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The Time is at Hand.

the year 1872 A.D. to be the year of the world 6000, and 1873 A.D. the commencement of the seventh thousand-year period, the seventh millennium, or thousand-year day of earth's history.

Thus chronology as gathered from the Bible alone, from creation down to well authenticated secular history, is clear and strong, bearing evidence, too, of the peculiar methods of divine providence in its record, in its concealing and in its gradual unfolding in due time. And this, together with the reliable dates of the Christian era and the several centuries before it at hand, enables us to locate ourselves accurately on the stream of time. And we begin hopefully to lift up our heads and rejoice, as we realize that we are actually sweeping into the glorious age of the seventh millennium—even though we recognize that its beginning is to be dark and full of trouble, as foretold by the prophets, and that the storm-clouds are already gathering and growing darker.

THE DATE OF OUR LORD'S BIRTH

In the sixth century the Church began to reckon time from the birth of our Lord, and fixed the date A.D. as it now stands; namely, 536 years after the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia.* Whether they placed it correctly or not does not affect the chronology as just given, which shows that the six thousand years from the creation of Adam ended with A.D. 1872; because it is eighteen hundred and seventy-two years since the year designated A.D., and the first year of Cyrus was five hundred and thirty-six years before that year (A.D.), whether it was the year of our Lord's birth or not.

* The year A.D. was fixed upon as early as the sixth century by Dionysius Exiguus, and other scholars of that period, though it did not come into general use until two centuries later.

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become corrupt, vain and idolatrous in proportion as they had attained national distinction. This was in the days of King Zedekiah; and the divine decree was expressed in the words of the prophet: "Thus saith the Lord God, remove the diadem and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more until he comes whose right it is, and I will give it him." Ezek. 21:24-27

This overturning of the crown, or dominion, has been accomplished. It was first turned over to Babylon, then to Medo-Persia, then to Grecia, and then to Rome. The character of these empires, as recorded on the pages of history, we have found to agree perfectly with the prophetic descriptions, as portrayed in Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the great image and in Daniel's vision of the four beasts. This overturned condition of Israel's dominion was to continue until Christ, the rightful heir to the throne of Israel and all the earth, who purchased it with his own precious blood, would come and take control. His, as we have seen, will be the fifth universal empire of earth, the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens. But unlike the preceding four dominions which were permitted for an appointed time, and therefore recognized, though not approvingly, this one will be approved and established by God, as his representative in the earth. It will be God's Kingdom, the Kingdom of Jehovah's Anointed. It will be established gradually, during a great time of trouble with which the Gospel age will close, and in the midst of which present dominions shall be utterly consumed, passing away amid great confusion.

In this chapter we present the Bible evidence proving that the full end of the times of the Gentiles, *i.e.*, the full end of their lease of dominion, will be reached in A.D.:

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1914; and that that date will see the disintegration of the rule of imperfect men. And be it observed, that if this is shown to be a fact firmly established by the Scriptures, it will prove Firstly, That at that date the Kingdom of God, for which our Lord taught us to pray, saying, "Thy Kingdom come," will begin to assume control, and that it will then shortly be "set up," or firmly established, in the earth, on the ruins of present institutions.

Secondly, It will prove that he whose right it is thus to take the dominion will then be present as earth's new Ruler; and not only so, but it will also prove that he will be present for a considerable period before that date; because the overthrow of these Gentile governments is directly caused by his dashing them to pieces as a potter's vessel (Psa. 2:9; Rev. 2:27), and establishing in their stead his own righteous government.

Thirdly, It will prove that some time before the end of the overthrow the last member of the divinely recognized Church of Christ, the "royal priesthood," "the body of Christ," will be glorified with the Head; because every member is to reign with Christ, being a joint-heir with him of the Kingdom, and it cannot be fully "set up" without every member.

