

WHAT TIME IS IT?

(Below is a discourse given by Edward H. Lorenz at the Fort Worth Convention, Mar. 25, 1979. Typed from a tape recording.)

Dearly Beloved in the Lord. Of course, we do not refer to the clock on the wall with the question, WHAT TIME IS IT? The Scriptures are clear for us that God moves His great divine plan by time schedules. In Eccl. 3:1 we read, "To every thing there is a season and a time for every purpose under the heaven." "A time for every purpose under the heaven." The Apostle Paul has helped us in setting a background for our lesson. In 1 Thess. 5:1 we note: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." No children of the Lord would ever be in ignorance concerning the time, the manner, the object and purpose of the Lord's return for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. Then the Apostle adds in V. 4: "But ye brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. (5) Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. (6) Therefore, let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober. (7) For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that are drunken are drunken in the night." Therefore, a reward is placed upon those who, having observant, spiritual eyes, observe the time seasons of the Lord and the great features of the Divine Plan.

Before pursuing further, let's merely ask a question in our minds. Can we answer the events of today, 1979, in connection with Biblical prophecy? We are children of the day, not children of the night; therefore, we should look to an answer. There are times, it has been suggested, the Lord encouraged sleep under certain situations, and the text that is frequently referred to is found in Matt., chapter 26—the time when the apostles were with our Master in the Garden of Gethsemane. Our Master had previously stated to the brethren, we well remember, that his departure was soon at hand. He had told them in very plain language that he was to die in Jerusalem; therefore, none of them should have been in ignorance concerning the events that were soon to take place. Remember in V. 36, Matthew 26, "Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go yonder and pray. (37) And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. (38) Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me."

We know the story: He went for a little season, a distance away to pray. He came back and found them asleep. He rose them from their slumber, and mentioned again to them, "I want you to watch with me one hour." Again he went away and came back and found them asleep the second time. Then we read in V. 43: "And he came and found them asleep again; for their eyes were heavy the third time. (44) And he left them, and went

away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. (45) Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.” Some have suggested that they were weary from the day—it was near midnight or so. And therefore, sleep overcame them, and the Master said “Sleep on.” Did he? Never! The Master never told his disciples to sleep. Look at your Diaglott. “Do you sleep now and take your rest?” The Revised Standard: “Are you still sleeping?” He admonished them: Brethren, be awake. This is a time of stress, a time in which as disciples, you should be awake to the events. I do not condone sleeping. Now we have our setting.

Let's turn to Isa. 21st chapter. In the 21st of Isaiah is the prophecy pertaining, we believe, to the period of our Lord's return, 1874. We believe the setting is the watchman in the tower. Bro. Russell, the 7th messenger, with his message that began in 1881, or 1879, “Come out of her, my people. Babylon the Great is fallen.” You'll notice the prophecy mentions there “Go declare what you see” and the prophecy described the various horsemen as the various areas of Great Babylon and their denominational establishments. Then in V. 10, “O my threshing, and the wheat or the corn of my floor: that which I have heard of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.” Now the prophecy is telling us this is the time of the harvest, the threshing floor scene is brought to our attention. V. 11: “The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, What of the night? Watchman, what of the night?” Well, you ask, What's so peculiar about it? (12) The watchman said, “The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye inquire ye again, return.” Of course some would say, naturally, morning always follows night; what's so peculiar about that? That wasn't it at all. The peculiarity of it was that it was already morning when it was still night. You say, “It's impossible.” It's not impossible, depending upon your viewpoint, where you are at the station of time. This prophecy is taken from the actual facts of the mountainous areas, say like Switzerland, areas of Judea where they would have a higher mountain and you'd have a valley. And those that are upon the mountaintop (particularly this is still true in remote areas) there are those that arise to see the morning sun, and as they are on a higher pinnacle of 10 or 12 thousand feet peak, they see the sun rise long before others, because over the curvature of the earth they see the sun that is hidden to the earth. And they see already it is morning to them because they are on the mountaintop. And the result, they take their trumpets or megaphones and call down to the next watchman, “It is morning! The morning is here!” He's down there in darkness, calls down to the valley below, which is darkness greater, and the valley finally hears the sound, “It is morning, but it's night.” So to us, brethren, the world is encompassed in darkness and night, but we are children of the day.

