, for it

is so devastating to all antichiliastic theories. Unless the nation of Israel is to be revived and restored, this prophecy has no meaning at all.

Another passage with the same general meaning is Luke 22:28,29:

But ye are they that have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (A.S.V.).

(f) In his most important eschatological address, Jesus suggested that a period of Jewish rulership of their ancient city, Jerusalem, would follow on the conclusion of this age, which He called "the times of the Gentiles."

This famous prophecy is found in Luke 21:24:

And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled (A.S.V.).

There is not space in this treatment for a thorough discussion of what is often called the Olivet Discourse. Suffice it to say that the address was given in answer to questions addressed concerning the promised destruction of Jerusalem, the time of Jesus' second coming, and the signs of that coming. Whatever may be said concerning the earlier portions of the address, as to whether they refer to Jerusalem's destruction or to Christ's second coming, it is certain that in verse 24 our Lord is looking far past that event of A.D. 70. Now, says Jesus (if we may interpret), this condition in Jerusalem, with Gentiles in charge of things and using the city for their own purposes, shall continue to the end of the time God has allotted for Gentile supremacy. But after that, the return of Jerusalem to its rightful owners shall take place.

This can never happen aside from the repentance, conversion, and restoration of Israel.

(g) It was the plain belief of the apostles, even after the death and resurrection of Jesus, that the kingdom would be restored, as of old, to Israel.

This belief is expressed plaintively in Acts 1:6: "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

I think the precise significance of this question is often missed because the immediately preceding context is ignored in referring to it. Luke informs us that the Lord appeared to the disciples in the days following the resurrection. Now, the important thing to note is the subject of His conversations with them. Luke gives us that in Acts 1:3, which I present in full: "to whom he also showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God." For forty days the Lord, intermittently of course, explained to the disciples the "kingdom of God." This He did to men

whose minds were steeped in the Old Testament promises to Israel in connection with that kingdom. It were vain, of course, to suppose that the bearings of that kingdom on the present age were not discussed--but the fact remains that after forty days of this instruction the Jewish disciples still believed that some time in the future the kingdom would be restored to them. Jesus did not tell them that their hope was false. He did not reprove them for a "carnal" view of the kingdom. He informed them only that it was not for them to know the time at which the restoration would take place.

It is no mistake that has led countless defenders of the Premillennial doctrine to this text in defense of it.

(h) The Apostle Paul declared that a time is coming in which "all Israel shall be saved" and that in such a context that the national repentance and conversion of the nation, if not national restoration, is a necessary inference.

The paragraph which summarizes Paul's teaching is Romans 11:25,26:

For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved: even as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (A.S.V.).

The context of this promise, which requires that we understand the national restoration of Israel--by way of repentance and conversion--has been summarized by Alva J. McClain as follows:

Is He, God, done with Israel as a nation? The apostle recoils from such a suggestion, and proceeds to show that the rejection of Israel is even now not total, but only partial. And even this partial rejection is not final, but only temporary. Three facts are adduced to prove that God has not cast off His people forever. First, there is a PRESENT ELECTION within the nation (1-10). He has spoken of this before, but he now points to himself, an Israelite among the saved, as an evidence to this election. Furthermore, the existing situation is very similar to that in the days of Elijah when in the whole nation there was but a small remnant who had not bowed the knee to Baal. So now there is a remnant according to the election of grace. As to the rest, they have been hardened, and their eyes darkened. Nevertheless, we are not to suppose that this is the end of Israel's national hopes. There is to be a FUTURE RESTORATION of the nation back to the divine favor (11-24). Israel did not stumble that he might fall irretrievably. There was a beneficent purpose in permitting all this to take place. Through the fall of Israel great riches have been brought to the Gentile world, and if his fall meant much to the world, certainly his future reception back into favor will mean much more. If, on account of unbelief, certain Israelite branches have been broken out of the tree of God's favor and Gentile branches have been grafted in, we are not to forget that God is able to graft the Israelite back into the place of favor. For, after all, they are the natural branches; God's favor came into the world through Israel. As a matter of fact, they shall be grafted again into their own tree. There is to be a final

SALVATION for the nation (25-32). (*Romans Outlined and Summarized*, pp. 36,37.)

Such is the argument of this chapter and the hope of the Apostle Paul.

(i) The Scriptures describe a future time when a temple of God in the Jewish city of Jerusalem shall be appropriated by God as His own and be misappropriated by Antichrist.

There are two passages of New Testament Scripture involved in this argument. The first is Revelation 11:1,2:

And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and one said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. And the court which is without the temple leave without, and measure it not; for it hath been given unto the nations: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months (A.S.V.).

