



*THE
EASTERN QUESTION*

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The Eastern Question

or

Israel and Egypt in Prophecy

by

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EGYPT

There is no doubt that Egypt is a country which plays an important part in Middle East affairs.

Egypt is mentioned some 480 times in the Scriptures, the references being distributed thus:

The Law — about 70 times; the Prophets 270 times; the Psalms 16 times; the Gospels 4; the Acts 14; the Epistles 4; and the Revelation one reference.

In an Analysis devoted to prophecy, it is obvious that the many references made to Egypt by Moses must be omitted. The common name for Egypt in the Scriptures is "Mitzraim" or "the land of Mitzraim". The dual form of this name indicates the natural division of the country with an upper and a lower region. At times the singular *Matsor* is used, and this appears to refer to lower Egypt only. In the genealogy of the nations, given in Genesis 10, we read:

"And the sons of Ham, Cush and Mizraim, and Phut and Canaan" (Gen. 10:6).

Genesis 13:10 gives some idea of the fertility of Egypt, saying that Lot beheld all the plain of Jordan "that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, *like the land of Egypt*, as thou comest to Zoar".

Two great rivers form the boundaries of the land of promise, the Euphrates and the Nile (Gen. 15:18). The attitude of Pharaoh, and the plagues that fell on Egypt, together with the song of Moses after the crossing of the Red Sea, and the two witnesses Moses and Aaron, have a prophetic interest, foreshadowing much that is recorded in the book of the Revelation. One outstanding title of Egypt is "the house of bondage" which occurs seven times in the law, once in Joshua and once in Judges.

Leaving these aspects of the subject, let us note what is said prophetically of Egypt and first let us consider Psalm 68:31:

"Princes shall come out of Egypt".

Rotherham translates this "ambassadors" and the Hebrew word *chashmannim* occurs nowhere else. The LXX renders this word *presbeis*, and in the absence of anything more definite, "ambassadors" seems to be the intention here. While we may not subscribe to some of the opinions of Moffatt, we must recognize his mastery of the

languages of the Bible, and submit to the reader his translation of Psalm 68:29-31:

“From Thy temple high above Jerusalem,
display Thy strength, O God.
Who hast so mightily prevailed for us.
There kings must offer Thee tribute.¶
Check that Brute of a Nile-power,
the bullocks and steers of pagans;
Trample down crafty policy,
rout all races that rejoice in war,
till Egypt sends ambassadors,
and Ethiopia hurries to submit to God”.

The sending of ambassadors suggests that Egypt will sue for peace (Isa. 30:4; 33:7), and when we consider Isaiah nineteen, “the burden of Egypt”, and the remarkable words of its closing verses, the translation will become even more suggestive. The prophet Isaiah rebukes Israel for trusting in the shadow of Egypt, and one passage, which is a warning, is often quoted with favour and as a message of comfort, but this is a mistake. The words are “their strength is to sit still” (Isa. 30:7), but the R.V. reads “therefore have I called her Rahab that sitteth still”. *The Companion Bible* comments:

“Heb. Egypt — sitting still (and thus not giving the help that was sought).

Rahab = pride or strength, is put by Fig. Metonymy (of Adjunct) for Egypt, the proud strong one. Note the wrong but common use of this verse, through not heeding the context”.

Moffatt’s vigorous translation here is “hence My name for it ‘Dragon-do-Nothing’”. After a desolation that lasts forty years, the Lord reveals that He will gather the Egyptians and bring again the captivity of Egypt and will cause them to return “and they shall be a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations” (Ezek. 29:13-15).

Because the Hebrew word translated “base” is sometimes translated “humble”, some commentators have thought that this word “base” does not refer to Egypt’s degradation, but to a lowly submission, and where the A.V. of Ezekiel 17:14 reads “that the kingdom might be base”. Moffatt reads “that the realm might be submissive and not ambitious”. At first, the words of Daniel 4:17 addressed to Nebuchadnezzar “and setteth up over it the basest of men” would appear to nullify this view, but it must not be forgotten that at the end of Daniel four Nebuchadnezzar was extremely humbled and acknowledged the sovereignty of the Most High. While

therefore this possibility must be admitted, our knowledge is too limited for more than an expression of the opinion that it may be so. On the other hand the added words "neither shall it exalt itself any more" seems to look back to the reduction of Egypt to "a base kingdom".

Another passage of prophetic interest is Isaiah nineteen, denominated "the burden of Egypt". After a series of prophetic utterances concerning the judgments that shall fall upon Egypt, comes a most wonderful and unexpected denouement (Isa. 19:23-25), but before we ponder this most marvellous manifestation of grace, let us note a few items that are of prophetic importance. The chapter opens with terms that appear to speak of the second advent of Someone riding "upon a swift cloud"; One Who "shall come", and "His presence" be manifest. The effect upon Egypt is that "the heart of Egypt shall melt". In the Burden of Babylon (Isa. 13) we have a similar consequence: "every man's heart shall melt" (Isa. 13:7). These words are followed by a reminiscence of Matthew 24:

"Pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth . . . Behold the day of the Lord cometh" (Isa. 13:7-10).

Psalm 68, which we have already considered so far as the reference to Egypt in verse 31 is concerned, speaks of the Lord riding upon the heavens of heavens which were of old (33) and at His arising depicts the enemies of the Lord melting as wax before the fire, and perishing at the presence of God. This link of Isaiah 13 with Matthew 24 is emphasized by a similar link in Isaiah 19:2, for the fighting of every one against his brother, "city against city, and kingdom against kingdom" is very nearly quoted by the Saviour in Matthew 24:7 and 8 where the use of nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom is said to be "the beginning of sorrows, or birth pangs" and where the same Greek word *odin* is used of birth pangs both in Isaiah 13:8 in the LXX, and in the Greek of Matthew 24:8.

