

LAODICEAN CHRONOLOGICAL
QUANDARIES

A LOOK AT

THE THOUSAND YEARS

AND

THE PARALLELS AS RELATED TO
THE HARVESTS

–PREFACE TO THIS BOOK–

While there are myriad little differences that keep brethren talking and comparing positions, there are two controversies which are large enough that they almost define segments of the “Bible Student Movement” since Bro. Russell’s day. These two large differences are THE 1000–YEAR REIGN OF CHRIST and the 40–YEAR PARALLELS AS RELATED TO HARVESTS.

We were going to publish treatments of these topics as separate booklets, but, in the end, it seemed appropriate to put both under one cover. Thus, this little book is really two booklets treating the two controversies mentioned.

It is our prayer that these presentations not cause further discord, but rather that they serve, at least in part, to enlighten us to the reasons behind the conclusions herein forwarded. The objective is to promote understanding, not conversion. Too often we don’t understand what “the other side” of an argument really is – or how it is related to scripture.

May the Lord use our efforts to be united in spirit if not in detail.

THE THOUSAND YEARS
(A Chronologically-Defining Study)

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

The question of dating the millennium mentioned in Revelation 20 has been a perennial matter of dispute among Bible students at this end of the Gospel Age.

All kinds of methods have been used in support of several seeming possibilities. These methods have ranged from (1) the less-than-ideal approach of basing the answer on personal preferences and reasonings, (2) the contradictory approach of citing page upon page of pastoral writings, (3) the conciliatory approach of inventing new answers which might calm both sides of the controversy, and (4) the purely Bible-based approach of comparing texts. It is this last approach which this little treatise on the subject will employ.

– Exhaustive Topical Study –

In Luke 24 we find the account of Jesus' walk with two disciples on the road to Emmaus. These two brethren were depressed about the events which culminated in Jesus' crucifixion. They knew not that it was he who was walking with them as they explained their confusion regarding the matters at hand. In verses 25 and 26, Jesus criticizes their lack of comprehension and points to the REASON their understandings were unclear:

“O fools, and slow of heart to believe all
that the prophets have spoken:
Ought not Christ to have suffered these
things, and to enter into his glory?”

With this HINT about how to understand, Jesus institutes TOPICAL BIBLE STUDY. As we read in verse 27: “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”

The effect was ELECTRIFYING! They later summarized their reactions and joy and the resulting comprehension in verse 32:

“Did not our hearts burn within us while
he talked with us by the way, and while
he opened to us the scriptures?”

At our end of the age, Pastor Russell revived this comprehensive, logical, and convincing method of study. By the 19th Century, the Lord had provided all the necessary helps needed to pursue such study. Lexicons, concordances, and multiple other aids in the common language became available so that nearly any sincere Christian might pursue exhaustive topical study.

If we do not apply this Jesus-instituted method to the controversies of the thousand years, it is we who are the unfortunate losers in the search for spiritual strength and clarity in things prophetic. This little treatise is designed to help us in that direction.

– Only Three –

The topic is not a difficult one for exhaustive study since the Bible deals with the concepts of a thousand years in only three places:

Psalm 90
II Peter 3
Revelation 20

We will examine all three with close scrutiny. If the scriptures do not thus define our answer, then no answer is available (which we do not believe to be the case).

There are limited possibilities:

1. The “thousand years” in all three places refer to the same period.
2. The “thousand years” in these places refer to more than one period.

– Our Objective –

As we compare the passages, it will become clear that those who hold that the three references are not the same bear a difficult burden of scripturally proving their point. We will see strong evidence within the contexts that all references are speaking of the same period. Therefore, if we can date any one of these references, all of the others are automatically dated. This is our objective.

This, of course, has been many times attempted in discussions, ecclesia studies, and discourses – and even partially in written articles. We are not aware, however, of such an exhaustive study being recorded in booklet form so that slow, prayerful, careful study of the matter could be pursued. It is our prayer that this effort will bless those seeking such inescapable scriptural conclusions.

We know that opinions on this subject are strong and often set firmly. We make no claims to perfection in our presentations. We do claim that the evidences herein presented are scripturally established and reasonable. We hope they are a blessing.

We will proceed with a simple format. Each of the three contexts will have a chapter in this booklet devoted to its careful examination. A final chapter will summarize.

CHAPTER TWO

PSALM 90

Psalm 90

A prayer of Moses, the man of God.

¹ *Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place
in all generations.*

² *Before the mountains were born, or Thou
didst give birth to the earth and the
world, even from everlasting to
everlasting, Thou art God.*

³ *Thou dost turn man back into dust, and
dost say, "Return, O children of men."*

⁴ *For a thousand years in Thy sight are like
yesterday when it passes by, or as a
watch in the night.*

Moses wrote this Psalm. We will see that it is at once a prophecy and a prayer that the permission of evil will work for man's benefit.

The first two verses create for us our trust in the Holy Word. God is our "dwelling place" – no matter in which age we live. We have no other source of confidence or information. There has never been, nor will there ever be, an alternate source of truth. These verses put a kind of stamp-of-approval on using an exhaustive search of His Word to answer all of our questions.

Verses 3-5 form the next section of this Psalm. They introduce and comment on thousand-year periods.

Verse 3 is the entirety of humanity's experience with sin. It is seven thousand years encapsulated into fifteen words. Because we sinned, we were "turned back into dust." But the promise is instant and secure that God will say "Return!" Here we have the promise of "the restitution of all things" of which ALL prophets spoke (Acts 3). How we can never cease to marvel at the beauty and economy of words in Scripture! Few words; eternal truths.

Verse 4 begins with the word "For." This, for our study, is of utmost importance. Verse 4 is the comment on verse 3. It is an EXPLANATION instead of a summary. The word "For" makes this clear. TWO one-thousand-year periods are represented in verse 4. They represent the two events of verse 3. One is the "yesterday" – the "day" of man's fall in Eden, a day which is now PAST. The other is a "watch in the night." This phrase demands cautious consideration. One thing is initially certain: whatever the "watch" is, it lasts a thousand years.

This "watch in the night" is the equivalent of the time of "return" in verse 3.

REMEMBER: verse 3 had two events (the fall and man's return). Verse 4 has two events (Adam's 1000-year "day" and the 1000-year "watch" when man's "return" would begin and progress). We need not guess about what is meant by this "watch" because Jesus uses this same symbology in Luke 12:38. (He almost certainly picked up this term from this very Psalm.)

Jesus says that his second advent would be in either the second or third “watch.” (Thus, second or third thousand years from some point.) His second advent, of course, is SPECIFIED as the “Times of Restitution” – the subject of this Psalm. (Acts 3:20, 21) It is inescapable from these texts that the third thousand years (the “watch”) is the Times of Restitution which is thus defined as a thousand years in length.

Thus this 90th Psalm has already linked us to Jesus’ advent and to the thousand years with which it is associated (the “Times of Restitution”). Our studies in chronology* have let us know that it was at the juncture of the second and third watches that he returned. By the authority of this Psalm, then, it is 1874 which begins the thousand years known as the “third watch.” (IF, then, we find that all mentions of the thousand years are the same, this Psalm, II Peter, and Revelation all have their “thousand years” beginning in 1874. Let’s wait to see.)

Verses 5 and 6 repeat our race’s plight so that the rest of the Psalm can record Moses’ plea requesting that we will benefit from it.

(These verses are probably not divided in the most logical place. The 6th verse should, for clarity, begin in the middle of verse 5—as shown to the left.)

