

## ~Other Speakers A-F: Andrew Bonar:

Reference has been made to the declaration in 2 Thessalonians 2 that the day of Christ should not come until "the apostasy" as well as "the man of sin" had been seen. Also to Matthew 24, where the great tribulation, "such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be," is also to precede the same glorious event. It is evident from these passages that the man of sin who is to exalt "himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped," must be the principal person in the tribulation which "immediately" (mark the importance of the expression, Matthew 24:29), precedes the "coming" by which he is destroyed.

His times also have been identified already with those of the tribulation spoken of in Daniel 12:1, inasmuch as there cannot be two unequalled tribulations any more than two second comings. It is equally evident that after the advent of Messiah in humiliation, only one abomination of desolation is spoken of, as shown by the use of the definite article (Matthew 24:15). The reference there made by our Lord is to Daniel 9:27 in connection with what had before been mentioned in chapter 8, and afterwards referred to in chapter 12:11.

These passages, as will be noticed, are all distinctly connected with the king, the Antichrist, who obviously is the principal character in them, for he is seen exalted above all that is named. Still more to show that the abomination is of necessity yet future, let it be borne in mind that there has been neither city nor sanctuary to pollute since Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus in the year A.D.70. And that it could not have happened before is manifest, for Revelation, which agrees with Daniel in the description of the times of the beast and in which there is distinct reference to the abomination as well as the tribulation, was not written for twenty years after the destruction of Jerusalem had occurred.

Again, as fixing the chronology of these events to a period yet future, the destroying king of fierce countenance (Dan. 8:23) is said to come "in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full," (can any one pretend to say in our downward career we have yet seen the full account of transgressors?) and to "stand up against the Prince of princes" to "be broken without hand," which again can mean nothing but the second coming of Christ, the "Stone . . . cut out without hands" (Dan. 2:34). Another remarkable sign fixing all these events, so connected with each other, to the very last days, is given by our Lord Himself in Matthew 24:14, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

It will be noticed on reference to the chapter that this is seen before the tribulation of which we have been speaking, and consequently also before the man of sin who appears in it. If so, he must be, as we have all along been contending, future, for no one will say that the gospel has been ever so preached until now, if it can even yet be said. Still it is evident that sign is drawing near enough to make all of us think how close at hand its full accomplishment may be, when the apostasy, the man of sin, the great tribulation, and the Son of man in the clouds of heaven will all, as it appears, follow in rapid succession.

Again, we are told (Dan. 7:24) that "the ten horns out of this kingdom (the fourth or Roman empire) are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them," etc. The ten kingdoms must therefore have appeared before Antichrist, inasmuch as he rises after them. This accords with what is said in Revelation 17:12, where the ten horns are again spoken of as "ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast," who, as we have seen, rises after them.

Now let us mark what is said of these kings (verse 13), "these have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast," for (verse 17), "God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." Is it possible for anyone to say that ten such kingdoms are in existence now in the Roman earth, each giving their kingdom to the beast? If not, these kingdoms must of necessity be future, for begin when they may, they "agree," and give their kingdom unto the beast until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

And what are these "words of God"? "I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet . . . These both were cast alive into a lake of fire" (Rev. 19:19-20).

Thus they are agreed until the purposes are fulfilled in the destruction of the beast, and his remnant being slain. It will not do, after such plain Scriptures, to say that some hundreds of years ago, ten kingdoms (which is doubted) gave their power to the pope, so trying to prove him to be the beast. Whatever they were then, it is not pretended by any that they are giving their power to him now, which is fatal to the theory of either the ten

kingdoms or the beast having yet been seen at all.

Once more: the fourth or Roman empire is divided into ten horns or kingdoms (Dan. 7:23-24), corresponding in all respects to the ten toes of Daniel's image, being its division at the time when the stone falls upon the feet—that is at the very end—and when "in the days of these kings" (Dan. 2:44), God sets up the kingdom which shall never be destroyed.