The reference to idols, charmers, familiar spirits and wizards in Isaiah 19:3 finds a counterpart in the Book of the Revelation where these evils reach their zenith. In verse 16 fear will come upon Egypt "because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts which He shaketh over it"; and a variety of words are employed to speak of the day when God will shake the heavens and the earth and will shake all nations (Hag. 2:6, 7, 21). Matthew 24:7 speaks also of "famines and earthquakes", and Isaiah 19:5-10 shows the effect upon the whole economy of Egypt at the drying up of their river "and everything sown by the brooks shall wither, be driven away (as stubble because dried

up, Isaiah 41:2) and be no more". At verse 16, a series of references commencing with the prophetic term "In that day" opens a new vista.

Isa. 19:16	In that day	the shaking of the land of Egypt.
Isa. 19:18	In that day	five cities speak the language of Canaan.
Isa. 19:19	In that day	there shall be an altar to the Lord.
Isa. 19:21	In that day	Egyptians shall do sacrifice.
Isa. 19:23	In that day	there shall be a highway.
Isa. 19:24	In that day	Israel shall be a third with Egypt and Assyria.

Here are six prophetic items. The central reference declaring that "there shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord". The word translated "altar" is the Hebrew *mizbeach* "a place of sacrifice". It is the same word that is used of the altar built by Noah, by Abraham and by Moses (Gen. 8:20; 22:9 and Exod. 17:15). It is the same word used of the altar of the Tabernacle (Exod. 27:1) and the altar of the Temple (1 Kings 8:22). The word occurs eight times in Isaiah, every reference being to an altar in the Scriptural sense of the word. We have rather laboured this point, because of the fantastic and misleading suggestion made by some, that the altar of Isaiah 19:19 refers to the Great Pyramid at Gizeh. There is also to be a "pillar" at the frontier. We read in Exodus 24:4 that Moses builded an "altar" and erected "twelve pillars" according to the number of the children of Israel. The same word is used of the pillar set up by Jacob at Bethel (Gen. 28:18 and 31:45). This last reference was called *mizpah* by Jacob, a beacon and watch-tower, for he said "The Lord watch between me and thee . . . I will not pass over . . . thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm" (Gen. 31:44-52). Something of the same intent seems to be implied by the pillar set up at Egypt's frontier "in that day", a respect for the sovereignty of both Israel and of Egypt in their own allotted lands. The reader should note the paranomasia of the two Hebrew words translated "altar" and "pillar". The former is made up of M, Z, B, CH, the latter of M, TS, B, H, as though the link between them was intentional and important.

It appears from Isaiah 19:18 that there will be a number of cities in Egypt that will have become converts to the teaching of the Bible,

"Five cities in the land of Egypt shall speak the language of Canaan".

The following passages will indicate the attitude of Israel and their conception of truth with a "language":

"When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language" (Psa. 114:1).

"He went out through the land of Egypt: where I heard a language that I understood not" (Psa. 81:5).

“The Jews . . . had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon and of Moab, and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews’ language” (Neh. 13:23, 24).

“For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent” (Zeph. 3:9).

One of these cities that speak the language of Canaan and who are loyal to the Lord will be “The City of the Sun” (Isa. 19:18). The Hebrew words for “sun” is *cheres*, and for destruction is *heres*, hence the different renderings (see margin of R.V. and note in *The Companion Bible*). Heliopolis, “the city of the sun”, is the Greek name for the Egyptian city “On” at the apex of the delta of the Nile. It will be remembered that Joseph married a daughter of a priest of On (Gen. 41:45). *Helios* is Greek for the sun, *polis* for city. In the Hebrew this would be represented by *beth*, a house, and *shemesh*, the sun, hence the city called Bethshemesh in Jeremiah 43:13 is the same city of Isaiah 19:18, even as the “images” which are to be broken there are the same as the “pillar” of Isaiah 19:19. In the former reference, the sanctity of frontiers found no respect from Nebuchadnezzar.

Returning to Isaiah 19, we find that associated with this altar and pillar is the sending of “a Saviour, a great one” who shall deliver such as cry unto the Lord, and as a consequence “the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day” (verse 21). If these events take place at the time of the end “The Saviour, a great One” could refer to the Lord Himself, particularly as the word translated “Saviour”, which occurs nine times in Isaiah in every reference apart from Isaiah 19:20, refers to God beside Whom, he declares, “is no Saviour”. Egypt is to be smitten, but is to be healed, they shall return unto the Lord and He shall heal them. Every one of these words is said in like manner of Israel. Once the Lord smote the Egyptians in the day of Israel’s exodus, and no healing followed (Exod. 12:23, 27), but at long last healing is now near, not only for Israel but for her hereditary foe and seducer, Egypt!

“In that day there shall be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrians shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians” (Isa. 19:23).

Here intercommunication will be established, fear of invasion and harm shall be removed, and both nations, once Israel’s oppressors, shall serve the Lord together. If this were all, it would be a state of affairs that would be wonderful to behold. But this is not all by any means:

“In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land (or earth)” (Isa. 19:24).

This unheard of exhibition of grace and mercy is followed by the words that close this chapter as a great "Amen":

"Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying
Blessed be EGYPT MY PEOPLE, and
ASSYRIA the WORK OF MY HANDS, and
ISRAEL MINE INHERITANCE".

No word that we can add to such superlative grace can do anything but spoil this gracious witness. Let us leave it to shine in all its unsullied glory, while we remember that when we, too, were enemies Christ died for us (Rom. 5:6-10).