Fourthly, It will prove that from that time forward Jerusalem shall no longer be trodden down of the Gentiles, but shall arise from the dust of divine disfavor, to honor; because the "Times of the Gentiles" will be fulfilled or completed.

Fifthly, It will prove that by that date, or sooner, Israel's blindness will begin to be turned away; because their "blindness in part" was to continue only "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Rom. 11:25), or, in other words, until the full number from among the Gentiles, who are to be members of the body or bride of Christ, would be fully selected.

Sixthly, It will prove that the great "time of trouble such

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as never was since there was a nation," will reach its culmination in a world-wide reign of anarchy; and then men will learn to be still, and to know that Jehovah is God and that he will be exalted in the earth. (Psa. 46:10) The condition of things spoken of in symbolic language as raging waves of the sea, melting earth, falling mountains and burning heavens will then pass away, and the "new heavens and new earth" with their peaceful blessings will begin to be recognized by trouble-tossed humanity. But the Lord's Anointed and his rightful and righteous authority will first be recognized by a company of God's children while passing through the great tribulation—the class represented by *m* and *t* on the Chart of the Ages (see also pages 235 to 239, Vol. I); afterward, just at its close, by fleshly Israel; and ultimately by mankind in general.

Seventhly, It will prove that *before that date* God's Kingdom, organized in power, will be in the earth and then smite and crush the Gentile image (Dan. 2:34)—and fully consume the power of these kings. Its own power and dominion will be established as fast as by its varied influences and agencies it crushes and scatters the "powers that be"—civil and ecclesiastical—iron and clay.

THE BEGINNING OF GENTILE TIMES, 606 B.C.

Our Lord's words, "until the *times** of the Gentiles be *fulfilled*," imply that the times of the Gentiles must have a definitely appointed limit; because an unlimited, indefinite period could not be said to be fulfilled. So, then, Gentile rule had a beginning, will last for a *fixed time*, and will end at the time appointed.

* The Greek word here rendered "times" is *kairos*, which signifies a *fixed time*. It is the same word translated "times" in the following passages: Mark 1:15; 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 12:14; Acts 3:19; 17:26. The word "seasons" in Acts 1:7 is from the same Greek word.

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and the living saints, as well as many of the world, are now being used as the Lord's soldiers in overthrowing errors and evils. But let no one hastily infer a *peaceable conversion* of the nations to be here symbolized; for many scriptures, such as Rev. 11:17,18; Dan. 12:1; 2 Thes. 2:8; Psalms 149 and 47, teach the very opposite.

Be not surprised, then, when in subsequent chapters we present proofs that the setting up of the Kingdom of God is already begun, that it is pointed out in prophecy as due to begin the exercise of power in A.D. 1878, and that the "battle of the great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:14), which will end in A.D. 1915, with the complete overthrow of earth's present rulership, is already commenced. The gathering of the armies is plainly visible from the standpoint of God's Word.

If our vision be unobstructed by prejudice, when we get the telescope of God's Word rightly adjusted we may see with clearness the character of many of the events due to take place in the "Day of the Lord"—that we are in the very midst of those events, and that "the Great Day of His Wrath is come."

The sword of truth, already sharpened, is to smite every evil system and custom—civil, social and ecclesiastical. Nay, more, we can see that the smiting is commenced: freedom of thought, and human rights, civil and religious, long lost sight of under kings and emperors, popes, synods, councils, traditions and creeds, are being appreciated and asserted as never before. The internal conflict is already fomenting: it will ere long break forth as a consuming fire, and human systems, and errors, which for centuries have fettered truth and oppressed the groaning creation, must melt before it. Yes, truth—and widespread and increasing knowledge of it—is the sword which is perplexing and wounding the heads over many countries. (Psa. 110:6.),