What time is it? It's morning. How do you know? Joel's prophecy suggests for us a setting in this connection and helps, as it always does, in all prophetic pictures. We love this particular passage, Joel, 2nd chapter. Note it carefully. It is one of the sound rungs

of the ladder of present truth. “Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain [or my holy kingdom]: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand.” Notice the immediate setting of the passage. “Blow ye the trumpet.” To whom? To Zion. The message of truth, as beautiful as we’ve heard it, declared this morning over our television program. Who heard the message? Really, only Zion hears the message; others get fragments of it and some joy and peace; but the trumpet, the seventh trumpet, the last trumpet, the sounding of the seventh trumpet is designed for the Zion class. And you notice the prophecy also says there’s a holy mountain, a holy kingdom from which this sound is dispensed; which means the spiritual phase of the kingdom has become established from the heavenly concept whereby the seventh trumpet can begin to descend to the earth and its arrangements. And in harmony with this marvelous message, the earth trembles because of her distress. V. 2. “A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains” (a clear passage that tells us that from the viewpoint on the holy mountain, we see the dawn of the Millennial Age, dawning upon the mountains and the kingdoms). So now look at Iran, look at Israel, look at Egypt. What do you see? Signs of the kingdom. That’s what you see from the viewpoint of Scriptural prophecy because they’re blending into an arrangement of prophetic fulfillment.

What time is it? How do you know time in the Scriptures? Our Lord did not leave us in darkness concerning time in Scriptural language. Turn with me to Matt. chapter 12, the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. V. 4, “But the wise took oil in their lamps. (5) While the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept.” This was the sleep of 1844, and the period prior to the bridegroom’s return. (6) “And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.” Why did the Master put time in the parable? Actually, the parable begins with that time. The time is the setting of the parable. Why did he say at midnight? Midnight is a focal point between two periods. A day is closing and a day is beginning. So our Lord indicated he would come at a time, at a blending of the ages—end of the Gospel Age and beginning of the Millennial Age. At the end of a 6,000 year period and beginning of a 7th thousand year period, we came to a time focal period called midnight, which would begin the thousand year day. Twenty-four hours in a day. Let’s divide the thousand year Millennial Day into twenty-four segments, and we have approximately 42 years to an hour. If that’s the case, we are now 105 years since 1874. What time is it? About 2:30 in the morning and it’s dark outside. Check it tomorrow morning at 2:30 and it’s dark outside. But where are you children of the king? You are on the mountaintop. You see the sun of the new day.

Let’s turn to Exodus 12th chapter. In the marvelous lessons that we’ve already considered at the convention, on the firstborn and the passing of the firstborn, we realize that God designed that there’s a time element involved in connection with the passing of the death angel over the land of Egypt, the land of Goshen, the land where the children of Israel were and the land of the Egyptians. Exodus 12:39, “And it came to pass, that at

midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.” I’ve asked a few of you, “Why midnight? Why midnight?” Why do the Scriptures indicate midnight? It could have just said “in the night.” Time, midnight, 1874, the Lord’s return. Immediately following 1874, midnight, the sleeping saints are raised. The firstborn were passed over—that’s the first time the church actually received a passing over. They fell in death and faithfulness, the Apostles after the Lord, but they waited for their passing over until they were raised triumphantly in Zion. And you and I do not need to sleep—we will be changed immediately. So the firstborn began to be changed immediately after midnight, and here is this marvelous setting of the passing of the first-borns in this typical picture to show that God moved time in connection with the features of the Divine Plan.