⁵ *Thou hast swept them away like a flood,
they fall asleep;*

Verse 5 summarizes our loss: our race’s life was swept away as by a flood, and all we do, ever since, is to “fall asleep” in the grave.

⁶ *In the morning they are like grass which
sprouts anew. In the morning it
flourishes, and sprouts anew; Toward
evening it fades, and withers away.*

Then (at the best beginning of verse 6), our above-mentioned experience is compared to the transient life of grass. (Isaiah 40:6-8 makes the same allusion.) Each life begins like a morning of promise; it may even appear to flourish. But as we grow older, we fade and wither away. What a sad testimonial for such a noble creature that God had made!

Verses 7 through 17 are Moses’ expansion of our experience and his plea for a good end to the story.

⁷ *For we have been consumed by Thine
anger, and by Thy wrath we have been
dismayed.*

Verses 7 through 11 show the righteousness of our condemnation and the dismay that hangs over us.

⁸ *Thou hast placed our iniquities before
Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy
presence.*

(It is interesting to note that our “normal” life expectancy, according to verse 10, is seventy years. Since Adam’s “yesterday” was, for him, only 930 years, it is almost as if God

⁹ *For all our days have declined in Thy*

* Volumes 2 and 3 of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES.

fury; we have finished our years like a sigh.

¹⁰ *As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, or if due to strength, eighty years. Yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; for soon it is gone and we fly away.*

¹¹ *Who understands the power of Thine anger, and Thy fury, according to the fear that is due Thee?*

¹² *So teach us to number our days, that we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom.*

¹³ *Do return, O LORD; how long will it be? And be sorry for Thy servants.*

¹⁴ *O satisfy us in the morning with Thy lovingkindness, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.*

¹⁵ *Make us glad according to the days Thou hast afflicted us, and the years we have seen evil.*

¹⁶ *Let Thy work appear to Thy servants, and Thy majesty to their children.*

¹⁷ *And let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us; and do confirm for us the work of our hands; yes, confirm the work of our hands.*

“rounds out” the first thousand years by giving us that part of it which Adam didn’t have.)

When we finally get to verse 12, Moses requests that this permission-of-evil lifetime of ours will ultimately grant us the wisdom, when our “return” occurs, that will allow us to be able to profit from it all.

Verses 13-17 are a fervent plea for the times of restitution. How well these verses express the longings of humankind.

– In Summary –

This Psalm encapsulates the seven thousand years of the permission of evil and the rescue from it. It specifically focuses on the first and last thousand years of this period – the first, when we were turned back into dust (Adam’s thousand-year day); the last, when we would return to profit from Jesus’ restoring program (the “third watch in the night” of Luke 12:38). Effectively, this Psalm (along with Luke and Acts) conclusively identifies this last thousand years as beginning in 1874.

CHAPTER THREE

II PETER 3

II Peter 3

¹ *This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder,*

² *that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.*

³ *Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts,*

⁴ *and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."*

⁵ *For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water,*

⁶ *through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.*

⁷ *But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.*

As Peter begins this chapter, he makes it ABUNDANTLY CLEAR that what he is about to write came from the prophets and from Jesus, and it has been reflected in the words of the Apostles.

In the course of this chapter, Peter is going to mention “a thousand years.” The ONLY place he could have gotten this information is from Psalm 90. It didn’t exist anywhere else! And he wants us to get a “REMINDER” of this prophecy. He links it with Jesus’ “day” (his second advent). Where did Peter get this? He got it from the only two sources: (1) Jesus told the Apostles about the “watch in the night” in regard to his second advent; (2) Psalm 90 combined this prophetic element with the thousand years. Peter is not inventing! The Holy Spirit has enlightened his understanding, and he is going to give us a more in-depth look at what Psalm 90 and Jesus both taught.

Peter is well aware that what he is about to say will be subject to ridicule. He knows this because he is about to tell us that Jesus’ “day”, as it begins, will not be visible to the fleshly eye. People will say, “It’s still the same old ugly world!” Even though our “day” is unusual, the scoffers will be reticent to acknowledge its uniqueness.

NOTE: According to verse 4, it is the subject of Jesus’ “coming” (his PRESENCE) that is the focus of Peter’s lecture. It was in Acts 3 that Peter first addressed this topic EQUATING the coming with the “Times of Restitution” – the very subject of Psalm 90. The deeper we examine II Peter 3 and Psalm 90, the less possibility we can find that they are not connected in Peter’s mind.

In verses 5-7, Peter makes a few other observations. Note Peter’s source, his authority, as he calls upon it in verse 5: “by the WORD of GOD.” This recalls the first two verses of the 90th Psalm as well as Jesus’ lesson on the Emmaus road. It is not by eyesight that Jesus’ day will be recognized; it is by prophecy.

In these verses Peter also wants to establish a type-antitype relationship in our minds. He probably learned this relationship from Jesus’ words in Matthew 24:37-42.

Peter wants us to know that ignorance of prophetic fulfillment

is NOTHING NEW. It was the same in Noah's day as it is to be in Jesus' day: the world will be in ignorance, but the saints will be enlightened.

Peter uses the comparison to show that the day of Jesus' presence would be characterized by "fire" – destruction. He soon will explain what it is that will be "burned" in this day. (If this were literal fire, of course, the scoffers couldn't miss it!) But, MOST IMPORTANTLY, in verse 7 Peter introduces the word "DAY." He will build on this word. Take a moment to scan the context. You will see "DAY" in verses 7, 8, 10, and 12. We will soon see that THIS WORD in Peter's mind is the equivalent of the thousand years we first encountered in Psalm 90.

Here, in verse 7, he gives it one of several names: THE DAY OF JUDGMENT. If we catch the connection in context, Peter is saying that, once the "coming" of verse 4 is accomplished, the "day of judgment" HAS BEGUN – even though scoffers remain unaware.

BUT:

Verse 8 is Peter's next use of "day," – and he wants TO BE CERTAIN that we don't miss that he is relying on Psalm 90 to define that "day" as a thousand years in length. "BUT don't let this one fact escape your notice," he writes. These are serious and important words. He is so very intent that we don't miss this! And where did he get it? Psalm 90 was THE ONLY AVAILABLE SOURCE. And Peter wants us to apply this gem of truth every time he mentions "day." He has done so once to this point: "the day of judgment."

Can we possibly miss the parallel language in this verse as compared to that in Psalm 90?

Peter: "with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years."

Moses: "a thousand years in Thy sight are like yesterday."

Peter has, as he promised, brought this to our remembrance. Exhaustive Topical Study brings so many details to light!

It is inevitable, if saints remain in the flesh once the thousand years of verses 7 and 8 have begun, that they will jump to incorrect conclusions. Verse 9 is Peter's safeguard against such conclusions. To paraphrase this verse: "Brethren, the Lord will not alter his chronology. The Day of

⁸*But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

⁹*The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*

Judgment WILL BEGIN ON TIME. God keeps His promises! But, because the day's opening is not visible to the human eye, many will reckon that God has DELAYED – that the promise of the PRESENCE, the beginning of the thousand-year judgment day, has not happened. But, even though it will have happened, God's plans for the completion of His Church (the whole seventh stage of it!) will still be going on. He will, even though the day has begun, be patient toward us, not rushing our development, so that we can, indeed, be faithful."

¹⁰ *But the day of the Lord will have come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.*

Again, in verse 10, he cautions against our misunderstanding: "BUT, the day of the Lord WILL HAVE COME."