Another prophecy concerning Egypt is found in Daniel 11. Before examining this chapter we quote from *Daniel's Great Prophecy* by Nathaniel West, D.D., and let it be noted the following words were written in 1897, and not in December 1956, when the problem of Suez and the Middle East was in everyone's mind;

"It is the '*Eastern Question*' that is here, a question not limited or local, but ubiquitous, affecting today the deepest interests of Russia, England, France, Austria, Germany, Egypt, Greece, Turkey and Palestine, in their relations to each other, to India, China and Japan, and to Africa, affecting the whole world; an age-long contention between conflicting civilizations, with creeds and forms of government, and prejudices of race and traditions diverse and opposed as the poles; that '*mache athanatos*' of Plato, the 'immortal conflict' between truth and error, right and wrong, which endures until a 'new cycle' of time shall bring its close. What statesman in any cabinet or chamber of modern legislation has ever lifted his voice to tell the world that as in Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zephaniah and Zechariah, so here Daniel has exhibited, in chapters 8 and 11 the '*Eastern Question*' in terms impossible to be misunderstood, or that the waters of the Hellespont, the Ægean and Mediterranean seas, with the isles of Greece and Asia Minor, and the mainlands washed by them — the storm-centre of the Eastern question in every age — form for the prophet the geographical theatre of his vision of the 'Warfare Great'? or that here the fleets of the nations must meet to sink and sail no more, in that final crisis when 'heaven, earth, sea, dry land, and all nations' are 'shaken'? It is the light of prophecy that enables us to see and understand the immense significance of the recent acts of the 'Powers' in reference to Crete, Greece, Turkey, Armenia, and what the parallel Jewish movements forebode. In the words of a great and deep writer in our day, 'internal politics, the world over, are resolvable into some form of the Eastern Question. It haunts the history of civilised mankind'".

We now approach what is perhaps the most difficult and intricate chapter in prophecy, viz., Daniel 11. One of the chief elements of difficulty is due to the blending together of type and antitype and of history and prophecy. The problem is to determine the point at which

the division occurs, to find the verse at which we may say, Here history ceases and prophecy begins. Chapter 11 contains a number of sections which we set out below for the clearer understanding of our problem:

- (1). 2-4 Persian and Greek kings, ending in the "mighty king" Alexander the Great.
- (2). 5-9 The division of Alexander's empire among his generals. The introduction of two kings named "king of the north" and the "king of the south".
- (3). 10-20 The alternating histories and policies of these kings of the north and south.
- (4). 21-45 The vile person and the wilful king.
The antichrist and the beast.
The little horn of Daniel 8:9.

The first section of this prophecy (verses 2-4) establishes a link with earlier visions, and particularly with that of chapter 8. This shows the close association that is intended between the history of Persia and Greece and the future antichristian king:

The RAM of Dan. 8:3 is interpreted as being Media and Persia (8:20).

The HE-GOAT of Dan. 8:5 is interpreted as being the king of Greece (8:21).

The GREAT HORN between the eyes of the he-goat represents the first king of Greece, and the FOUR NOTABLE ONES arose toward the four winds of heaven, are interpreted as four kingdoms that shall stand up in his stead (8:21, 22).

The angelic interpreter of Daniel 11 makes a fuller reference to these two great powers. We now learn that there were to stand up three kings in Persia, and that the fourth, richer than they all, would, by his strength through his riches, stir up all against the realm of Greece. Alexander is spoken of as a mighty king who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to His will, whose kingdom shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven. So far, the chapters are parallel. Returning however to Daniel 8, we find that here we immediately leave the fourfold sub-division of Alexander's kingdom for a consideration of the yet future dominion of the beast of the Apocalypse:

"And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land" (8:9).

This passage is interpreted in 8:23-24 as follows:

"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. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his

own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand”.

It will be seen that in Daniel 8 no record is given of the history that intervenes between the break-up of the kingdom of Alexander and the advent of the antichristian king. This has an important bearing upon the interpretation of Daniel 11, for the prophecies concerning the kings of the south and the north in 11:10-20 are usually interpreted as being fulfilled in the doings of Ptolemy I, II, III, IV, V and VI, of Seleucus I, II, III and IV, and of Antiochus II, III and IV. Instead of commencing future prophecy at 11:21, however, we follow the lead of Daniel 8:23 and the explicit statement of Daniel 10:14 (viz., that the revelation of Daniel 11 and 12 concerns Israel “in the latter days”), and commence the prophetic and future section of Daniel 11 at verse 5, seeing in the activities of Ptolemy and Antiochus *foreshadowings* only and not fulfilments of the earlier verses.

Before proceeding further, it will be helpful to see the whole prophecy set out before us. The subject-matter is, of course, too vast and too involved for us to attempt to include every member, or to account for every detail. All we can do is to point out the most obvious features, leaving the reader the difficult but joyous task of seeking fuller details for himself.

Daniel 11:3-12:3

- A 11:3 A king He shall do according to his will
- B 11:6 The King's daughter
- C 11:7-10 In his estate
- D 11:14 They shall fall
- A 11:16 A king. He shall do according to his will
- B 11:17 The daughter of women
- C 11:20 In his estate
- D 11:35 Some shall fall
- E 11:21-34 The vile a 21 Flattery
 Person. — In b 22-32 c Heart against
 his estate holy covenant
 d He shall do
 (*exploits*)
 c Indignation
 against holy
 covenant
 d So shall he
 do
 c Forsake the
 holy covenant
 d Place the
 abomination
 c Against the
 holy covenant
 d They shall
 do
 (*exploits*)
- a 33, 34 Flatteries
- A 11:36 A king He shall do according to his will
- B 11:37 The desire of women
- C 11:38 In his estate
- D 12:1-3 Many shall awake.

We have only to look at this outline to perceive the unity of the prophecy, despite its involved character. At the time of the end there shall be a king who shall do according to his will. And not only is this king foreshadowed by Alexander the Great (11:3) but the doings of Alexander's successors also foreshadow yet future history leading up to the manifestation of the man of sin. Moreover, the strange break in the structure, occasioned by the introduction of the vile person and the setting up of the "abomination that maketh desolate" warns us to keep distinct the two important figures of prophecy, "the beast" and "the false prophet".

We must go back to ancient history to discover the kingdoms

associated with the rise of the man of sin. At Alexander's death, his kingdom was divided among his four generals as follows:

- (1) Ptolemy took Egypt and Palestine.
- (2) Seleucus took Northern Syria.
- (3) Cassander took Macedonia and Thrace.
- (4) Lysimachus took Asia Minor.

It will be noted that Daniel 11:5 assumes that we shall recognize the identity of the king of the south, and verse six speaks familiarly of the king of the north. We have been prepared for some such terms as these by Daniel 8:8, where the fourfold division of Alexander's kingdom is said to be towards the four winds of heaven. In agreement with this, we find in Daniel 7:2, 3:

"Four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse from one another".