This prophecy came to John nearly thirty years² after the temple of Herod was destroyed by the Romans. So the prophecy does not refer to that temple. It was not the heavenly temple "which the Lord pitched and not man," for this is to be desecrated by nations which will also trample the city. It is in Jerusalem, as the words "holy city" specify. Furthermore, even without taking into consideration the action of measuring, which many interpreters think symbolizes God's appropriation of a rebuilt temple at the beginning of the seventieth week of Daniel, it is plainly said to be "the temple of God." So much for the fact--a Jewish temple is to be built in Jerusalem and appropriated by God.

Now, Paul predicts that this temple (it could hardly be another) shall be misappropriated by Antichrist for his own blasphemous worship. After pointing out to the believers at Thessalonica that the "man of sin...the son of perdition" shall be revealed before the day of the Lord, he adds concerning this wicked man that he "opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God."

This agrees precisely with what the Revelation says concerning the "Beast" (or Antichrist) in the thirteenth chapter of that book.

This is another truth supporting the teaching that the nation is to be restored to their land and their God as in the days of old.

(j) The Revelation predicts a resumption of God's dealing with Israel in the sealing of 144,000 Israelites, organized according to their tribal divisions.

I recognize that there are problems in connection with this fact. The

² This argument is valid, of course, only on the ground that the late date of composition of Revelation is the correct one. It seems to the writer that the late date is correct, but, if not, the loss of this argument does not do away with the others.

tribal names, for instance, are peculiar and differ from the usual. No one seems to be very sure of the reason why. Yet this does not justify our saying--what in effect the anti-millenarian interpreters of Revelation do say--that the passage is totally without known meaning, being wrapped in unreadable symbolism. The passage is still in Revelation, chapter 7, and certainly means something. I quote:

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that no wind should blow on the earth, or on the sea, or upon any tree. And I saw another angel ascend from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel (Revelation 7:1-4, A.S.V.).

In the four verses which follow, it is specified that 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes were sealed.

Let our Postmillennial and Amillennial friends explain this for us. They find many faults in our explanation that this applies to 144,000 Jewish servants of God in the Tribulation period. Let them tell us when it is if it is not then. It could not be in the period before John, for history bears no record of it and it would be completely anomalous in that time. In the centuries since it has not happened. The facts are that it fits no known period except the future, at the end of this present age.

(k) The prophets speak as if the honor of Jehovah God is at stake in the restoration of Israel in a final and permanent way.

God has a stake in the restoration of Israel. The honor of His name and the validity of His covenant-keeping mercy depend on it, according to several passages. In connection with several chapters in Ezekiel in which the final restoration is predicted, this appears:

I had regard for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations whither they went. Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy name, which ye have profaned among the nations, whither ye went (Ezekiel 36:21,22, A.S.V.).

Peters (*The Theocratic Kingdom*, II, 53) says in this connection that evidently the condition of Israel at the time of their future restoration will be one of unbelief. Only because the time in the plan of God for the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom shall have arrived will God move in mercy again to restore the nation.

"Because" the nation has been overthrown and its uplifting is a necessity,
"because" the heathen ridicule the Covenant and its promises, God will

perform this work, and, by an astonishing process, bring this rebellious nation to heart-felt obedience and most fervent allegiance" (Peters, *ibid.*, 53).

This is related to the following final argument, and that which concerns the next argument applies with equal force on this one.

(1) The Bible reveals that the very worthiness of God as the object of the faith of the patriarchs requires that He yet restore Israel and fulfill the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

In Romans 11:28 Paul writes that Israel is yet "beloved for the fathers' sake." This means that God's present care for His ancient people is, at least in part, out of respect for the faith of "the fathers" who believed God and expected Him to fulfill His ancient promises. After writing of the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the writer to the Hebrews observes:

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth (Hebrews 11:13, A.S.V.).

Not all of the promises of God to the patriarchs have been fulfilled yet. Of course, as the New Testament makes clear, some of the promises have come true in Christ, in the benefits of His redeeming work at Calvary. But all the distinctive promises to Israel wait for complete fulfillment. We know that unbelief and resultant chastening are the cause. But God has made a promise concerning the overruling of the unbelief, and to this promise Paul must have turned his mind as he wrote that Israel was still "beloved for the fathers' sake." I refer to a passage in the Pentateuch, the portion of God's Word in which this series of arguments began. After detailing the dread results of disobedience--banishment from the land--God says:

They shall confess...then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. The land also shall be left by them, and it shall enjoy its sabbaths....And yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I am Jehovah their God; but I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am Jehovah (Leviticus 26:40, 42-45, A.S.V.).

I can think of nothing more utterly compelling and appropriate with which to close my remarks on this theme than the prophecy of Jeremiah 33:25,26.

Thus saith Jehovah: If my covenant of day and night stand not, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I cast away the seed of Jacob and of David my servant, so that I will not take of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and will have mercy on them.