NOTE: The Greek is not "will come;" it is "WILL HAVE COME." The difference is immense! Brother Russell deals with this in Volume 2, but many seem to have overlooked it.

Thus Peter repeats his point:

"Even though some will scoff at it; even though the Church will not yet be complete, THE DAY WILL HAVE COME!" (He also gives the "day" an additional name: "THE DAY OF THE LORD." This teaches that Jesus' assigned work period is a thousand years – no more, no less.)

Note now how Peter characterizes the qualities of this thousand-year day. He says: IN IT the religions ("heavens") will be passing away noisily. He says: IN IT the everyday ingredients ("elements") of normal daily life will be eliminated because of great heat (the arguments which leave rationality and become emotionally irrational). He says: IN IT society ("earth") and its objectives ("works") will be destroyed ("burned up").

We have arrived at a great enlightenment regarding the "thousand years" of II Peter – and, consequently, about the thousand-year "watch in the night" of Psalm 90 from which Peter takes his cue: ITS FIRST PART IS TROUBLE. If any of us have imagined the "thousand years" as a peaceable kingdom in its entirety, we have imagined incorrectly. (Of course, this pre-supposes that the Revelation 20 Millennium is the equivalent of that in Psalm 90 and in II Peter. THAT has yet to be demonstrated. But it should be clear by now that Peter's thousand years and the final thousand years of Psalm 90 MUST be the same period. And we now know that it has two parts: trouble, and then peace.)

- ¹¹ *Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,*
- ¹² *looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!*
- ¹³ *But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.*
- ¹⁴ *Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,*
- ¹⁵ *and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,*
- ¹⁶ *as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.*
- ¹⁷ *You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness,*
- ¹⁸ *but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

Verses 11-18 conclude this chapter with Peter's admonitions to us to make ourselves ready. He, along with Psalm 90, and along with his own Acts 3 sermon, pinpoints the objective of all of this: as he says in verse 13, it is the new heavens and earth of righteousness that we anticipate. And again, he bases it on scripture: "according to His promise."

In verse 16 he reminds us of our ability to "distort...the Scriptures." Because we all do not agree about the thousand years, **SOME OF US MUST BE DISTORTING THE INFORMATION!** That is exactly why an attempt to explain the true relationship of Psalm 90, II Peter 3, and Revelation 20 is so imperative. We **DISTORT** only if we ignore or fail to answer all of the elements in these three contexts.

It is interesting to note that, in verses 15 and 16, Peter seems to refer to his own verse 9. He says that Paul also comments on "the patience of our Lord" as an element of our salvation – apparently in regard to **OUR DAY**. A separate study on Paul's remarks would, no doubt, prove most beneficial.

– A Contextual Look at “Day” –

Because Peter’s use of “day” is spread out over several verses, it is easy to miss his connection of thought. Therefore, we need to do a quick-glance review of Peter’s four uses of the word.

1. He introduces “day” in verse 7 as the period which will accomplish two things:
 - (a) It will destroy the old religious and social orders.
 - (b) It will conduct INDIVIDUAL judgment which will ultimately DESTROY the persistently ungodly individuals of our race (i.e., “second death”).
2. In verse 8, he DEFINES the length of this day he mentioned in verse 7. It is to be a thousand years long.
3. He mentions in passing (in verse 9) that the Church will still be here when this “day” begins.
4. He stresses (verse 10) that this day will have begun (even with the Church still here) in order to get the old order OUT so that the new order can function. (This is all summarized in Revelation 20:11.)
5. He shows that the Church must both “look for” (because it is not visible) and anticipate (“hastening”) this day. Here (verse 12) he gives us an additional name for the day: “THE DAY OF GOD.” And he again repeats his point: It is BECAUSE IT HAS BEGUN (“on account of which”) that trouble will be rampant. Trouble does not PRECEDE the thousand years; it is IN it!

CHAPTER FOUR REVELATION 20

We now have come to the most challenging and most controversial of the three contextual treatments of the thousand years.

At the outset, it is important to say that the discussion of this subject should never begin here in Revelation. A consideration of Psalm 90 and II Peter 3 **MUST** precede a look at Revelation 20. As we have seen, these two former instances instruct us with so much information, and in language not nearly so symbolic as that in Revelation, that beginning with Revelation **IS A HANDICAP** – a handicap that **MAKES** many of us **SPECULATE** on interpretation.

Revelation 20 poses **MAJOR** questions related to the thousand years:

- When is Satan bound?
- When does Jesus reign?
- Does the Church reign only after it is all on “the other side”? (And does it reign a full thousand years?)
- Is the mediation a thousand years in length?

These questions are answerable **IF** we understand when the thousand years begin, and not otherwise.

Those who do not think that the thousand years of Revelation began in 1874 are faced with a great challenge. That challenge is: **WHY** is **THIS** thousand years **NOT** the same as what Moses and Peter have defined? If, indeed, they are not the same, there **MUST BE CLEAR** scriptural evidence to the contrary. After all, if we have been instructed so clearly by Moses and Peter about what they call “a thousand years,” how can we, without **STRONG TESTIMONY**, now say that this third and final mention of “the thousand years” is **DIFFERENT**?

Actually, there is in Revelation 20 a subtle and interesting **INTERNAL EVIDENCE** that its thousand years are, indeed, the same as taught by Moses and Peter. It is an evidence easily overlooked.

If we think about it, we realize that all other time periods shown in Revelation have a **SYMBOLIC**, not a **LITERAL** word following the number. Examples are:

- (1) In 2:10, 10 days means 10 years.
- (2) In 9:5 and 10, 5 months means 5 thirty-year periods (150 years).
- (3) In 11:2, 42 months means 42 thirty-year periods (1260 years).
- (4) In 11:3, 1260 days means 1260 years.
- (5) In 11:9, 3½ days means 3½ years.
- (6) In 13:5, 42 months means 42 thirty-year periods (1260 years).

The question, then, arises: Why does Revelation 20 say thousand **YEARS** – a literal rather than a symbolic word following the number? Why does it not say thousand **DAYS**? Such an obvious **EXCEPTION** creates a **DEMAND** for an explanation.

Having studied Psalm 90 and II Peter 3, we have an acceptable answer given for this Revelation exception. **IF** the Psalm or Peter had not used the word “years,” their passages could well have had ambiguity. But **BOTH** Moses and Peter wanted **NO MISTAKE** – **NO SYMBOLISM**. They wanted us

to understand the chronology of the seventh creative day. When Revelation, then, uses thousand years instead of thousand days, as would be consistent with ALL of its number passages,

IT IS BECAUSE IT WANTS US TO KNOW THAT IT IS SPEAKING OF THE SAME THING AS WAS SPOKEN BY MOSES AND PETER!

One internal evidence thus immediately suggests that Revelation's millennium began in 1874 as did the thousand years of Psalm 90 and II Peter 3.

– The Structure of Revelation 20 –

Revelation 20

- ¹ *And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand.*
- ² *And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,*
- ³ *and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.*
- ⁴ *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them, even the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.*
- ⁵ *This is the first resurrection.*
- ⁶ *Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.*
- ⁷ *And when the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison,*
- ⁸ *and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.*
- ⁹ *And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured*

A quick glance at this chapter will show four uses of the phrase “And I saw” – one of the Revelator’s tools for letting us see sections in his text. (The use of this phrase inside of verse 4 is spurious and has been corrected in our Revelation text at the left.)