It is impossible for us at the present time to say which of the four successors of Daniel 7:4-8 is the lion with eagle's wings, or which is the bear or the leopard or the monster. But that they speak of the future resuscitation of these four kingdoms is a matter beyond doubt. Taking everything into account we learn from Scriptural prophecy to watch closely the "north" and the "south" kingdoms; the north, Syria, the south, Egypt. The wars and the policies that have been connected with these two powers in the past but foreshadow the "Eastern Question" of the time of the end. The endeavour to promote alliances by marriages such as that of Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II to Antiochus II; or of Cleopatra to Ptolemy V will again be attempted but prove futile. In this connection the structure proves of great value, for it reveals the fact that the final antichristian king will be proof against such allurements. This may, at first, seem strange, but it is in keeping with the doctrines of demons exposed in 1 Timothy 4 which will include "forbidding to marry".

It will be seen from the structure that the words, "in his estate" occur four times. The Hebrew word *ken* means a base (as in 1 Kings 7:31), and in the first three references of Daniel 11 in the LXX is translated by the word *etoimasia*, "a preparation". The latter is used in the N.T. of the work of a forerunner. Does this not seem to indicate that Satan, ignorant of the "times and the seasons" which the Father has kept in His own power, is perpetually "prepared" with his man? Here, in Daniel 11, we have several kings in readiness, should the end have come. To this principle may be ascribed the close likeness which some outstanding characters in history have had to the prophetic picture. Quite a number of prophetic students believed that Napoleon

was the man of sin. More recently Mussolini and others have been named. There may be many more, but at the end, Satan will be prepared with his man, "in his estate"; the man and the moment will adhere.

It would appear from Daniel 11 that towards the time of the end, arising out of either Syria or Egypt, there will be several marked anticipations of the man of sin. The description of the first abortive attempt is given in Daniel 11:7-19 where we read of war between the kings of the north and south, and of an unsuccessful attempt to make Judaea independent, and so to "establish the vision". The words, "the robbers of thy people" (Dan. 11:14) may mean "the violent ones among thy people". These would be revolutionists who would league themselves with an apostate power to gain their own ends. They shall fail, however, for God alone is able to restore Israel to their land.

While Babylon and Nineveh have passed away, Egypt, Greece, Syria and Asia Minor remain to this day, *and it is from among these kingdoms that the last great oppressor shall arise*. Time would fail us in the attempt to deal with the details of this chapter, but perhaps the following analysis may be of help:

MAIN FEATURE OF THE FUTURE.

Daniel 11:5.

A prince originating in Egypt possesses a great dominion. When this development in the Near East takes shape — "Know that summer is nigh".

Daniel 11:6.

A marriage alliance between Egypt and Syria for the purpose of making "an agreement" proves a failure.

Daniel 11:7-19.

Conflicts between these two kingdoms will result in dire trouble in the "glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed" (11:16) and end in a "staggering" defeat (11:19).

Daniel 11:20.

Satan's attempt proving abortive, "in his estate" a raiser of taxes arises, who shall exact heavy tribute from Israel and the land of Palestine. His end shall be sudden and mysterious: "within a few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle".

Daniel 11:21-35.

Still undismayed, Satan causes to stand up "in his estate" one who is described as a "vile person". This one, instead of devastating the land,

“comes in peaceably”, and “obtains the kingdom by flatteries”. “After the league made with him he shall work deceitfully with a small people; he shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places”. After stirring up strife against the king of the south, and apparently involving more than one king (11:27), he returns to his land with great riches, and at length manifests his true intent: “His heart shall be against the holy covenant” (11:28). This covenant is referred to in Daniel 9:27: “He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week”.* In the midst of the seven years he breaks the covenant, causing sacrifice and offering to cease, and in its stead (see note of *The Companion Bible* on Daniel 9:27) brings in the abomination that maketh desolate.

Such is the analysis of the place that Egypt occupies in the Prophetic Scriptures. At the moment of writing, the dispensation of the Mystery still runs its course, and Israel are still *Lo-ammi*, “not My People”. The re-shuffle of the nations in the Middle East is a preparation for the day fast approaching when the prophetic clock will begin once more to tick and the Day of the Lord will dawn. While, therefore, our own blessed hope must be realized before these things come to pass, their proximity but reminds us that “now is our salvation nearer than when we believed”.

THE GATHERED PEOPLE

A survey of the scattering and the gathering of Israel, and their association with the land and the city of their fathers, their repentance and the coming of the Lord.

When we endeavour to compute the time of the end, without of course attempting “the day and the hour” which is forbidden, there are certain features which are key events which, if seen in their right relationship with other prophetic features, will lead us to an approximation of the character of the time of the end, even though many details can only be understood in the light of their fulfilment. Prominent among such subjects, is the future gathering of Israel by the Lord to the land of promise. It will be observed that we have said “the future gathering” and “by the Lord”, the present occupation of the land by Israel being rather in line with Abraham’s mistake which led to the birth of Ishmael. A future “gathering” of Israel presupposes a past “scattering”, and we believe an examination of the Scripture closely dealing with these related events will be profitable in more ways than one.

*The time that elapses from the making of the covenant to verse 31 is 3½ years of the last seven of Daniel 9.

In the New Testament, the Greek word *diaspora* “the scattered” has become, practically, a title of Israel. *Diaspora* occurs three times:

“Then said the Jews among themselves, whither will He go, that we shall not find Him? Will He go unto the *dispersed* among the Gentiles (Greeks) and teach the Gentiles (Greeks)?” (John 7:35).

“James (literally Jacob), a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which are *scattered* abroad, greeting” (Jas: 1:1).

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers *scattered* throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia” (1 Pet. 1:1).

There are six references to the *diaspora* in the LXX, namely, in Deuteronomy 28:25; 30:4; Nehemiah 1:9; Psalm 146:2 (147:2 A.V.); Isaiah 49:6; Jeremiah 41:17. The first reference is a consequence of the curse pronounced from Mount Ebal upon disobedience to the commandments of the Lord.