Let’s now look at Luke 21. Our Master, the last five days of his ministry, particularly was mindful of the brethren following His second advent of 1874. He set the stage in many of His parables that only have their application at this time. Like, for instance, the parable of the dragnet indicates a time will come when the net is drawn ashore and they begin to deal with the fish; the parable of the wedding garment, and at that time the King came in; our Lord gave the parable of a nobleman that went into a far country to receive a kingdom and to return; the parable of the wise and foolish virgins which we have just mentioned—at midnight the cry is made and all the virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. Notice it states, by the way, all the virgins, wise and foolish, trimmed their lamps to herald the bridegroom’s return. We believe the parable suggests in other scriptures that those that are anointed of the Lord to see the visions of the present Truth would naturally recognize the return of the Lord and the connection and the features of His divine plan in execution.

Now looking at Luke 21, we notice in V. 24 our Lord makes the very singular statement found in the scriptures: “And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” Now we have time. Looking at this time, looking backward over the past 65 years to 1914, we can understand why Bro. Russell was not permitted to see beyond the 1914 date primarily in connection with this longer period of time with the development of the church, though he gave indication that he recognized that there was going to be a time element. But now we can look back because of prophetic fulfillment—we’re no wiser, only because of certain features of scripture that become clear to us by nature of the time in which we live. Now we recognize our Lord pinpointed time, that following 1914, brethren were going to enter into a new phase of activity of earth’s affairs unlike any previous period of the world’s history. Whereby He says (25) “There shall be signs of the sun [the New Testament] and the moon [the Old Testament] and the stars [the Apostles] and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity: the sea and the waves roaring.” You may remember that President Johnson used the expression in one of his talks, “It seems that in this dilemma there’s no way

out.” That’s the Greek word for “perplexity” in this text—There’s no way out. The confusion is such and you notice the statesmen of the world—they have no answer. Men’s hearts failing them for fear from looking after those things coming upon the earth—the powers of heaven shall be shaken. Now note, “And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.” Who’s the “they?” The watchmen on Mount Zion! They see the Son of Glory, not the world. The world recognizes the problems they have, but they have no answer. They will in time.

“And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, lift up, lift up your head for your redemption draweth nigh.” V. 29 should be circled in your scriptures. (29) “He spoke to them in parables: Behold the fig tree and all the trees. (30) When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. (31) So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.” Nigh at hand. How close is it at hand? It’s here! That’s what the prophecy is telling us. It isn’t some remote future, from the viewpoint of the scriptural language as our Master said in His own time. Remember John the Baptist (using the Diaglott translation) where he said, “Behold, the royal majesty of the heavens stands in your midst” and he pointed at Jesus the Lamb of God. “The royal majesty of the heavens is in your midst.” John recognized the Messiah in fulfillment of the prophecy to be the anointed of the LORD and he properly gave the appraisal of the language to our Lord. Again, remember Nathaniel who was questioning with Phillip whether or not this Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. Remember that Nathanael, in order to satisfy his mind, sought the enclosure of a fig tree and prayed to God whether or not Philip was right that Jesus was the Messiah. And he came out; remember, Jesus passed by. Jesus looked at him and called to Nathaniel and said, “Behold, an Israelite indeed.” Remember, then Nathanael came back to our Master, “Whence knowest thou me?” Our Master said, “I saw thee under the fig tree.” And what was Nathanael’s response? “Thou art the Messiah, thou art the King of Israel.” He needed no evidence, no armor, no sword, no soldiers, to know that He was the King of Israel because He fulfilled scripture. Therefore, children of light need not ocular evidences; they need the evidences that are supported ocularly (to the sense of the fulfillment of the scriptures), but it is by the nature of the scriptures themselves that we come to this appreciation of these things.

Now let us go back to V. 29, Luke 21, “And he spoke to them in parables: Behold the fig tree, and all the trees. (30) When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is nigh at hand.” Now this would be following 1914, The Times of the Gentiles which was a period of 2520 years (this, we won’t have time to go into). Take your 2nd Volume and verify it again, and the features and the facts of the earth also give evidence to it. Our Lord indicated that following 1914 the brethren at this end of the age would begin to note something. First, they would look at Israel, the fig tree. It would begin to have signs of vigor, signs of life. It would begin to shoot forth. But a new phenomena would take place upon the earth that never took place before. What’s that?