In other words, the ten kings, receiving power at one hour with the beast, give him their power to the end of this dispensation when they share his destruction. The new dispensation is the setting up of the "kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." Now surely this proves that these kingdoms and the beast, to whom they are said to give their power, exist at the very end of this present dispensation, and not in times long past, as so many seem determined to have it.

But if we look further into what is said of this remarkable division of the Roman earth into ten kingdoms, it will appear still more manifest that that division cannot yet have taken place, and if so, the Antichrist who, as we have seen, rises after them, is of necessity future also. The limits of what is called the Roman earth are sufficiently known to all, and no division of it which does not include the whole can be said to have fulfilled its division into the ten toes or kingdoms spoken of at the end.

But whilst admitting that the legs of iron mean the east and west divisions of that empire, no scruple is shown in leaving out the former altogether (embracing as it does the portion most important in Bible history, namely the Holy Land, Syria, Egypt, Turkey and Greece), and placing the ten toes upon one foot of the image in Daniel 2. In fact, it was found impossible to take the Eastern empire into account at all, and so it was abandoned.

Thereafter the whole effort seems to have been directed to discover them in the Western, at the rise of the papacy, and the result is the submission to us of various different lists of ten kingdoms certainly, which if they ever existed at all, have long since confessedly disappeared. Whilst the pope, who, if he really had been the beast, ought to have disappeared with them (Rev. 19:19-21), is still strong enough to make the effort he is doing in our day to recover the power he has lost.

It would be a useless task to follow the extravagancies in regard to these pretended ten kingdoms and the part they are alleged to have acted in fulfilling the predictions of Scripture. The pages of Gibbon and others have been ransacked, and singular confirmations are alleged to have been discovered there, whilst between metaphorical and literal interpretation of Scripture language itself, as alternately it suited the purpose to have it so, the whole has been wrought into a tissue of extravagance sufficient to involve the work of prophetic inquiry, if not the study of the Bible itself, in ridicule and confusion.

If the fourth kingdom (the last) stretches, as it must, to the end of this dispensation, where should we expect to find the ten toes—in its condition at the end—but at the extremity of its existence? Originally the kingly power (however abused by him afterwards) was conferred on Nebuchadnezzar the declared head of the image, "thou art this head of gold," "the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom," —and is seen descending through gradually baser metals, till mingled with the people's.

This will be the remarkable feature in the ten kingdoms when they are seen, mingled "with the seed of men" —the kingly power mixed with the people's—the governing with the governed - and all who are not willfully blind to it, may see the whole tendency already going in that direction.

The supposed era of the rise of the papacy (for it is far from being settled even among those who date their predictions from it), is somewhere between the years 560 and 600, when in the pretended ten kingdoms the people's power was as little recognized as can well be imagined. How different now, when although the kingly power is needed to keep all together, the people are pronounced to be the source of all power, and when even in our loyal land the will of the governed is becoming more and more compulsory on the governor.

The clay-iron principle is daily coming out in more recognized strength. And it is the distinguishing feature of the ten toes when developed, as they will speedily be, out of elements already displaying themselves in the feet from which these kingdoms arise.

What has caused much perplexity regarding their formation or rather the period at which it occurs, is not noticing that the times of the Gentiles which began on the rejection of Christ by "His own," intervene manifestly as an interruption or break in the prophetic history of "his people" the Jews, as given by Daniel among others.

The nationality of the Jews (whilst individually they remain a standing proof of the literal fulfillment of Scripture denunciation) ceased for the time with the destruction under Titus, which consummated by building Aelia (Hadrian Capitolina) on its site to suppress the very name of Jerusalem. Indeed virtually the loss of their nationality may be dated from the fatal hour when they crucified their King after having disowned Him as the King of the Jews (John 19:15). Along with it must have ceased also for the time, the history of the Jewish people as a nation, inasmuch as they were no longer one.