“The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies; thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed (thou shalt be a dispersion, LXX) into all the kingdoms of the earth”.

Here, in this first occurrence, we have the root cause of all the dispersions of Israel that follow, and in the next reference we find the germ of all the promises of their final restoration; we quote direct from the LXX of Deuteronomy 30:4:

“If thy dispersion (*diaspora*) be from one end of heaven to the other, thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and thence will the Lord thy God take thee” (Deut. 30:4).

This passage from Deuteronomy 30:4 is remembered by Nehemiah in his prayer, as recorded in Nehemiah 1:9:

“But if ye turn unto Me, and keep My commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set My name there” (Neh. 1:9).

Here the words “cast out” are *diaspora* in the LXX. Psalm 146:2 (LXX) 147:2 (A.V.) reads:

“The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: He gathereth together the outcasts (the *diaspora*) of Israel”.

Where the A.V. of Isaiah 49:6 reads:

“It is a light thing that thou shouldest be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved (margin or desolations) of Israel”. The LXX reads:

“It is a great thing for thee to be called My servant, to establish the

tribes of Jacob, and to recover the dispersion (*diaspora*) of Israel" (Isa. 49:6).

Jeremiah 41:17 in the LXX is Jeremiah 34:17 in the A.V. It would take too long to explain the reason for this, and it has no bearing upon the present study. So we proceed with our quotations:

"Therefore thus saith the Lord; Ye have not hearkened unto Me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, I will proclaim a liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine, and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth" (Jer. 34:17 A.V.). Here once again the LXX reads "I will give you up to dispersion".

We must return to these references to discover their testimony concerning Israel's defection, but before we do so, we must consider the use of the verb "to scatter", namely the Greek word *diaspeiro*. The word occurs three times in the N.T., namely in Acts 8:1, 4 and 11:19, where we read of the "scattering" that followed the persecution of the church which reached as far as Phenice, Cyprus and Antioch. The note that is of interest is that the "scattering" resulted in a preaching of the Word in these parts. The word *diaspeiro* comes some sixty times in the O.T., and while we do not propose to exhibit that number of references here, we will give a fairly typical exhibition of the teaching associated with its usage.

In the first occurrences of this word "scatter", blessing, not judgment, is in view:

"These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread", (LXX, scattered) (Gen. 9:19; 10:18, 32).

In line with this must be read Deuteronomy 32:8:

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

This beneficent purpose was resisted by the sons of Noah, and they said:

"Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth" (Gen. 11:4).

This resistance turned a blessing into a curse, for we read:

"So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence" (Gen. 11:8, 9),

and instead of being united by a common language, their speech was confounded, their city called Babel, and the seed sown for all the

confusion and conflict among nations that has since arisen, and which will only be remedied when Jerusalem is the acknowledged centre, when the nations accept their appointed relationship with Israel and their land, and when the prophecy of Zephania shall be fulfilled:

“For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent” (Zeph. 3:9).

This is the reversal of the state of affairs described in Genesis 11. An important lesson is here, which if observed will illuminate much that is said concerning the “scattering” and the “gathering” of Israel. The prophet Hosea reveals that Israel were to go into a condition named “Lo-ammi”, not My people (Hos. 1:9), but this was preceded by two causes. (1) They should be “scattered”, for such is one of the meanings of the word *Jezeel* (Hos. 1:4); (2) they should have mercy withheld from them, the meaning of *Lo-ruhamah* being “not compassionated” (Hos. 1:6). In Hosea 2:23, all this is blessedly reversed:

“I will sow her unto Me in the earth”	(<i>Jezeel</i>)
“I will have mercy”	(<i>Ruhamah</i>)
“Thou art My people”	(<i>Ammi</i>)

The Hebrew word *Jezeel* is a *homonym*, i.e. a word having two related meanings: (1) Scatter (Jer. 31:10); (2) Sow (Jer. 31:27; Zech 10:9). Had the nations obeyed the Divine mandate, and “spread abroad” with Israel’s land as their centre, and with one common language to unite them both in worship and in service, a great step forward would have been accomplished. This would have fulfilled one meaning of the word *Jezeel*, i.e. “sowing”, with a harvest of peace in view. This, however, was antagonized by Satan the “Resister” (Zech. 3:1, 2), and the “sowing” was transformed into a “scattering” and a confusion, and will not be remedied until He Who scattered both the nation and the nations, gathers them once again, with Jerusalem in their midst, but when that blessed event will take place we do not here stay to consider; it will emerge as we examine the usage of the word “gather” which is to follow.

To be scattered, consequently became a sign of a curse (Gen. 49:7). Leviticus 26 is a series of alternating references to disobedience and its punishment:

Lev. 26:14, 15	Commandments, statutes, judgments, despised, covenant broken.
Lev. 26:16, 17	The consequent punishment.

This alternation occurs five times, and in the last pair, namely in Leviticus 26:27-39 we read:

“And I will scatter you among the heathen (or nations) and will draw

out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste" (Lev. 26:33).

"The dispersed of Judah" are said to be "in the four corners of the earth" (Isa. 11:12), and the prophetic import of this scattering is crystallized in the opprobrious epithets "the Ubiquitous Jew" and "the Wandering Jew". Passages could be multiplied to show that God Himself scattered Israel as a punishment for their sins, as it is written "He that scattered Israel, will gather him" (Jer. 31:10). Nevertheless, just as in the preaching of the gospel the Lord stoops to use human instruments (Rom. 10:14), so the animosity of the nations against Israel often furthered, unwittingly, the Divine purpose:

"For behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for My people and for My heritage Israel, whom *they have scattered* among the nations, and parted My land" (Joel 3:1, 2).

From N.T. and from O.T. alike we find sufficient evidence to refer to Israel as "the Scattered People", but whether Isaiah 18:7 refers to Israel is a moot point.