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The Finished Mystery

Have sealed the servants of our God.— See Rev. 19:20: 14:1. Satan is a diligent student of time prophecy (Luke 12:39); but not having the Holy Spirit he is unable to reach accurate conclusions. Seeing a definite Plan, and a definite time for every important feature of that Plan, his aim has ever been to thwart the purposes of the Almighty. This attempt to destroy the Seed began with the death of Abel and still continues. **No doubt Satan believed the Millennial Kingdom was due to be set up in 1915;** and no doubt, also, he knew that seven years prior to the time of the setting up of that kingdom the restraints upon the evil spirits would be lifted. **Be that as it may, there is evidence that the establishment of the Kingdom in Palestine will probably be in 1925, ten years later than we once calculated.** The 70 jubilees, reckoned as 50 years each, expire October, 1925. (B186.) Gen. 15:1-16:3, read connectedly, indicates that Abraham's vision as to when he would receive the Kingdom was not granted until ten years after the Covenant was made, or 2035 B. C. The ages of the animals offered aggregated eleven years, which, applied prophetically, on the scale of a year for a day, equal 3960 years, the length of time from the date of the visions to A. D. 1925 (Z.'07-79). It seems conclusive that the hour of Nominal Zion's travail is fixed for the Passover of 1918. (See Rev. 3:14.) That will be 7 years prior to 1925. At that time there is every reason to believe the fallen angels will invade the minds of many of the Nominal Church people, driving them to exceedingly unwise conduct and leading to their destruction at the hands of the enraged masses, who will later be dragged to the same fate. The great war now raging is most certainly the work of evil spirits, and the Kaiser is not the only clever ruler who has been deceived by evil spirits, as history will sometime show.— *Lu. 12:56.*

If our reasoning is correct, we inquire whether there was any indication of a move on Satan's part 7 years prior to 1915, showing that he expected the restraints to be removed from the evil spirits at that time; and we answer that there was something very definite indicated at that time. In the Vow, advised by Pastor Russell in that year, and in the experiences of many, for and against it, it is plain that the Enemy *then* attempted to come in like a flood, but was held back— restrained until the sealing work is done. (Matt. 10:25; Luke 22:42-44; Heb. 12:4; Isa. 63:3.) After the demons have been turned loose on the swine class, we shall see what happens. (Matt. 7:6 8:31-34.) Those now fearful that they might learn some thing will be terror-stricken then for a different reason.

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name; and therefore their speech shows them to be false prophets. While they claim to speak in the name of the Lord, their predictions neither come true nor tend to magnify Jehovah's name. According to the divine rule they prove to be false, and the Lord promises that in due time he will deal with them as he does with all hypocrites.—Matt. 24: 51.

From the rules by which the prophets would be tested or judged it is evident that some things which were spoken in the name of Jehovah by the prophets were to have fulfilment soon after the time spoken. But the coming to pass of some of these events was not alone sufficient to prove one a prophet. Complete fulfilment must take place in due time. When Jehovah had a message for the future time it was indicated by words of the prophet such as Jeremiah used, to wit, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord," or as Isaiah said, "It shall come to pass in that day." This is an important point in studying prophecy, and the student must keep it in mind. The test was provided by Jehovah, and to such test all the prophecies must be subjected. Many things spoken by the prophets of God have not yet had fulfilment. For instance, Isaiah prophesied that God would establish on earth a righteous government which shall rest upon the shoulder of the Messiah. (Isa. 9: 6, 7) Also that all the nations would go up to Jerusalem and learn of Jehovah, follow his teachings through his government, and learn war no more. (Isa. 2: 2-4) Jeremiah prophesied that God would make and inaugurate a new covenant with Israel and that by the terms of that covenant both those dead and those living should have an opportunity for a blessing. **If these prophecies have not been fulfilled, and if all possibility of fulfilment is past, then these prophets are proven false.**

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turn to the Lord; and these are the ones who are to be taken through the time of trouble.