—“and all the trees.” All the trees? How many trees were there in 1914? Principally, there were ten—the ten toes of Daniel’s Image which moved and manipulated the entire earth with their great colonies and vast empires. England and Netherlands, and Italy, and France, etc.—they all had their great dynasties under the ten toes of Daniel’s vision that he interpreted for Nebuchadnezzar. Alright, they passed. What has come in their place? How many members of the United Nations today? Ten? Oh no, about 145. Where did all these little trees come from? These are the sprouts of the trees that have come since 1914, and what happened to them? They get cut off and another shoot comes out. An emperor loses his throne; another one sprouts up. All these—how do they come up as little tiny weaklings? They come up defying the United States. We’re seeing today a new type of tree growing, and their defiance is so great. Look at Arafat and his boasts, and great big empires sit back and hear him boast a determination to bring war in the Middle East. Now we are seeing something take place in this stage that the Lord has designed, since we are children of the day and recognize some of these features.

Turn with me to a prophecy. Let’s look at Ezekiel, 20th chapter. We’re going to consider the fig tree, Israel. Our time is limited, and we hope that the Chairman takes a long walk somewhere [Laughter]. Ezek. 20:33, “As I live saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you.” Mark in your margin—“Reign over you.” The word is reign. “With fury poured out, will I reign over you.” When did our present Lord begin to reign over Israel? 1878. Why not sooner? He was forbidden by the mishneh or the double of God’s own arrangement. Remember our Lord last decreed to Israel when He wept over the city that night. “Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that stonest the prophets and killest them that are sent unto thee. How oft would I gather thy children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate.” What date was that? That was exactly the end of 1845 years from Jacob’s death, and the parallel of trouble. 1845 years began in 33 A.D. and ending in 1878 at the Berlin Congress of Nations, when ten Gentile nations sat in conference and listened to Lord Beaconsfield, Benjamin Disraeli, the Prime Minister of England, settled the Turkish Russian War, and declared an open door for Israel. God’s time-clock struck, and the movement was right.

Ezek. 20:34, 35: “And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm and with fury poured out.” Note this (35) “I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face.” Face to face, the wilderness of the people. When you think of a wilderness today, you think of some mountainous area with lakes and streams and all the beauty like the wilderness of Alaska or Oregon or some of these areas. Not at all. This word “wilderness” means “pastureland” where one would lead animals or cattle to feed. It actually means an area without a path. An area with a path—Israel’s path today is not clear, is it? They have no path because the Lord has not yet opened the full acknowledgment of them in connection with the full response to the

kingdom, but the machinery is in operation to bring this to pass. But notice He says in verses 34 and 35: “And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face.” Now think of the land of Israel. It’s all fenced in—all loving neighbors all around? Bringing all kinds of baskets of fruit, and all kinds of benefits? NO! Everyone’s got their guns pointed at them. There’s the pasture land of Israel today. The God of Heaven alone can solve the problems of Israel, which solves the problems of the world, if they know it. Now we recognize, where he says, “I’ll plead with you face to face.” That word “face to face” is *prosopon* or the equivalent of *prosopon*, the Greek word of Acts 3:19-21. Remember when Peter and John stood before the gates of the Temple Beautiful and healed the impotent man and he then declared to them, “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when times of refreshing [*prosopon*] shall come from the presence [face] of the Lord.” There was a direct declaration from the context that follows, and He’ll hold our Lord in the Heavens until the time of His return—that favor would begin to be manifested to the nation of Israel. So the favor of God is now manifested toward Israel, though it looks as though they are a hopeless people without a destiny.

That text, we believe, is marvelous when you analyze its depth—“I will bring you into the wilderness of the people; there will I plead with you face to face like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt”—they were all encompassed in the land of Goshen. “So will I plead with you,” saith the Lord. “I will cause you to pass under the rod. I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.” What covenant? The Law Covenant replaced [with]—the New Covenant. The covenant they forsook will be the covenant that will bring them back. So God’s rod of chastisement today upon Israel—whether they know it or not, they’re being spanked, to be brought back under the rod of the covenant, under the mercies of the New Covenant which the families of the earth are going to be blessed under. Now you begin to see, brethren, that these are marvelous prophecies in their grand fulfillment.