Jerusalem has since been "trodden down of the Gentiles," and will continue to be so, by distinct announcement, "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). Who can affect indifference as to the sign of their drawing to a close, which our Lord Himself has supplied in Matthew 24, where it is written, "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." From Scripture we shall see, as we proceed, that the return of the Jews to their own land which must precede "the end" as a matter of necessity, will be in unbelief, even as at the time they left it. Still it will be a return in such circumstances as to place them in it once more as a nation.

The prophetic history broken off at their dispersion, will then be resumed preparatory to the mighty events to be enacted there, and the manifestation of "the abomination that maketh desolate," "the king of the fierce countenance," "the little horn," "Assyrian," "the Antichrist" who is to be broken without hands there on the mountains of Israel (Ezek. 39:4; Isa. 14:25; Dan. 2:45).

If it was given to Daniel, who was eminently a Jew, to know what should befall his people in the latter days (10:14), surely it is to be expected that we should find the Jews nationally among the ten toes or kingdoms from such mention being made by him of these toes, and this is in accordance with their return in unbelief while the times of the Gentiles are still unfulfilled.

Yet everything indicates a short duration for these kingdoms when seen, else they would not be in harmony with the other proportions of the image which he describes. For the toes of it, of iron and miry clay" (implying certainly less duration than the nobler proportions of it which by general consent have passed their day), could not surely exceed in point of duration all the rest put together, as they would do if they dated from the rise of the papacy the more so as by the conditions of the prophecy they would require to be existing still, and until "the Stone" falls upon them.

To make this more plain, it may just be noticed here that the Babylonish empire lasted 78 years, dating from the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, the Persian 200 years, the Grecian 300 years, in all about 578 years. These were succeeded by the Roman empire which was established under Augustus. Unless we are prepared to admit a break in the prophetic history, we must be prepared not only to show that the Roman earth, in its integrity, was then divided into ten kingdoms which are still existing, but still further to explain how such lengthened duration could consist with the harmony in the portions of the image which have been seen.

Again with regard to the time of these remarkable kingdoms, coexistent as they are to be with the Antichrist inasmuch as we have already seen they receive power at one hour with the beast, and agree to give him their kingdom until the purposes of God are fulfilled (Revelation 17:12,17), we must remember, that Daniel in speaking of him under the name of the king of the fierce countenance (Daniel 8:23) distinctly places his appearing at the time of the end.

This is confirmed by three different expressions all marking the same fact in the same chapter. In the preceding one, Antichrist is seen rising out of the ten kingdoms into which the Roman empire will then have been divided, whilst here, it is out of the four into which Greece was parted under Alexander's generals. But in this, as in all else, there is no discrepancy when it is examined, for the Roman empire received its most valuable additions from the territories which it wrested from the successors of Alexander. All therefore would be accomplished should Antichrist rise out of the Grecian portion of the Roman earth, "in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full" (Dan. 8:23).

This time cannot have been seen yet, unless we are prepared to say that transgressors have come to the full in contradiction to the apostle Paul's warning to Timothy concerning these same perilous times in the last days, which shows us that instead of amelioration, "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13), till, under Antichrist, with the measure filled up in his times, the Lord Himself comes to destroy the wicked one, and supplant him with a reign of righteousness.

The break in the prophetic history which is contended for may be seen perhaps still more distinctly if we examine the well-known prophecy of the 70 weeks of Daniel (9:24-27), and the events declared to happen in

them. Is it not evident, to begin with, that the prophecy must reach to the end of this dispensation from the mention of the terminating in the everlasting righteousness which is to be seen only when the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him" (Daniel 7:27)?

Doubtless in the loose interpretation of such passages, it has been assumed that all this may be said to have happened when our Lord came, and by suffering on the cross, established His right to the dominion He had so purchased. His right, thank God, is clear and will one day be vindicated in the destruction of all that interferes with it (Ezek. 21:27). But whilst this evil generation lasts, is not the people of the saints of the Most High a persecuted people? And their Lord still "despised and rejected"? The everlasting righteousness and anointing of the Most Holy which concludes the 70 weeks (Dan. 9:24) are yet therefore to be seen in times as unlike the present as prevailing evil is to prevailing righteousness.