Let us now turn to the other side of the picture, and see whether we are justified in calling Israel "the Gathered People" as we look to the end of prophecy and the day of restoration spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began (Acts 3:19-21). Whether Israel will be gathered by the consent and help of the nations of the earth, whether they will be gathered by miraculous intervention, or a combination of both, it stands written: "He that scattered Israel, will gather him", and justifies our closest attention to the terms used in the associations revealed. The Hebrew word that must occupy our attention is the word *qabats*, and *Brown, Driver, and Brigg's Lexicon* tells us that in the Sabeans the word means a "harvest", and in many if not in all references, the harvest of either the wheat or the tares, a gathering either for blessing or for judgment is implied.

Again, it will be necessary to make a selection from the great amount of references that are found in the O.T. to the gathering of Israel. One of the fullest promises, and supplying us with some of the necessary conditions associated with this gathering is found in Deuteronomy 30:1-6. If in their captivity Israel "call to mind" the threat of cursing and the promise of blessing, if they "return unto the Lord" and obey His voice, then said God, I will turn their captivity and have compassion upon them "and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee", even though they were driven to the outmost parts of heaven. These the Lord

promises He will bring into the land which their fathers possessed, and they shall possess it.

From this initial prophecy, several important features emerge:

- (1) The gathering of scattered Israel will be contingent *upon their repentance*. If Israel and Judah return to the land in unbelief that will not be the gathering of the Lord, but a human attempt to bring about the restoration by evil means, which will end in disaster, and such an abortive movement has taken place, with disastrous consequences in our own time.
- (2) All Israel is in view in Deuteronomy 30. The subdivision of the Ten Tribes and the Two Tribes is not envisaged. It matters not where the dispersion of Israel may have taken them, even though it be to the utmost parts of heaven.
- (3) This gathering will take scattered Israel back to the land which their fathers possessed, and they shall possess it. That land is Palestine, and cannot possibly be Great Britain or any other country on earth. This prophecy is explicit, it is basic, it is definite; it cannot be made to mean anything other than what it actually says.

The reference to the “outmost parts of heaven” seems to have been in mind when that typical anticipatory “gathering” took place on the day of Pentecost, for we read:

“And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5).

Leaving this testimony of Moses, let us acquaint ourselves with the witness of the Prophets. Isaiah 11 is one of the passages which seems to be rightly called Millennial. It is linked with the presence of the Lord (Isa. 11:1, 4 and 10):

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah *from the four corners of the earth*” (Isa. 11:11, 12).

Let us once again pause to consider this prophecy:

- (1) This gathering of Israel takes place at the Second Coming of Christ for He shall not only fulfil Psalm 72, and judge the poor, but shall “smite the earth (*eretz*, or with some codices *ariz* ‘the oppressor’, verse 4) with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked or the lawless one” (Isa. 11:4). (See 2 Thess. 2:1-8).
- (2) The countries of the dispersed remnant are named, but the full quota of Israel and Judah will come from the four quarters of the earth.

- (3) When this gathering takes place, the whole house of Israel, including the ten tribes, and Judah will become one nation again, as Ezekiel 37:16-22 declares.
- (4) This gathering will be “the second time” of Acts 7:13 and Hebrews 9:28.

Isaiah 43 contains a glowing prophecy of Israel’s re-gathering:

“For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in My sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I given men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters *from the ends of the earth*; even every one that is called by My Name: for I have created him for My glory, I have formed him; yea I have made him” (Isa. 43:3-7).

Like the Apostle, who esteemed his life of suffering “light” while he kept in mind the “eternal weight” of glory that would be his at the end, the Lord said to Israel:

“For a *small moment* (one period at least has lasted nineteen hundred years!) have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee” (Isa. 54:7).

The context leads us to the glory of restored Jerusalem, a faint adumbration on earth of the splendour of the heavenly city (Isa. 54:11, 12). The testimony of Jeremiah and of Ezekiel is in entire harmony with what we have already seen. The reader may appreciate the references for his own meditation: Jeremiah 29:14; 31:8, 10 and 32:37. Ezekiel 20:34, 41; 28:25; 34:13; 36:24 and 39:27. Hosea, who uses the symbolic words Jezreel or Lo-ammi, says:

“Then (see verse 10) shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel” (Hos. 1:10, 11).

Micah has a word to say concerning the gathering of Israel:

“I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel . . . and their king shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them”.

“In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; and I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast off a strong nation: and the Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, *even for ever*” (Micah 2:12, 13; 4:6, 7).

It is possible that the gathering of 2:12 will be for Israel's cleansing and purging, the figure "the sheep of Bosrah" rather suggesting this than immediate blessing, but one thing is certain, the Lord is their "king" and He is not an absent King reigning from heaven. He "reigns" over them "in Mount Zion" and so fixes this gathering as taking place at the Lord's coming and reign.

This refining and purifying is referred to in Malachi 3:1-3 and 4:5, 6, where the words "I will send My messenger" and "I will send Elijah" reveal that just as John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah, and whose ministry overlapped the advent of the King the first time, so Malachi 3 and 4 show a similar ministry at the time of the Lord's Second Coming. When the Redeemer shall come to Zion, when He establishes with them His covenant, then and then only will it be possible to say:

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee" (Isa. 59:20, 21; 60:1).

Any attempt to isolate Isaiah 60:1 from its context must be resisted, the glory of the Lord will not rise upon Israel until the Lord of glory returns (see Isaiah 59:20, 21). Only when the Lord's way has been prepared, shall "the glory of the Lord be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together" (Isa. 40:3-5).

When the Lord brings again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, Joel declares that the Lord will also gather all nations, and bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for "My people and for My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations and parted My land" (Joel 3:2). It should be noted how explicit the time note is of this prophecy, "For behold in those days and in that time" refer back to chapter 2 where the words quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost are found. In response to the words "I will also gather all nations" we read in verse 11:

"Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen (nations), and gather yourselves together round about" (Joel 3:11).

The harvest is come (verse 13), and the same phenomena that is associated with the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord, is repeated here:

"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood".

"For in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance".

"The sun and the moon shall be darkened . . . the Lord also shall roar out of Zion . . . the Lord your God dwelling in Zion".

(Joel 2:31, 32; 3:15; Isa. 13:9-11; Matt. 24:29, 30).