Turn with me to Zechariah, 1st chapter. I apologize for going so fast, but even a very limited material will take a little while. We are looking at Zechariah, 1st chapter. We’re going to note this from V. 14, and I’ve given a couple of questions to a couple of our younger brethren, and if they’re in the audience, they’re going to find their answers in this prophecy. “So the angel that communed with me said unto me” (by the way, this is a vision of the prophet Zechariah concerning the restoration of the second temple; this immediately follows the seventy years of captivity. Zechariah was born during the seventy years of captivity. Habakkuk, the older prophet, was dying. The LORD was removing Habakkuk and moving Zechariah into the scene. So the prophecy before us is the period of the time following 536 A.D. when the time of the building of the second temple began. It took them 14 years you remember, before they actually began

construction, but this is in connection with this time feature—but it's principle is looking forward to the building of the greater temple, the Heavenly temple, the new Jerusalem in Heaven, which is what we're looking forward to.)

V. 14: "So the angel that communed with me, said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy." Notice the two phases of the Kingdom—"I am jealous for Jerusalem [earthly phase], jealous for Zion [the Heavenly phase] with great jealousy." So He brings both into this picture. (V. 15) "And I am sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease." Note this text, "I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease; for I was but a little displeased but they helped forward the affliction." Think of England. What did she do with the Jews in 1948? She's paying the price, the penalty today for her refusal to admit Israel to the land under the protection of the British guns, because she promised to take care of two people at the same time with opposite viewpoints—the Arabs and Israel. (V. 16) "Therefore, thus saith the LORD; I am returning to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth up upon Jerusalem." Why a line upon Jerusalem? They have the surveyors' crews out. They're measuring the size of Jerusalem, and other prophecies tell us it's just right. It's just the right size. Another prophecy in Habakkuk—God goes out and measures the nations and they're all too short so He gets rid of them.

It's interesting how the prophecies indicate that He measures Jerusalem and they say; He measures the Gentile governments and He removes them, which we see will take place. (V. 17) "Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; my cities through prosperity shall be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem. (V. 18) Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns. (V. 19) And I said unto the angel that talked with me, What be these? And he answered me, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem. [Horns are powers.] (V. 20 and 21) Then said I, What come these to do? And he spake, saying, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no man did lift up his head: but these [that is, the carpenters] are come to fray them, to cast out the horns of the Gentiles, which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it." Now remember our Lord gave the prophecy—"Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." We believe our Lord had this prophecy in mind, along with others, of course, in which he visioned that blessing would come, would result with the removal of the four previous horns—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome. Every one of these horns have frayed, destroyed and persecuted the Jews, the seed of Abraham. But four carpenters come down. We believe they represent the four attributes of God in complete harmony to execute the Divine Plan to remove the four horns or the powers of the earth. Isn't it beautiful, brethren, when you begin to see how simple and how marvelous the prophecies all tie together and link into the various features.

Zechariah 12:1: “The burden of the word of the LORD of Israel, said the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him” Why does this particular precede the line of thought? The prophet is trying to have us visualize something of the nature of the greatness of our God. He pictures the great, tremendous Heavens, that our God has laid out these heavens, and if some of you have read last week’s paper (it may have been earlier, but I read it last week, and I know some of you have because I asked you) you may have read where the astronomers have now located a new galaxy, they say many times larger than the Milky Way, never detected before, far beyond any space that they’ve ever determined. How great is our God? Now that’s the God of Israel—that’s our God. So the prophet draws our attention. How great is our God? How big is the Atlantic Ocean? How big is the Pacific Ocean? Four or five miles deep in areas. I turn this (water in a glass) and it would pour out, wouldn’t it? You know, brethren one half of every day the Atlantic Ocean is upside down and hanging in suspense? We’re on a ball! We’re not on flat land. Half of the day we are upside down and ships carrying oil from Arabia are on the top of the surface of the water suspended by the power that God has set forth called gravitation. That’s our God! So we have come to realize, brethren, we deal with a mighty Being and He deals with us.