It is true the price was paid on the cross, but "the redemption of the purchased possession (inheritance)" (Eph. 1:14) is still future, and until it is completed, the prophecy we are considering cannot be said to have been accomplished in all its parts. Yet as so large a portion has, without contradiction, been already fulfilled, how is it possible, without admitting the break spoken of, that the 70 weeks with the cutting off of Messiah occurring at the close of the 69th (Dan. 9:25-26), could reach the times of everlasting righteousness which are to be only when "the kingdom" is set up which shall never be moved (Dan. 2:44)?

In fact, no other solution can be given of the difficulty than that which will be found to be in harmony with all else, namely, that Daniel, giving as he did, the future history of his people to the end and the promises which are yet to be made good to them, spoke of them as he was moved by the Holy Ghost only as a nation, which they ceased to be when their Messiah was "cut off" at the end of the 69th week, and when they themselves were scattered (as predicted elsewhere) and the gospel sent to the Gentiles.

As their "times" draw to a close, Scripture indicates a return of the Jews again as a nation, although in unbelief (Ezek. 22:19-22), when the last week, shown to be a week of years from the portion of the prophecy already fulfilled, will remain naturally still to be accomplished before the happy days of universal righteousness and the anointing the Most Holy are seen, which, as we are told, "seal up the vision and prophecy" (Dan. 9:24).

And here it may just be noticed, that the word "week" is in the original simply a hebdomad or seventh, and would have been better so rendered in our translation, for a week with us implies a week of days only. In this instance, by the measure observed in the other parts of the prophecy already fulfilled (Messiah having been cut off at the end of the 69th hebdomad of years), it must mean a seventh of years also, or seven years. Jacob served Laban for Rachel seven years, and was said to have "fulfilled her week" or hebdomad (Gen. 29:28).

It is of this week accordingly that express mention is made immediately after (Dan. 9: 27), the "he" there spoken of being manifestly the destroying prince that shall come, the Antichrist, with his abomination to the end, and with whom Daniel's people will enter into a covenant, choosing, in the strong delusion sent them, the false prince for the True.

What strange and deep meaning is there in that declaration of our Lord when so viewed, "I am come in My Father's Name, and ye receive Me not: if (or when) another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (John 5:43). And this Antichrist will do, for he will exalt "himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped" (2 Thess. 2:4).

His coming is declared to be with all "deceivableness of unrighteousness." He adapts himself, just as Napoleon Bonaparte did, to the prevailing system of the godless times he appears in, and especially to the prejudices of the Jewish people, who (probably by his help) in their own land once more as a nation with their great wealth, will rise into importance there. In this "deceivableness" also it is that the covenant is made with them for the whole remaining week, which Satan, who works through him (2 Thessalonians 2:9), knows perfectly will exhaust the term remaining of his power to deceive until the thousand years which follow should be fulfilled (Revelation 20:3).

At first all seems to prosper. All the world is seen (Rev. 13:3) to wonder after the beast, and not only to wonder but to worship him and the devil too, who gives "him his power ... and great authority." How fearful to think even of such an apostasy as this. Well may it be called "THE apostasy," connected as it is with this prince that shall then have come and shown himself to be that "man of sin . . . the son of perdition," for in the midst of the week (although his covenant, such as it was, had been made for the whole), he throws off the mask and shows

himself "that he is God" (2 Thess. 2:4), with a false prophet too working miracles before him in the power of Satan himself -the mock trinity of hell then shown in opposition to the Trinity of heaven, in league too with all whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life!

The last half of the seven years, when the covenant has been broken, are the times of the unequalled tribulation so often referred to already, and of which so much is said in Scripture. God has mercifully shortened those days, and told his people in every different mode of expressing it what the limit is; "the midst of the week," or hebdomad of seven years, that is, three years and a half, the "1260 days," the "42 months," the "time, times, and half a time," all expressing exactly that same duration, and all, if taken with the context, pointing distinctly to the same dreadful period.