This gathering of the nations is comparable with the revelation of Matthew 25:32 and this takes place

“When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations” (Matt. 25:31, 32),

and just as that is an inquisition into the way in which the nations have treated Israel (Joel 3:2-8), so there will be an inquisition as to the way the nations have treated the Lord’s brethren (Matt. 25:35-44). For as Joel 3:12 declares “there will I sit to judge all the heathen (nations) round about”. The “mighty ones” of Joel 3:11 referring to the “holy angels” who come with Him (Matt. 25:31 and 2 Thess. 1:7).

So far we have limited our investigation to those passages which employ either the word “scatter” or “gather”. We must, however, take the subject a stage further and consider the bearing that certain other features have on this great issue. We commence this second aspect of our study with Isaiah 27:12:

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel” (Isa. 27:12).

“Beat off” translates the Hebrew word *chabat*, the first occurrence of which reads “when thou beatest thine olive tree” (Deut. 24:20), and the second “and beat out that she had gleaned” (Ruth 2:17). In Judges 6:11 it refers to “threshing wheat” and in Isaiah 28:27 to beating out fitches with a staff. The statement “Ye shall be gathered one by one” (Isa. 27:12) seems to indicate that the reference here is to the harvesting of the olive berry. Twice, Isaiah speaks of the “shaking of an olive” (Isa. 17:6; 24:13), and the figure used in Isaiah 27:12 is that Israel shall be gathered “one by one” as olives are beaten off the boughs, not gathered indiscriminately mixing wheat and tares together in one sheaf.

Two rivers are indicated in Isaiah 27:12. “The river”, Hebrew *nahar*, refers to the river Euphrates (See Gen. 2:14; 15:18; Deut. 1:7; Jer. 46:2). The “stream” of Egypt refers to a brook, Hebrew *nachal*, usually translated “brook” as in the references to “the brook of Eschol”, “the brooks of Arnon”, “the brook Kidron” (Num. 13:23; 21:14; 2 Sam. 15:23). Dr. Lightfoot says “this is not the Nile in Egypt, but Sihor in the way to Egypt (Josh. 13:3; Jer. 2:18). In the LXX it is *rhinocorura*”. Dr. Young, in the map contained in his *Analytical Concordance*, places “the stream of Egypt” south of Gaza, a strip of territory much in the news as these words are written. The word Mesopotamia “between the rivers” is *aram naharaim*, retaining this word *nahor* “the river”, i.e. the Euphrates. The “channel” of the river

is the translation of the well-known word *shibboleth*, used as a test by the men of Gilead to discover the Ephraimites, who at the passages or fords (Jud. 12:6) of Jordan asked permission to go over, the test word “shibboleth” being one of the names in Hebrew given to a ford, a channel or a wady. The gathering “one by one” not only alludes to the method of gathering olives, but suggests that there will be no possibility of anyone “gate crashing” as in Matthew 22:12. This “one by one” discriminate gathering is compared with the way in which the tithe of the herd was counted, as in Leviticus 27:32, “whatsoever passeth under the rod”. In Ezekiel 20, the prophet says of Israel, that they will say: “We will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone”. To this the Lord replies:

“As I live, saith the Lord God . . . I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered . . . and I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond (or the ‘binding obligation’, only occurrence of this word) of the covenant: and I will purge out from among you the rebels” (Ezek. 20:33-38).

In Jeremiah 33, where Israel’s desolations are to be restored, the same figure is used:

“In the cities of Judah, shall flocks pass again under the hands of him that telleth them” (Jer. 33:13).

It is not without purpose that the Psalmist associates “the gathering of the outcast of Israel” with the fact that the Lord

“Telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names” (Psa. 147:4).

This insistence by the Prophets on the “one by one” gathering, the passing under the rod, the telling of the names, is all against a mass movement crashing into Palestine at the impulse of fear, or for the satisfaction of political purposes. When Israel enter their land, the tares will be discriminated from the wheat. The names Cain, Lot, Ammon, Moab and Ishmael come to the mind at once. When Israel left Egypt on the night of the first Passover, we read “a mixed multitude went up also with them” (Exod. 12:38), and Nehemiah uses the same word and refers to this same strange event in Nehemiah 13:3, where he also recorded his indignation and sorrow at a similar “mixture” which threatened to undo all that he had been led to do for the returned captives:

“In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews’ language, but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them, and cursed them,

and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves. Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin. Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives? And one of the sons of Joida, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son in law to Sanballat the Horonite: therefore I chased him from me" (Neh. 13:23-28).

We read that Esau married two women who were Hittites (Gen. 26:34). Seeing that these wives pleased not Isaac and Rebekah and that Jacob was charged not to take a wife of the daughters of Canaan, he married a daughter of Ishmael, thus adding still further to the mixture of his descendants. One may interpose here, and say, even so, but as Esau was not in the line either of the Covenant nor of the Messiah it does not matter so much. But here we are mistaken, for in the days of David, Edom became a subject people (2 Sam. 8:14), and in 1 Kings 11:1 we read that Solomon loved many strange women . . . of the Moabites, Ammonites, *Edomites*, Zidonians and Hittites. During the time of Elisha, Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king over themselves (2 Kings 8:20). But later, under the Maccabees "the children of Esau finally lost their independent existence, and became substantially merged in the house of Israel" (*Imperial Bible Dictionary*).

Josephus informs us that about 125 B.C. Edom was finally subdued by John Hyrcanus, who compelled them to submit to circumcision and other Jewish rites "that they were hereafter No Other Than Jews" (*Jos. Ant.* xiii. 9. 1).