“The burden of the word of the Lord of Israel, the Lord which stretcheth forth the heavens and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him. Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about.” Hmmm, is this true? They’re not having a bit of a problem, are they? A little handful of people, three million people, less than half the size of Los Angeles, has the whole world in turmoil. If they only could remove those Jews and put them into the Mediterranean, we’d have peace in the earth! That’s their thinking, isn’t it? This was written prophetically, and here, you and I, brethren, are living to realize it. I hope sometime, brethren, when you read the scriptures, they so affect your mind that you literally cry before the Lord for the beauty of His word, and that your mind has been unlocked to see God’s plan.

(3) “And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. (4) In that day, saith the Lord, I will smite every horse [doctrine, teaching, philosophy] in that day saith the Lord, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider [those that ride these arrangements—think of the P.L.O.—they’re riding a big horse] his rider will I smite with madness: I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, I will smite every horse of the people with blindness [remove their philosophies and vain theories].” Now we come to the beautiful part: (5) “And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength and the Lord of hosts shall be their God. (6) In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a

sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem.” Who are the governors of Jerusalem or Israel? I believe the governors here are the Ancient Worthies. I believe this is a scene when the Ancient Worthies bring order out of chaos, the earthly representatives of the kingdom. I’ve had many privileges in times past of speaking before Jewish groups. I remember one night when I had mentioned, when I paused in our lesson, I said “What would you do, my friends, if tonight on television you heard Moses speak to you?” I said, “that is going to be a reality in some of your lives when David, Daniel, Zechariah, Joel, John the Baptist, Abel, become the administrators of the kingdom upon the earth, not moved by politics, not moved by money, but moved by the reverence and love of God and the spirit of God in their hearts.”

No wonder it says here, “In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, like a torch of fire in a sheaf; they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left [that devour means, I will bring them into submission]: Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in their own place, even in Jerusalem.”

Let’s turn to Jeremiah 31. We’re going to note V. 35 to 37: “Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar, the Lord of hosts is his name.” Again notice the prophet Jeremiah wants to magnify the power and greatness of our God with whose prophecy we now deal with. (36) “If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord,” (and this is interesting—if the stars, the sun and the moon refused to keep their time schedules, then we have no confidence in the prophecies of God. And for the past several mornings, I’ve enjoyed our fellowship with our Bro. Cramer, who in his studies of astronomy, remarked this morning about the precise motion of the planets, whereby they can time-clock to the second their future of years in the distance. And one of the grand realities to prove this is the recent rocket mission to Mars and Jupiter—right on time! You and I have seen photographs of something beyond thoughts of our parents if they died a handful of years ago. Well, brethren, we have seen a great God in action.) (36) “So if those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever.” I believe in the heart of several of Israel, undoubtedly, even in Begin’s heart—it was true of Golda Meir and Ben Gurion, they had great faith in promises of Israel, and Chaim Weizmann. If you’ve not read his book “Trial and Error,” do so, it’s marvelous, the autobiography of his history of his life, and you see how the Lord moved him to become the first president of Israel. (37) “Thus saith the Lord God; If heaven above can be measured [hmmm, they’ve just found a new galaxy, haven’t they?] Thus saith the Lord God; if heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord.” (38) “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD that the city shall be built to the LORD from the Tower of Hananeel,” which is now a reality in the actual land of Israel. Where do you and I fit into this picture,

brethren? What is our prophetic future? What's our hope in this connection? May we turn to Zechariah's prophecy once again?

In the 3rd chapter of Zechariah the Lord causes a marvelous vision to take place. "He shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him." We think this Joshua of the Lord is a prophetic picture of the Church, head and body, in her glorious destiny that has been designed for her. Notice the prophecy begins immediately with the fact that the angel of the Lord stands with this Joshua, a prophetic picture of the development of this royal priesthood. But another angel is standing in this scene, Satan, standing at his right hand to resist him. (2) "And the Lord said unto Satan, the Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that has chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Here is the picture of the message of God speaking to Satan as Satan rebuffs, and chastises or works as an instrument of chastisement against the New Creation. He thought he would destroy the babes of Bethlehem and Jerusalem in order to get the promised King, the Son of God, little Jesus, but he failed in that respect. He thought the Jews would be destroyed by the Romans under the time of Hadrian, 135 A.D. It surely looked like the hopes of all Israel would be destroyed by the animosity and hatred of the Romans and others at that time, but Israel lives in Palestine today. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Out of all this turmoil, God has brought forth the nation of Israel.