John thus visually shows us that

- verses 1-3 form a complete picture;
- verses 4-10 form another complete picture;
- verse 11 stands alone as an important commentary – even though it has an inseparable link to the verses that follow it;
- and verses 12-15 form the final picture of INDIVIDUAL JUDGMENT (mediation).

Note that the “thousand years” are never mentioned in the final two sections. This is because neither of these two sections lasts a thousand years!

Verse 11 dates from 1874 until individual judgment begins.

Individual judgment is IMPOSSIBLE until the old heaven and earth have “fled away” because these old systems deceive, and the millennium’s judgment will be without deception.

Verses 12-15 are about the time we call MEDIATION – the judgment of INDIVIDUALS. This is not a thousand years in length as is evidenced by the thousand years not being mentioned – as well as by the fact that verse 11 consumes the forefront of the Millennium. Is this not in harmony with II Peter 3? He also states that the troublous passing of heavens and earth are IN the thousand-year “day” of the Lord – constituting its beginning.

We see that Revelation’s thousand years are exactly as Peter’s. They both DIVIDE the period into DESTRUCTION and then INDIVIDUAL JUDGMENT. Therefore, it is

- them.
- ¹⁰ *And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*
- ¹¹ *And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.*
- ¹² *And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.*
- ¹³ *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.*
- ¹⁴ *And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.*
- ¹⁵ *And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

OVERWHELMINGLY likely that Peter and Revelation are speaking of THE SAME thousand years.

– A LOOK AT THE TWO PICTURES WHICH DO LAST A MILLENNIUM –

- ¹ *And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand.*
- ² *And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,*
- ³ *and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.*

The first picture of the complete thousand years is found in verses 1-3. We can see here immediately that these verses go beyond a thousand years since after the “thousand years were completed,” we find what we usually call the “little season” (KJV terminology).

Note that this picture begins with Jesus’ return – an 1874 event according to our comparisons of Psalm 90, Luke 12:38, Acts 3:20,21, and II Peter 3.

The problem here, of course, is that the wording does not clearly place Jesus’ return within the thousand years of verses 2 and 3. We are justified, however, to say that the return is at the beginning of some thousand years BECAUSE Jesus (Luke 12) and Peter said it was.

Many are reticent to make the leap that this is the thousand years about which Peter spoke because their feelings and reasonings on the binding of Satan make it difficult. But letting this binding question becloud the chronology which is so strongly suggested by Moses and Peter seems backwards at best. It is, of course, NECESSARY that the questions of binding find a RATIONAL and SCRIPTURAL explanation – but we should at least try to find an explanation within the definition of the thousand years given us by the greatest prophet and one of the most prominent Apostles. After all, isn't John trying to teach us how the binding of Satan fits into the framework established by Moses and Peter, and not how Moses and Peter have to be ALTERED in order to ACCOMMODATE the binding of Satan?

– A Long Aside: The Binding of Satan –

Our subject is not the binding of Satan. But Revelation 20:1-3 so inseparably ties his binding to the thousand years that it becomes impossible to proceed without examining this subject. We will make the examination as short as possible consistent with the need to understand the matter.

If we objectively look at the two pictures of the millennium given us (verses 1-3, and verses 4-10), we can safely summarize them thusly:

1. Verses 1-3 picture the entire thousand years from the standpoint of restraining evil (which used to reign) so that deception will not hurt the restitution work.
2. Verses 4-10 answer the question: “If we remove the old evil reign, what will take its place?” The answer: Christ and his saints.

Each of these two millennial views ends with commentary on the little season when evil will reappear TO DECEIVE as the final test on the restored. Deception is NOT the test of the millennium.

Peter made it plain that the removal of the old tainted order was IN the thousand years. BUT, does this mean that Satan is bound at its beginning? NO! Remember, Revelation 20:11 shows that the fleeing away of the old order (its unseen rulers included) is a PROCESS REQUIRING TIME — before individual judgment arrives.

Is this not reflected in verses 1-3? We nearly ALWAYS over-simplify the question by saying “the binding of Satan.” But these verses unquestionably show a five-step process, not just a binding:

- lay hold of,
- bind,
- cast into pit,
- shut the door,
- seal the door.

Notice that, beyond a doubt, his deceiving power is said not to be gone UNTIL THE SEALING. However, we are justified somewhat in our simple use of the term “binding” because verse 2 summarizes the entire event as “bound him for a thousand years.” But Peter FORBIDS us from interpreting this to mean that he is totally bound for the total period. It simply doesn’t fit. Peter shows the restraining of evil to be a period which opens the millennium.

Remember: The advent has been shown to be at the beginning of the thousand years. Therefore, the “binding” (which is SAID to be “for a thousand years” – verse 2) MUST be gradual unless we conclude that it was immediately accomplished in 1874 – a thought untenable with observation, with other prophecies (e.g., II Thess. 2:9), or in the minds of nearly all Bible students of our day.

– An Expanded View of Satan’s Binding –

Another topical study on the “Satan” of Revelation 20 yields a helpful balm for some of the problems of this subject.

The parables of Jesus regarding the binding of “the strong man” seem almost certainly to be about the absolute restraining of the spirit being we call Satan or the devil. There is nothing in these parables which requires this event to happen until the moment before mediation begins.

BUT, when we look at the “Satan” of Revelation 20, we should immediately be made curious about his IDENTITY. A careful comparison with other Revelation texts suggests, almost undeniably, that the binding of THIS Satan is not the restraint of the personal devil – although it will certainly INVOLVE the sentient being of Jesus’ parables.

The Revelation 20 “devil” and “Satan” are SYMBOLIC of the CIVIL POWER through which the personal devil has manipulated so many things. If this be PROVEN to us, much of the difficulty of interpreting verses 1-3 DISAPPEARS. After all, how many of us (even the worldly!) would deny that over the last century earth’s civil power and authority have been waning, have been threatened, and have been experiencing that BOUND feeling – taking away the totality of their power to deceive, bilk, cheat, hide, and exercise manipulative control?

There are TWO elements in Revelation 20 which virtually prove that the “Satan” here referred to is A SYMBOLIC SATAN:

1. The first proof is to notice in verse 2 that THIS “Satan” has a four-part description: dragon, serpent, devil, and Satan. Where have we seen this before? Only in one place: Revelation 12:9. It was Br. Russell’s CORRECT interpretation that this Revelation 12 creature was a

symbol of the CIVIL POWER (of Rome in Chapter 12). There is no justifiable reason to change this interpretation when it re-appears in Revelation 20 – particularly once we see the next proof:

2. The second proof is obtained by noticing that Revelation 16:13 presents a list of three symbolic characters: the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. Br. Russell, and nearly all current interpreters among us, explain these as representing civil power, the Roman church, and Protestantism. NOW, look at what happens to all three:
 - (a) In Revelation 19:20, TWO of them (Beast and False Prophet) are thrown into the “lake of fire” at the end of the Gospel Harvest. In Chapter 20:10, we find them still there at the end of the millennium. This (19:20) represents the end of nominal Christianity at the close of the Harvest, and its eternal extinction as a functioning entity.
 - (b) But what has become of the dragon – the THIRD ENTITY from Revelation 16:20? Well, THERE HE IS – right at the beginning of Chapter 20 in verse 2. But HE, still representing the same CIVIL POWER as he did in Chapter 16, DOES NOT GO INTO THE “LAKE OF FIRE” at the Millennium’s beginning. Quite to the contrary, he gets BOUND and SEALED in a pit TO BE RELEASED as a deceiver at the end of the millennium. FINALLY, however, he joins his other two evil symbolic conspirators in the “lake of fire” – total and eternal extinction (20:10).