NO FURTHER DELAY

God's faithful people on the earth emphasized the importance of the dates 1914 and 1918 and 1925. They had much to say about these dates and what would come to pass, but all they predicted did not come to pass. The predictions as to the dates were correct, but what came to pass could not be fully seen in advance. The failure to come to pass of some of the things predicted has afforded Satan's agents in Christendom, particularly the clergy and the "man of sin", an opportunity to ridicule and reproach the faithful servants of the Lord and to say of and concerning them and their predictions: 'All their visions and predictions have failed; and such proves that they are all wrong, and that all their predictions for the future must fail.' This the clergy use to turn the people away from God and his truth. Such was foreshadowed by what God said to Ezekiel: "Son of man, what is that proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth?"—12: 22.

To be sure, no man can say exactly what day or year Armageddon will be fought, but it is easy to be seen that the conditions amongst the people are such now that a great crisis is near. The clergy and the politicians have predicted and continue to predict great success and prosperity for their man-made schemes. They speak against the witnesses of God and say in substance that all the Lord's servants are "weak in the head", and that it will be many days

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sage. (Ps. 91: 1-9; Isa. 51: 16) The fact that Ezekiel survived the destruction of Jerusalem indicates that some of the remnant at least will be on the earth after the destruction of Christendom.

“Also, thou son of man, shall it not be in the day when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters, that he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause thee to hear it with thine ears?”—(24: 25, 26; 33: 21) Ezekiel, by commandment, spoke the word of prophecy, and Jehovah would have that word verified by eye witnesses who survived the disaster upon Jerusalem and who would testify that Ezekiel had spoken truthfully. Thus is indicated what shall come to pass after the fall of Christendom, and thus God “confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers”. (Isa. 44: 26) In such manner God will prove to the survivors that there has been a class of people in the land who have been and are faithful to him and who have truthfully proclaimed his word.—Ezek. 33: 33.

These scriptures support the conclusion that the “servant”, that is, Jehovah’s faithful witnesses, whom Ezekiel foreshadowed, will be on earth for some time after the destruction of Christendom, and that the survivors will be eye-witnesses of that destruction and will seek out the remnant and will confess that God has used the remnant to declare his truth.

There was a measure of disappointment on the part of Jehovah’s faithful ones on earth concerning the years 1914, 1918 and 1925, which disappointment lasted for a time. Later the faithful learned that these

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- Vindication

dates were definitely fixed in the Scriptures; and they also learned to quit fixing dates for the future and predicting what would come to pass on a certain date, but to rely (and they do rely) upon the Word of God as to the events that must come to pass. Jehovah has spoken his word and will perform it, and the Scriptures seem clearly to indicate that Jehovah will grant to his faithful witnesses the privilege of seeing his great "act", thereby proving that his witnesses have spoken his word of truth according to his will; and that this he will do before his witnesses are "changed" into the glorious organism like unto Christ Jesus'. This is not predicting dates, but is merely calling attention to events that must come to pass because clearly set forth in God's Word.

Now the witnesses of Jehovah are not in good repute with men. There are many who believe the truth but who shun the witnesses of Jehovah because of fear of losing their reputation or their property. By so doing they are moved by selfishness, of course; but as surely as the witnesses of Jehovah speak his truth, just so surely God will make the people come to know that such witnesses have spoken truthfully. This will not be that the witnesses may have an exaltation amongst men, but that the people may know that God has had witnesses amongst them.

Great is the privilege to now be a witness for Jehovah. Only those who have full faith and confidence in and love for God and his kingdom will now declare the truth with boldness. This is the day of judgment, and those who really love God will speak with boldness. (1 John 4: 17, 18) Others who have received the truth but not the love of it will go to the rulers in

creature and not to the Creator. If Brother Russell were on the earth today he would express no sympathy whatsoever with those who foolishly say: "We stand in the basic features of the truth as expounded by Brother Russell." He loved the Lord and would give honor to whom honor is due. The work of the church from 1875 to 1918 was the work of 'preparing the way before the Lord', and when that work was done the Messenger of the covenant came straightway to the temple. (Mal. 3:1-3) Thereafter there was and is a change of work and teaching of the people of God, but no man is responsible therefor or is entitled to any credit therefor.