During it God raises up two witnesses, doubtless individual men, from what is said of them, whom he miraculously protects during the time of "their testimony" (Rev. 11:3-7), inasmuch as He has never left Himself without a witness on the earth (Acts 14:17), nor does so, until His longsuffering being exhausted and His Spirit no longer striving, the earth and its Antichrist king whom it had chosen to its confusion, are left to the terrors which fall upon its inhabitants, as Christ descends with power and great glory to vindicate the insulted Majesty of His Father, and to show in His times "Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15).

We must never overlook the prominent part assigned in Holy Scripture to Israel. The whole history and prophecies there revolve round it as a center. Israel alone was God's chosen people and recognized as such by Him. "You only have I known of all the families (nations) of the earth;" and it is added, "therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos 3:2). Accordingly the mention of every other nation is always in subordination to Israel and their connection with it for the time. They are seen to be advanced to punish Israel when Israel had sinned, and turned back again when repentance had brought back to it God's favour.

And even in the New Testament, when the "middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile had been broken down, the earthly distinction of the Jew and the favour yet to be shown to Jerusalem, are distinctly remembered and confirmed. God has not cast off His people whom He foreknew (Rom. 11:2), nor will it be found that He has forgotten the promises He has made concerning them. "Behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy" (Isa. 65:18), and connected as Jerusalem now is with the Gentiles by their adoption, it will yet be literally "the joy of the whole earth."

To separate, therefore, the Jews from our thoughts of the blessedness which is yet to be in this, at present, blighted earth, is to overlook the promises as well as prophecies which connect them still, distinctly as a nation, with the better day that is coming. For yet "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2:3-4).

A difficulty has occurred here to some out of what they consider the small and insufficient mention which, according to this view of prophecy, is made of Christ's church on earth during "the times of the Gentiles" now running their course. They ask, "How can we think that startling events, like the rise of the papacy, should have occurred during the long 1800 years which have passed, without special notice of them for the church's guidance?"

In reply to this, let us bear in mind the fuller dispensation as well as presence of the Holy Ghost the Comforter under which the Gentile church had been placed from the outset. And let us not, at the same time overlook the perfectly accurate and sufficient description which was given in addition to this, of the trials and treatment to which believers in it would be exposed, whilst "the times of the Gentiles" were being fulfilled.

The disciples, until the Holy Ghost descended, had thought that Christ "at that time" would have restored the kingdom to Israel (Luke 24:20-21), even although our Lord Himself had warned them in Matthew 24 of what was to intervene, telling them that "all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places."

And as to His people themselves, about to be gathered out of all nations, They shall "deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for My Name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another, and many false prophets (the pope among them) shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of (the) many shall wax

cold. But he that shall endure unto the end the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:6-13).

It was inspiration alone which could, in the disciples' days, have drawn out with such fullness and accuracy the description of the "times of the Gentiles," keeping pace as they have been doing with the no less wondrous description of Israel and its dispersion until their close - still dwelling alone, and not mingled among the nations (Num. 23:9) amongst whom their wanderings are. Deaf to their own prophets and not seeing the light around them, blindness in part having happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles shall have come in (Rom. 11:25).

The warning to and hope of the Gentiles was distinctly held out to them from the beginning, whilst as their times draw to a close, the prophetic history of Israel, with which their own fullness is shown to them by the apostle to be bound up inseparably (Rom. 11:11-12), again comes in as a guide, if they will take heed to it, to all God's people, Jews as well as Gentiles, through the dark passage which still remains to be trodden before there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer Who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11:26), at the close of the last of the 70 weeks.