Here then is a "mixture". Those called "Jews" even by so aristocratic a Pharisee as Josephus could include Edomites, whose mothers were Hittites and Ishmaelites! We do know that at the time of the end there will be those who "say they are Jews, and are not" (Rev. 3:9), and it is certain that when the Jews were dispersed during and at the close of the Acts, they were "a mixed multitude", tares mingled with wheat, not to be segregated until the harvest. Israel is to be sifted among the nations as corn is sifted in a sieve (Amos 9:9). The word translated sieve is the Hebrew *kebarah*, a network, but the word "sift" is not the verbal form of this word, but the Hebrew *nua* a word meaning "to wander up and down", "fugitive", "vagabond", "scatter", and other terms which graphically picture the "wandering Jew", and suggests one way in which this "sifting" will be accomplished. This element of mingling and mixture, necessitates the

purging and the refining that must take place before Israel can be given their land at the opening of the day of the Lord.

“For he is like the fire of smelters and the acid used by fullers; He will sit down to smelt and purge, purging the sons of Levi, refining them like silver and gold” (Mal. 3:2 Moffatt).

“Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in Mine anger and in My fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you . . . as silver is melted in the midst of the furnace” (Ezek. 22:19-22).

To go outside the pages of Scripture for our information is fraught with danger, we are neither historians nor ethnologists, we simply refer to a further evidence of this great intermingling that has taken place since A.D. 70. There is evidence in hand to show that another nation was incorporated into the Jewish faith, a people called the Khazars, who occupied the south-eastern corner of Europe in the eighth century A.D. About the end of the seventh century, the Khazars became converted to Judaism, and Rabbis were brought over from Spain to minister in their synagogues. Later on this Khazar kingdom became incorporated in Southern Russia, and this accounts for the great Jewish population of Poland, Rumania and adjacent countries. All this, however, we take “on trust”, knowing little more from history than that such a kingdom existed.

If to the Edomite intermixture we add the Khazar, and other additions, we can well understand that the “all Israel” that God is pledged to “save” (Rom. 11:26) cannot include many who are “of Israel” or who can call Abraham their “father” (Rom. 9:6-8); such are not the children of the *promise who are counted for the seed*. If we have represented the character of the “Jew” aright, it makes it simply impossible, that to such a mixture, the blessed words should be addressed, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come”; such an unholy mixture could never be used by God as a Pre-Millennial kingdom, for their melting and refining, the ridding of their dross, takes place on the eve of the Lord’s return at His Second Coming. Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles until the end of Gentile time. Gentile time will end when the Stone cut without hands smites the image of Daniel 2. The people that become a blessing to all nations will be those who at long last will look upon Him Whom they have pierced, and who will say:

“Unto Him that loved us, and washed (or loosed) us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen” (Rev. 1:5 6).

In line with all that we have seen is Peter's appeal immediately following Pentecost:

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).

The word presence, *prosopon*, is generally translated “face” and CANNOT possible mean “absence”. In verse 13 we read of the “presence of Pilate”, and in 5:41 identical language is used for departing “from the presence” of the council, and in the reference to the Second Coming in 2 Thessalonians 1:9. The promised “refreshing” and the threatened “destruction” flow alike from the immediate personal presence of the same Lord. This “Scattered People” will at last become the Lord's “Gathered People”, and that gathering will take place at the Second Coming. At that gathering a great sifting and refining will take place, which shows that before that time Israel will be in no position to become a blessing in the earth; they stand in need evidently of a personal blessing themselves.

Let us rejoice that

“He that *scattered* Israel will *gather* him”.

THE PROPHETIC EARTH

As an appendix to this study, we draw the reader's attention to a series of articles in volumes xxxvi and xxxvii of *The Berean Expositor* under the title “The prophetic earth”, which suggest that the prophetic earth does not extend further than that ruled over by Nebuchadnezzar and his successors; in other words from the Indus to the straits of Gibraltar. We quote:

“It seems a sound argument to affirm that by reason of Israel's *Lo-ammi* condition at Acts 28 (that is, her laying aside by God in unbelief), the time element in the history of the successive rulers from Nebuchadnezzar should cease to have a place, and it seems reasonable to believe that, when the prophetic clock again begins to tick, the parenthesis will be closed and the powers indicated in the two feet and the ten toes (which toes are symbols of the ten kings yet to reign with the Beast, at the time of the end) will reign, in the first place, over the same territory as was governed by their predecessors”.

“The reference to ‘the kings of the East’ in Rev. 16:12, does not refer to the Far East as we speak of it today. The Greek word *anatole* is used of the home country of the wise men (Matt. 2:1). The corresponding terms in the Hebrew are *mizrach* which means “from the rising (of the sun)” (Josh. 4:19) or *qedem*, a land, comprehending Arabian Desert,

Ammon, Armenia, Assyria and Mesopotamia. This is the *anatole* of the Hebrews. To this region belong the kings of the the East, for the Hebrew words *melchi qedem* are found in Isaiah 19:11 and are there translated 'ancient kings'; but Pharaoh may be boasting here that he is descended from the kings of the East".

Psalm 83:4 refers to "crafty counsel" taken by those who are "confederate against" Israel, and have said:

"Come and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance".

words that have been unconsciously repeated by Arab leaders and reported in our newspapers in our time. Then, we ask, is it accidental that Ten Nations of the Middle East are immediately enumerated?

Edom, Ishmaelites, Moab, Hagarenes, Gebal, Ammon, Amalek, Philistines with Tyre, Assur and Lot (Psa. 83:6-8).

"The great powers outside the limits of the prophetic earth naturally play their part and exert a great influence, but just as the reference to the new heavens and the new earth in Isaiah is localized, and our attention is focused upon 'Jerusalem' (Isa. 65:17, 18), or Millennial blessings are peculiarly associated, in the first place, with 'all My holy mountain', before the earth is full of the knowledge of the Lord (Isa. 11:9), so the doings of the nations in the limited zone of the prophetic earth precede and anticipate the wider activities and judgments that follow".

We make no pretence to being "prophets" and can only be guided by what is written, realizing that much is still "sealed"; nevertheless in 1952/3 we wrote:

"Two items of peculiar interest are Oil and The Suez Canal, the oil fields of Iran, Irak (Persia and Mesopotamia, so including Babylon) and Saudi Arabia and the canal which passes through Egypt. It may well be that a 'corner' in oil and a command of the Suez Canal, together with the control of the air will make the rest of the world say of the last dictator:

"Who is able to make war with him?" (Rev. 13:4).