²³ Who on earth understood prior to 1918 that Zion is God's organization and gives birth to the kingdom and to her children? The fact that no one on earth did so understand prior to the Lord's coming to his temple is proof that it was not God's due time for them to understand. Who understood prior thereto about Satan's organization, the battle in heaven, and the casting of Satan out of heaven? Manifestly no one could understand these things until the temple of God was open. (Rev. 11:19) Only those who by the grace of God have been taken into the temple do now understand. These do not understand by reason of knowledge or wisdom that comes to them from any man, but they are taught of God, who teaches them the truth by and through the Head of the temple class, Christ Jesus. Why then should those today who really believe they are servants of God hesitate for one moment in determining the question concerning who gives them the doctrine of truth? Jehovah God is the great Teacher of his children. To be sure, the publication of these truths is put forth by imperfect men, and for this reason they are not absolutely perfect in form; but they are put forth in such form as reflects God's truth that he teaches his children.

²⁴ Those who are of the temple class have the spirit of God in the measure that came to Elisha, and they do the work which Elisha foreshadowed. Jehovah now gives his children a special revelation of his Word, because it is a time of stress and his children specially need this additional help. Jehovah manifests himself to his people and gives to that class that really love him his full assurance that they are in the right way. It is "in that day", which is the day or period of time after the opening of the temple, that Jehovah specially manifests himself to his children. His people are first made to have an understanding of the meaning of his name Jehovah, and then they are given an understanding that it is Jehovah that speaks to them. To the children of Zion, that is to say, his sons by his woman, he makes known the meaning of his name, and teaches them. To them he says: "Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know *IN THAT DAY THAT I AM HE THAT DOETH SPEAK; BEHOLD, IT IS I.*" (Isa. 52:6,7) **Today the children of Zion need no extraneous proof**

that the spiritual food and understanding of the prophecies they have comes from God. They know that no man or men could provide such food. No man or men on earth attempt to lay claim that any of these truths proceed from man. God has spread his table bountifully for his people, and the children of his woman feed thereat. To these children of Zion he says: "Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them." (Isa. 42:9) The context of this last scripture definitely locates God's anointed ones as the ones to whom he thus speaks.

²⁵ Jesus told of a time coming when there would be complete unity in Zion, and that the faithful ones would know it; and his very language fixes that time from and after his coming to the temple of Jehovah. He said: "AT THAT DAY ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." (John 14:20) To have this full assurance one must be a member of Zion; and therefore there exists a confidential relationship between God and those of his organization, and these are taught of God in that day. We are now in that day to which these words of Jesus apply. "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14:23) Thus the close confidential relationship is shown between Jehovah, Christ Jesus, and all who are of the temple. The Lord Jehovah is in Zion as his place of habitation. (Ps. 74:2; 132:13) Only the children of Zion, the members of the temple, are there; and such are the ones that are taught and who have a deep appreciation of the things God teaches them from his Word.

²⁶ The church could not come to maturity until the coming of the Lord Jesus to the temple and the building up of Zion. What food the consecrated had and fed upon prior thereto consisted of the first principles or fundamental truths. Those who refuse to progress beyond that the apostle likens unto babes that feed upon milk. What God has given to his people since the coming of the Lord to his temple is strong meat. Those who have refused to accept these truths given by the Lord since that time are therefore unskilful, to say the least of it. "For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Heb. 5:13,14) The strong meat has not come by reason of the wisdom of man, but has come only to God's people because they are children of God and his woman who is Zion; and these are taught of Jehovah.

²⁷ During the Elijah period of the church God gave his people an understanding of some of the deep things of his Word, such as are taught in *Tabernacle Shadows*. These truths were fundamental, to be sure;