It is the personal devil that meets his end in Revelation 20:9 – along with those who have been deceived. But it is the SYMBOLIC DEVIL which meets his end in verse 10.

To summarize: The first three verses of Revelation 20 show us the 1874 return of Jesus, his subsequent PERIOD of making the CIVIL POWER powerless by means of a series of five restraining actions, and the following period of DECEPTIONLESS mediation until a post-millennial release of a CIVIL POWER DECEPTION.

This scripturally-supported interpretation creates NO PROBLEM with the Revelation millennium’s being synchronous with that of Moses and Peter. It strengthens it.

– The Second Millennial Picture: Verses 4-10 –

⁴ *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them, even the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.*

⁵ *This is the first resurrection.*

⁶ *Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.*

⁷ *And when the thousand years are*

We suggest that verse 4 opens in 1874. This necessitates that those on the thrones are not alive because the first resurrection does not begin until 1878. The symbolism of Revelation supports this. Note that it is “souls” on the thrones. As is the case in 6:9, “souls” appears to be a symbol representing saints who have made their callings and elections sure, but who await their awakenings from the grave.

This symbol is further confirmed if we see the connection of the first and last parts of verse 4, along with the legitimate part of verse 5, WITHOUT all the extra information in the central part of verse 4. Thus:

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them...even the souls of those...beheaded;...and they CAME TO LIFE...This is the first resurrection.”

completed, Satan will be released from his prison,

⁸ and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.

⁹ And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

¹⁰ And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Because they COME TO LIFE at the end of the verse, it is logical to believe that they were not alive when the verse begins. Thus the verse begins in 1874 (the ESTABLISHMENT of the thrones – as in 20:11), but ends in 1878 (when the first resurrection begins). Establishment of thrones seems an apt symbol to show a reign begun.

The part of verse 4 relative to our study is the phrase “they came to life and REIGNED with Christ for a thousand years.”

Again we are faced with either accepting this thousand years as synonymous with that of Moses and Peter, or with insisting that it is a different thousand years. Thus, verse 5 can have two interpretations. Is reigning with Christ

1. At the COMPLETION of the first resurrection, or
2. At the BEGINNING of the first resurrection?

One INTERNAL hint is that these “souls” are OFFICIALLY ON THEIR THRONES in 1874; thus, their reigning is ACKNOWLEDGED AS BEGUN at that date – even though they are not alive! Consequently, the saints OFFICIALLY reign (with Christ) the ENTIRE THOUSAND YEARS. But not one individual of that class ACTUALLY reigns that long.

Here again, we have been faced with a question of PRIORITIES. Is not John telling us how the REIGN OF THE CHRIST fits into Moses’ and Peter’s framework, and not how that framework needs to be ALTERED in order to accommodate the reign? It is so easy for us to focus on the wrong question! John’s topic, like that of Moses and Peter, is THE THOUSAND YEARS. It is not the binding of Satan or the reign of Christ. He is merely EXPANDING the discussion of the Millennium, beyond what Peter taught, to show us how these other things FIT IN.

The easiest solution to this picture is to ACCEPT that we have no reason to introduce A NEW thousand years. We need only to accept the period defined by Moses and Peter and thus conclude that it is CHRIST’S thousand-year reign IN WHICH the saints participate – some before they are alive, some as they are changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye after 1878 (Revelation 14:13). After all, the first resurrection is DEFINED as coming to life and reigning with him. (20:4, 5)

The same reasoning would apply to verse 6. The Revelator’s thought seems very clear if we accept Moses’ and Peter’s thousand years as synchronous with that in Revelation 20. The Revelator is simply saying that there will be a thousand-year

reign of Christ; sharing in that reign with him will be his body who will join the reign as they pass beyond the veil.

Verses 7-10 expand the description of the “little season” with much more detail than did verses 1-3. (But the “little season” is not our subject. It does show, however, that John, as did Peter, EXPANDS the information about the “thousand years.” He is not introducing something new; he is just elaborating on what has been presented.)

– In Summary –

1. The simplest answer is frequently the best – not only in Bible study, but in the sciences and in life itself. The simplest answer is that John is just building on the information already supplied by Moses, Jesus, and Peter.
2. Is there scriptural authority – or even hints – that the Revelation millennium is not that which Moses and Peter discuss? Seemingly not.
3. The Revelation 20 millennium is the ONLY Revelation usage of time with a LITERAL PERIOD MENTIONED (“YEARS”). Why is this? It is to EQUATE Revelation with Psalm 90 and II Peter.
4. The combination of verse 11 with verses 12-15 DOES constitute a full thousand years. But BECAUSE the two parts are separate, neither is that long, and, consequently, neither mentions the thousand years.
5. These two sections (11 and 12-15) DO constitute the TWO PARTS of Peter’s thousand years: trouble, then individual judgment.
6. The first two millennial descriptions (1-3 and 4-10), while they DO cover a thousand years each, focus on the two concepts of Peter: (1) the destruction of Satan’s influence (1-3), and (2) the installation of the new judges who will bring life to individuals (4-10).
7. Verses 1-3 begin with Jesus’ advent – a date clearly taught as 1874 both in Psalm 90 (with Luke) and in II Peter (with Acts).
8. Verses 4-10 begin with the establishment of thrones – a logical reference to a reign (even though those sitting thereon are not yet alive), thus beginning the reign of Jesus AND his saints at 1874 (consistent with the establishment of Jesus’ 1874 enthronement as shown in verse 11).
9. The binding of Satan, clearly gradual in verses 2 and 3, is consistent with a gradually introduced millennium instead of a sudden thousand years of total restraint.
10. The proof that Satan in this chapter is primarily a symbol of civil power, and not a prophecy about the personal devil, eliminates virtually all of the problems inherent in most discussions which have tried to interpret verses 1-3.

CHAPTER FIVE ADDING IT ALL UP

It is hopeful that the three contexts dealing with “the thousand years” speak for themselves once we have considered their testimonies.

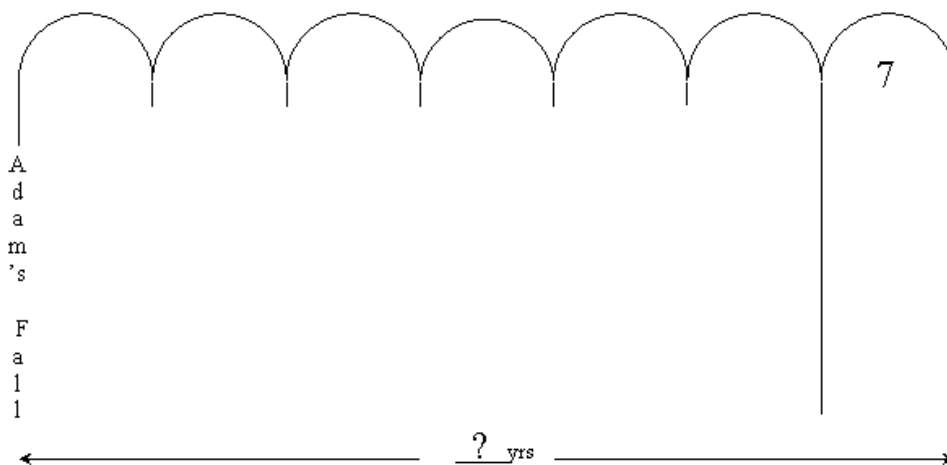
It feels “right” that each context is there for a specific purpose:

- That Moses (Psalm 90) set the groundwork for chronology and for its objective – the Restitution of All Things
- That Peter (II Peter 3) supplies much-needed additional information regarding the thousand years beyond that which Moses first presented. He shows that it is divided into two sections: the removal of the old order, followed by the new “righteousness” period. He also tells us that the Church is yet in the flesh when the period begins.
- Finally John comes along in Revelation 20 to build on Peter’s testimony. He shows that the fleeing of the old order is synonymous with the binding of the deceptive influences of the devil. He also shows us that it is not JUST Jesus’ reign, but that his saints share in it. He then finalizes the picture showing something BEYOND the Millennium.