These promises are indeed sure, but so let it be remembered, is every word of Scripture regarding the abomination of desolation and the time of trouble yet to be seen in Judea (Matthew 24:15-16) before that blessedness come. It is with the people of whom Daniel was speaking, as we have seen, that Antichrist will "confirm the covenant . . . for one week," although the whole ten kings of the Roman earth join together in giving "their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

The scene will be once more in Judea, for he, Antichrist, plants the tabernacle of his palaces there "between the seas (the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea - Dan. 11:45), in the glorious holy mountain" (a name given alone to Mount Zion, in Jerusalem), and there it is that he comes "to his end and none shall help him," for he is broken in "My land" and trodden down upon "My mountains" (Isa. 14:25). Well then may we look to Jerusalem as the days of its being trodden down are so surely drawing to a close, for there again a people terrible from their beginning hitherto" (Isa. 18:2) shall be gathered, that what remains of the prophecies concerning them may be fulfilled.

God has said that He will gather the house of Israel into their land again, not as we have been taking it for granted, in favour, but in anger. "As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace ... so will I gather you in Mine anger and in My fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you ... in the fire of My wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof" (Ezek. 22:20-21).

If such is to be the course of events, how striking is it to see already amongst other signs of the times, the Eastern shores of the Mediterranean daily attracting greater notice and becoming of greater interest to the world. Greece, too, as well as Egypt (both spoken of in the times of the end), have reappeared only of late years, and the other two required with Turkey to complete the five toes of the Eastern foot, will not be wanting when the time comes - nay, may even already be guessed at. The transit through Egypt to our Indian possessions has for some years been drawing all eyes in that direction, and steam, with the introduction of railways there, will soon make its neighborhood yet more familiar and important.

The jealousy with which the European powers are watching each other in that quarter, is revealed by the powerful fleets, in seeming idleness and maintained at prodigious cost to watch over the different supposed interests there, which must be correspondingly great. Turkey, too, extended for its own strength, is confessedly maintained in its integrity through the jealousy felt by the great powers of each other - a jealousy showing itself on all occasions, as in the recent and still unsettled question regarding the holy places, of which the Eastern and Western churches are alike claiming the right of custody.

However it may be arranged for the time, as probably it will, it has shown in addition to all else, that the feeling regarding Palestine, which has been dormant since the days of the crusades, is alive and stirring once more. The feeble sway of the Turk could not stand even now but for the interested protection given by others who are opposed to one of themselves occupying such a position of advantage over the rest. Such being the anomalous position of Palestine itself, who can help noticing the rising importance of its ancient possessors, the Jews, and how they have come to be spoken of as the bankers of Europe from their enormous command of capital?

What is to prevent such a people, by general consent, being called upon on any emergency to occupy that land as a mode of removing the difficulty at present existing? The more so, as neither by their religion, which unlike others tries to make no proselytes, nor by their arms, for they have none, are they in a condition to disturb the balance of power there as any other movement would.

Things far more wonderful have happened, but be this as it may, the increasing consequence of the Jew and his land are among the undeniable realities of these days of energy, when money and mercantile interest are shown to be the great springs of action, both being especially the weapon of the Jew.

If religion cannot quite unite the families of the earth, the thought with its rulers now evidently is that mercantile interest may, and the Jew and Gentile may blend with Turk and Hindu with no mention of religious differences at all. This is also the system Antichrist will encourage and under which the "vile person" (Dan. 11:21) will be called "liberal," a word of the day used more and more to mean the same laxity of principle as characterizes Antichristianism and will still more characterize Antichrist in whom the vile man is to be personified. He it is who is destroyed by the King Who shall reign in righteousness" (Isa. 32:1). After which, as may be noticed (verse 5), "the vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful."

And if we look at the Jews themselves with their deathless yearning still for the land of their fathers and belief of future rest and greatness there after all their wanderings, how visibly do they seem to feel that a change in their condition is at hand?

With the restoration to their own land is inseparably associated the rebuilding of their temple and renewal of sacrifices there. For this express purpose, a subscription has been already begun among many of the wealthiest of them, particularly in America, to erect a building like the "holy and beautiful house" of their fathers. Who can doubt their ability to raise any sum that might be required for such purpose, when they see their time come for executing it?