Think of the persecutions of our brethren in the past. Some of you have known brethren who have died on behalf of the Truth. Some of our brethren during the time of Hitler were in the concentration camps and they suffered like others in their deaths and arrangements. But we realize that the New creation will be a brand plucked out of the fire. (3) "Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments [coming to the typical picture of the Church in development], now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and stood before the angel." (4) "And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with a change of raiment." (This beautiful passage that indicates the hope of the Church in her glorious reward that's before her.) (5) "And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by." (This is in our life already if we are in Christ. Our filthy garments of Adamic condemnation have been covered by the garments of the priesthood office to which we have been called and at the present time called the Robe of Christ's Righteousness which becomes our wedding garment and also becomes the robe of the Melchisedec priesthood.) (6) "And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying," (7) "Thus saith the Lord of hosts (now speaking to the Joshua class, you and I) Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." Now let's analyze the text—If thou wilt keep my charge, I'll

let you judge my house. What house? The Adamic house that's being restored under kingdom blessings. Know ye not that ye shall judge both men and angels, judge the world? The future hope of the Church and the promise to the Church is they will be judges. But they'll be righteous judges, not, for the sins of the past which will be all forgiven, but the sins that will take place under the convenient, pleasurable arrangements of the kingdom upon the earth. Then mankind's judgment will be an honest judgment, and the decisions of this judgment class, the New Creation, will also be just.

“Thus saith the Lord of hosts, If thou wilt walk in my ways [a simple statement], if thou wilt keep my charge [my responsibility—every one of us has a charge, big or little, whatever it is, you have a responsibility, and you've been asked to fulfill it], then thou shalt also judge my house, thou shalt also keep my courts.” The courts—we picture the Tabernacle court. We can envision the day will come when the Holy and Most Holy of the Tabernacle will be removed because that scene will pass. What's left? The court is enlarged. The walls of the Tabernacle, in symbol or picture, will extend out to the whole earth and will be enclosed in the court condition. Or, if you want to use the Temple scene, the Temple has a court in which the world of mankind are pictured bringing their offerings of their heart to God as they come through the Great Mediator, the New Creation, and receive their arrangement with the heavenly scene. And brethren, when you think of these things, this part, what I've just mentioned—thou wilt judge my house and keep my courts, remember that's only employment for 895 years. Then you're going to be out of a job. Think of it—895 years, this prophecy closes—that's the end of the Millennium, and the Church steps to the side, the Father takes over after the little season, as He administers the little season, and then the world of mankind will be fully in righteousness and the world will be brought back into harmony with God, and there's no need of the Mediator. Then what are you and I going to do? We're going to be pensioned off, aren't we? Oh no! brethren, oh no. Let's read on. This may answer some of the questions I've asked some of you along the way. (7) “Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.” What's standing by? Billions of planets with “For Rent” signs on them. Brethren, the earth was not made in vain; neither, do we believe that the great planetary systems of God are just useless masses in orbit. We believe God loves life—he gives life of every form. Therefore, I see from this prophetic picture another thought. When Paul says in the ages to come, God will show forth His glory (the ages to come pertain to the tremendous future work after our present 895 years of future employment pertaining to the Millennial Age). Then the grand reality of the mission of the Church will take place. “I'll give thee places to walk among these that stand by.” And I believe it's entirely in harmony with the thought of the scriptures, that perhaps even the Ancient Worthies, having received such faithfulness recorded in the past where Paul says that “they without us shall not be made perfect,” that they will be brought into a royal scene of God's divine blessing for the testimony of their faithfulness in obedience to God under extreme

hardship. Loving brethren, may we walk in His paths, and keep His ways, that we may walk among the places that stand by.