This simple building of testimony has all the hallmarks of the Divine standard (as expressed by Isaiah):
Line upon line; precept upon precept.

Even though many of us have passionate viewpoints on these matters, the simple testimonies of scripture make it nearly inconceivable that any thousand years other than that which began in 1874 is meant by Moses, Peter, and John.

The Venerable Tradition



Seeing the simple drawing above, what is the answer most of us would give if asked, “How long is this period?” The standard answer is “seven thousand years.” But how do we know that? There is ONLY

ONE scriptural answer: We know the length of the last (or seventh) part. Therefore, we know the length of the whole picture. But HOW do we know the length of the seventh part? We may not have carefully considered this; but we know it ONLY because of Revelation 20. If Revelation 20 did not begin with 1874, we have NO CHRONOLOGICAL ANCHOR.

Brother Russell, in teaching us chronology, looked for the end of six thousand years from Adam's fall because he knew that Christ's Sabbath of healing was a thousand years long. Therefore the "work week" of sin and death must have been six thousand years long. He calls it "the venerable tradition." It IS VENERABLE – worthy of respect, because it is not just tradition, but it is rooted in Biblical types and prophecies. The SIX-PLUS-ONE standard IS the Bible standard for chronology.

It is no accident that genealogy and history place 1872 as the end of six thousand years from man's creation; it is no accident that prophecy places 1874 as being six thousand years from man's fall. But those numbers are useless and erroneous if the reign of Christ does not begin in 1874. If the 7th period does not begin where the previous six end, it means that we have something terribly wrong!

Men, and even brethren, may look at 1874 and say (as Peter predicted), "Where is this fulfillment?" But if the millennium of Revelation 20 is yet future, the venerable tradition (God's tradition: Volume 2, page 39) is false. Adding up six thousand years from Adam becomes meaningless, and the whole question of chronology in the Bible becomes meaningless.

But that is not the case. The testimonies of Moses, Jesus, Peter, and John say otherwise. There is ONE PERIOD, a thousand years in length, which is the "third watch," "the times of restitution," the "coming (presence)" of the Lord," "the day of judgment," "the day of the Lord," "the day of God," and the reign of The Christ. We are in it; "PRAISE THE LORD!"

**THE QUESTION
OF
PARALLELS & HARVESTS**

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

It is comforting and gratifying to realize how many things Laodicean saints agree upon. It should be that way. After all, heaven has decreed and provided that we would receive “meat in due season” by the hand of that servant who has been raised up to supply what we need, as well as to teach us how to continue in our investigation of the additional details pertinent to what he has supplied.

There are, however, a few (fortunately, a very few), areas which give us communication problems on an ongoing basis. One of those, the one which is the subject of this booklet, is our inability to communicate clearly on parallels and harvests. It may be, and we hope it is, merely a communication problem – a problem of not knowing what is meant by, or what is behind, the words we use.

The struggle for fellowship in these areas is nearly always characterized by quoting and interpreting pastoral writings. It is not that this is inherently wrong; but it has PROVEN to be inherently fruitless!

There is no question that the death of Pastor Russell, at the time THE LORD CHOSE to have it happen, is at the root of the problem. He died at a time when all brethren were in expectation of enormous things. Much of what Pastor Russell predicted had come to pass. Much of what Pastor Russell predicted had NOT come to pass. The struggle which pits our fidelity to the truths supplied by his ministry against the continuing march of history is an epic one! (Rev. 14:12) Some of us choose to retain the words he used as if alteration is inconceivable. Some of us choose to alter the words (but not the concepts) to fit what we see. All of us need to consult Scripture in order to polish off the rough spots which irritate one another. Scripture is not irritating! (except to error).

Truth is truth. It is found only in one location. (John 17:17) It is not found by insisting on pastoral quotes – a principle which Bro. Russell, himself, made abundantly clear. It is also not found in Scripture if our attitudes blind us to it!

What do Brother X and Brother Y mean when they say “harvest?” It may not be the same thing. Too frequently Brothers X and Y fail to try to understand, accommodate, or alter their differing definitions. We need cautious Scriptural comparisons. They are the only solution to differences.

The question at hand is unique to the Laodicean period. No one before Bro. Russell seems to have known about “the Parallels.” No one since him seems to be able to gainsay them. They are so Scripturally-derived and so chronologically imperative that it is dangerous for any of us to meddle with them. So, their validity is not the question. The question resides in the detail. Do we read TOO LITTLE into them? Do we read TOO MUCH into them? Do we connect them with items with which they should not be connected? Do we feel convinced that we have sufficiently examined their Scriptural contexts, implications, and limitations?

Brother Russell, for all of his ministry, was basically convinced that the old order would come to an end, if not AT 1914, then, certainly, in the VICINITY of 1914. He never really varied from that feeling – despite a few remarks which, in essence, said that he would not be disappointed if the Lord chose to let things go on for a while. His equating of the parallels, the ending of the Gentile Times, and the harvest never varied to any great extent. It was a natural mistake! But it WAS a mistake. His two years of life beyond 1914 were a STRUGGLE as he tried to “massage” the details. (Reprint 5950

is a famous and telling example.) But the Lord took him – FOR OUR GOOD. Now it is WE who must do the “massaging!”

One thing Pastor Russell did not do was to correlate the definitions of the Jewish and Gospel Ages strictly to the dates suggested by the parallels. This seems unknown or unacknowledged by many. The Chart of the Ages (in Volume One of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES) gives definitions for the two ages which are strictly in direct conflict with the exactness of the parallels; but these definitions were never challenged nor altered by Bro. Russell:

JEWISH AGE

“from Jacob’s Death to the End of the 70 Weeks”

GOSPEL AGE

“from Jesus’ Baptism to the Completion of the Church, Which is His Body”

Years before the 1916 forewords, Bro. Russell CAUTIONED against equating parallels and ages. We will examine this after we carefully examine the Scriptures.

Our examination will be in two basic parts:

1. We will examine the three primary Scriptural contexts which teach the parallels.
2. We will examine the text which *suggests* parallel extensions.

It is our hope, and certainly our prayers, that communication (and peace!) may be enhanced by this examination. We cannot be so naïve as to expect that one more attempt will make a great difference; but we can hope that a modicum of understanding of the problem can be achieved by this review so that enlightened exchange might grow.

CHAPTER TWO THE BASIC PROPHECY

—Preface—

Most frequently, Bible students refer to the subject at hand as “The Parallels.” This is certainly justified in that the prophecy deals with periods of time IN the Jewish and Gospel Ages which parallel each other in length and characteristics. We capitalized “IN” above because it is not only correct but imperative to say “IN.” As we will see from Scripture, the parallels are NOT THE AGES. The parallels are IN the ages. This is why Bro. Russell’s Chart definitions differ from the dates of “the parallels.” The parallels are VERY Scriptural; they are VERY accurate; but they are NOT the ages.