The ancient temple, as all know, was on Mount Moriah, where the Jews have still a weekly lamentation with prayer in the words of their own prophet, whose warnings of old were disregarded, that its walls may again be built. "Be not wrath very sore, O LORD, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all Thy people. The holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised Thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste. Wilt Thou refrain Thyself for these things, O LORD? Wilt Thou hold Thy peace, and afflict us very sore?" (Isa. 64:9-12).

But it is not on Mount Moriah, for the mosque of Omar there on the site of the ancient building, forbids the profanation of "the unbeliever," and the spot likely is understood to be on Mount Zion, with which, let it be remembered, all their future glory is connected.

And how strange does such a locality appear as we read that "the tabernacles of his palace" are to be planted also there (Dan. 11:45), "in the glorious holy mountain," a name applied to none other than to itself. It is there "on My holy hill of Zion" that God will place His King (Ps. 2:6), and it is on it too that first the tabernacles of Antichrist will be seen.

The false deliverer will doubtless appeal to Scripture in support of his claim to be received, for it is "out of Sion" the Deliverer comes (Rom. 11:26). If then the Jewish temple be erected on Mount Zion by Israel still in unbelief, where else would Antichrist seek to restore for them their sacrifices and thereafter to show "himself that he is God," but in the place of which these things are spoken, and where the Jews themselves expect the Lord of the whole earth will one day reign?

Surely an allusion, without fancy, to this placing of the false where the true is yet to be, may be traced in Ezekiel 43:5,7-8, where, in speaking of the return of God's glory to the wondrous temple he had been describing so minutely, and which is yet to be seen in better days than these, he says, "The glory of the LORD filled the house ... And He said unto me, Son of man, the place of My throne, and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and My holy Name, shall the house of Israel no more defile, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places. In their setting of their threshold by My thresholds, and their post by My posts, and the wall between Me and them, they have even defiled My holy Name by their abominations that they have committed; wherefore I have consumed them in Mine anger."

The "abomination of desolation," let us remember, will before that latter glory come, have been seen "standing where it ought not" (Mark 13:14) in the holy place," and Antichrist too, consumed by "the brightness of His coming."

The Jews are looking to the restoration of their daily sacrifice in the temple that is to be, but confess they know

not how the sacred fire is to be again lighted on the altar. This will afford their Antichrist another occasion to lay claim to their belief, for among the great wonders done in his presence (the devil giving him his power), "he maketh fire to come down from heaven . . . in the sight of (all) men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do" (Rev. 13:13-14).

The priests of Baal in the days of Elijah failed in their attempt to prove by fire that he was a god, but in the latter day, when the transgressors are come to the full" and such practisings perfected, the false prophet, who will then be ministering in the permitted working of Satan himself, is not so restrained.

Yet with the fire so kindled for the sacrifice, it is only at first and until established in power that Antichrist goes in with the desire of the Jews to see all restored in their temple again, for we read that "in the midst of the week," when he breaks the covenant he had beguiled them with, "he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" (Dan. 9:27), his own overspreading abomination exalting itself above every thing, false or true.

For it is then that he will be seen opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God (2 Thess. 2:4). Paul foretells that his coming will be "after the working of Satan" (2 Thess. 2:9) when he does come, which John also affirms (Rev. 13:2), and Isaiah, still more remote, is heard declaring in unison with what they, along with Daniel, had declared, that their "agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you (see warning also in Matthew 24:15,23), for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only when he shall make you to understand the doctrine" (see margin, Isa. 28:18-19).

It is to the same terrible individual that the allusion is also in Isaiah 33:1, "Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled." And further on, of the desolation that marks his progress, at verses 8-9, "the highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth: he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man. The earth mourneth and languisheth."

And to the same great crisis is the allusion in Psalm 55:20-21, "He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: he hath broken his covenant. The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords." How fearful will these times be, and who shall live when God doeth this!

Mercifully, as we have seen, the days are shortened, else no flesh should be saved. In them "men will seek for death, but shall not find it." They are the days of unequalled tribulation following upon "the falling away" and revelation of that man of sin, the son of perdition, who had been mistaken for "the Son of man," the "Heir of all things.