There is another name which brethren assign to this subject: THE JEWISH DOUBLE. This term is so much more accurate because it incorporates the word used by the prophets. It also defines the prophecy as primarily Jewish and thus suggests we must justify its application to another age. We will see that this prophecy is about punishment, not about age definition. The distinction is not small, nor is it subtle. The Jewish and Gospel Ages are not parallel, but events regarding the “two (unfaithful) houses of Israel” are parallel in time and in character. But this must all be seen in and verified by Scripture.

—The Three Sources—

There are three primary texts which deal significantly with the basic prophecy: “The Double.” They are:

Zechariah 9,
Jeremiah 16,
Isaiah 40.

We have listed them backwards, and we will consider them in that order. As we do, PLEASE NOTE that none of these deals with anything other than 1845-year periods. Because we all know about this subject in advance, our minds will tend to want to rush into consideration of items BEYOND the 1845 years. But step-by-step building is so important: “Line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, there a little” – as Isaiah so wisely cautioned. If we do not FIRMLY comprehend the BASIC prophecies, we will misconstrue the details built upon them.

—Zechariah 9—

⁹*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.*

¹⁰*And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and*

This chapter of Zechariah has the advantage of having Apostolic comment made on part of it. (Matt. 21:1-5) Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem, just before his death, is the subject of verse 9. The following verse carries us all the way into the peaceable kingdom – the blessed result of that fateful week in Jerusalem.

But in between these events, Israel was rejected, and the Gentiles were grafted into the body of Christ as shown in the

from the river even to the ends of the earth.

¹¹As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.

¹²Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee;

¹³When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man.

¹⁴And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the LORD God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.

¹⁵The LORD of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar.

¹⁶And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.

¹⁷For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.

¹¹As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.

¹²Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee;

first half of verse 10. A few simple words thus serve to fill in the time between the crucifixion and the Kingdom. But these simple words teach an enormous truth: Israel was to be abandoned during the Gospel Age! Thus, in verses 11 and 12, the prophet explains the long-term fate of that people during the time we call the Christian era. It is a period of powerlessness (pit), and insufficient truth (water). It will end only after a period called the “double”. Verses 13-17 then show Israel’s restoration to favor and national importance toward the end of that Christian era.

It is verses 11 and 12 that will now draw our attention.

NOTE FIRST: Israel’s rejection is a punishment. As Amos 3:2 so powerfully states it:

“You only have I known among all the families of the earth; Therefore, I will punish you for all your iniquities.”

In other words, favor begets responsibility. Thus, in Zechariah 9:10, God was justified in leaving Israel and turning to the Gentiles. (Luke 16:18) It is so important that we catch the point here. The WHOLE SUBJECT of the parallels (or the Jewish Double) is about the REJECTION OF THE UNFAITHFUL. It is not about dealing with the faithful – not about the primary work of the age! This is WHY the parallels are not the ages. (This is WHY Bro. Russell says the parallels “follow the nominal houses.”)

So, as verse 11 begins, God promises a day when the punishment would end. Jesus borrowed from the verse when he gave the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. (Luke 16:18-31) But here in Zechariah, we see that Israel will not just get “the tip of the finger in water” (Luke 16:24), but will be set...free from the waterless pit. It will be at the time in history when they are, as admonished, to “Return to the Stronghold.” Meanwhile, they would remain prisoners under disfavor – but with this hope!

Verse 12 then gives us the chronological prophecy: “Even today do I declare that I will render double unto you.” The specificity of the date is impressive. Such statements occur at the grandest moments in history. Zechariah 9:9 shows us that

the day of this promise is just days before Jesus' crucifixion (cf. Matt. 23:37-39), a time when he would again stress the import of another "today" to the thief: "Verily I say unto thee today..." (Luke 23:43)

This booklet does not have as its purpose the details of the chronology which pinpoint Jacob's death. So, suffice it to say that God "knew" (or favored) Israel (Amos 3:2) as a nation from the time of Jacob's death when he began to deal with them as a "people," "family," or nation. In other words, the Patriarchal Age came to an abrupt end at Jacob's death in 1813 B.C. Then, this exclusive "favor" to this people ended in A.D. 33 (1845 years later), in the days just before the crucifixion. When Zechariah 9:12 said that a declaration was made "this very day" (NAS), the only contextual "day" is when Jesus rides into Jerusalem (9:9).

—What Does the Lord Declare?—

Zechariah 9:12 is the source of the word by which we name this prophecy, "The Jewish Double." The meaning of the word "double" can be and has been argued. But that, again, is not our objective. Suffice it to say that its chronological meaning and accuracy were visibly demonstrated when Israel's return to its land began at Petach Tikvah in 1878. The word "double" means, and has been historically proven to mean, the same amount again. Thus Zechariah (in essence explaining Amos 3:2) is saying, "As long as I have favored you, that is the amount of time I will disfavor you." Hence, 1845 years after A.D. 33, in 1878, Israel's restored favor began to be visible. The "double" was FULFILLED.

—What Have We Seen?—

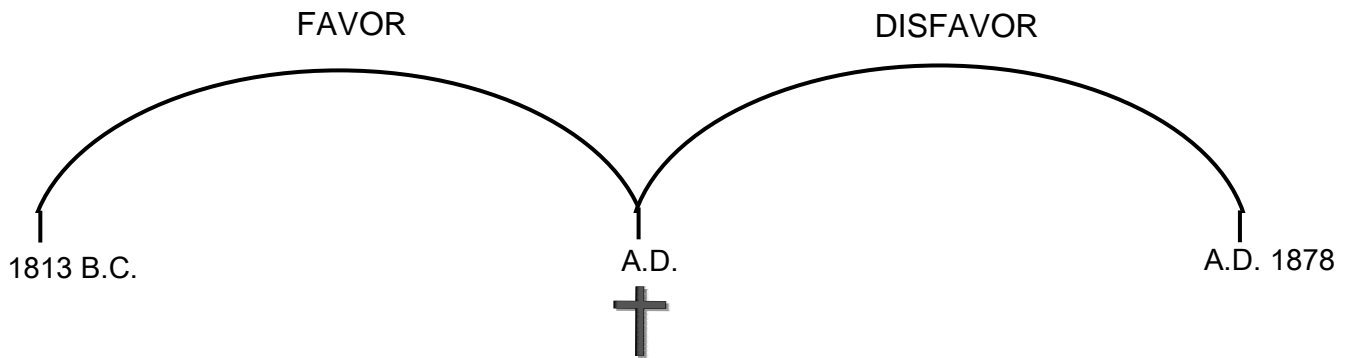
A brief summary of Zechariah's prophecy is as follows:

- Zechariah pinpoints a day in history – the spring of A.D. 33
- The prophecy centers on Israel's being cast off from favor at that date, but also confirms its finally experiencing a triumphant restoration.
- The rejection of Israel was a PUNISHMENT. Thus, the subject of the "double" is about PUNISHMENT.
- The punishment was to last as long as had their favor (Amos 3:2), i.e., 1845 years (from Jacob's 1813 B.C. death until A.D. 33).
- Thus, their favor's restoration was to begin in A.D. 1878. It did!
- The "Jewish Double" refers not to an age or ages, but to the rejection of the unfaithful.

We can draw a simple chart reflecting all that has been said. This chart will apply not only to Zechariah, but also to the Jeremiah and Isaiah prophecies yet to be examined.

The Basic Prophecy Illustrated

Zechariah 9
Jeremiah 16
Isaiah 40



—A Note Regarding A.D. 33 to 1878—

Zechariah has done much to inform us about the part of unfaithful Israel in this “double” prophecy. The focus of Zechariah is that the two halves of the double represent the two halves of Israel’s experience in their relationship with the Lord: (1) Favor from 1813 B.C. until A.D. 33, and (2) Disfavor from A.D. 33 until A.D. 1878. But Zechariah does not deal with what else happens in the second half of this “double” except to say that the Lord would “speak peace to the heathens” – i.e., He would accept Gentiles into His favor in place of the Jews. (Zech. 9:10)

This is where the subject of THE PARALLELS comes in. This word, parallel, suggests THE SAME THING AT ANOTHER TIME OR PLACE. We will see that the three prophecies concerning the “double” are, indeed, primarily about Israel – not Christianity. So we NEED scriptural support for the idea that something “parallel” happens in Christianity. Unfaithful Christianity, UNLIKE unfaithful Israel, is not going to be cast into disfavor for a period and then be restored! The PUNISHMENT for unfaithful Christianity will be VASTLY DIFFERENT from the punishment given to unfaithful Israel. So, the parallel IS NOT THE NATURE OF THE PUNISHMENT, it is the TIME when the rejection or punishment begins.

The parallels between a rebellious Israel and a rebellious Christianity will be:

1. The amount of time the Lord allows the relationship to continue;
2. The cause or event which brings their judgment to a head;
3. The amount of time allotted for their judgment processes;
4. The nature of the events which destroy their relationships with the Lord;
5. The process which begins the separation of the faithful from the unfaithful.

The text we need in order to tell us that there are, indeed, PARALLEL experiences for Christianity is found in Isaiah 8:14, 15. Its core testimony is that Jesus will be

“for a stone of stumbling and
for a rock of offence
to BOTH THE HOUSES of Israel.”

As we meditate on these words, it is important to compare companion texts as found in:

⁶Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

⁷Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

⁸And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

⁹But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of

I Peter 2:6-10

darkness into his marvellous light;

¹⁰*Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*

²³*But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;*

²⁴*But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*

²⁴*Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?*

²⁵*As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.*

²⁶*And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.*

²⁷*Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:*

²⁸*For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.*

²⁹*And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha.*

³⁰*What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.*

³¹*But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.*

³²*Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;*

³³*As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*

¹¹*I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.*

¹²*Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?*

²⁰*Well; because of unbelief they were*

I Corinthians 1:23, 24

Romans 9:24-33

Romans 11:11, 12, 20-22

broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

²¹For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

²²Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

Notice how each of these contexts gives the same lessons and warnings regarding Israel AND Gentiles, and the faithful vs. the unfaithful in each.

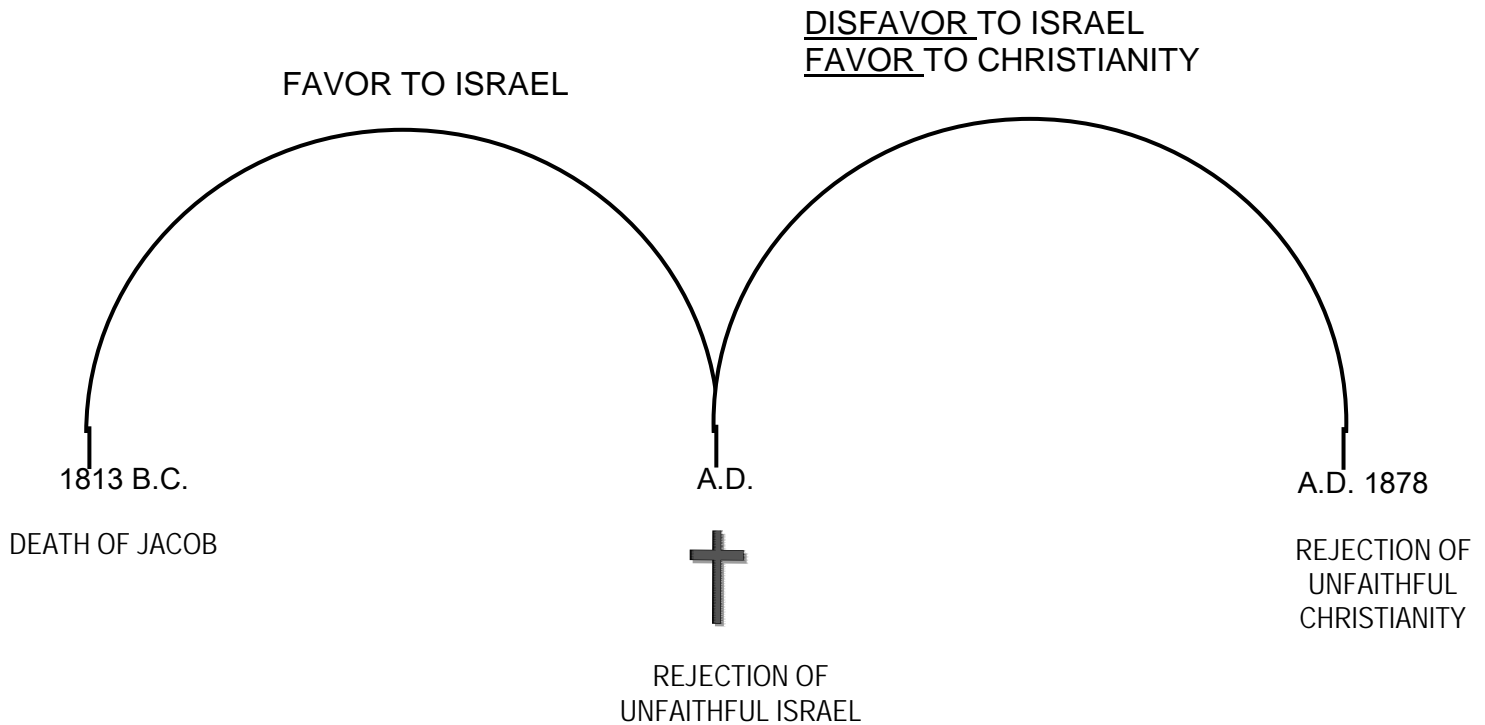
This gives us the proof that “both houses of Israel” means fleshly Israel AND spiritual Israel. It also confirms to us mightily that the ultimate triggers for judgment and rejection of the unfaithful are THE TWO ADVENTS OF JESUS, for it is HE who is the stumblingblock, and unless HE IS PRESENT, he cannot be rejected. Fleshly Israel never knew of Jesus until the first advent; spiritual Israel knew of him for the entire time of their existence, but their STUMBLING over him happens (as with Israel) only at the end of the age.

Thus we can conclude that Isaiah 8 and its companion texts, and the REJECTION parts of the “parallels,” are AT BOTH ADVENTS – A.D. 33 when Jesus tells them of their “desolate” house, and A.D. 1878 when the proclamation goes forth, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen” – each event at the exact close of one-half of the “double.” The next chart illustrates this. (Matt. 23:38 and Rev. 14:8 and 18:2)

The Basic Prophecy Illustrated

(Augmented To Show Christianity's Parallel Based on Isaiah 8)

Zechariah 9
Jeremiah 16
Isaiah 40



—Jeremiah 16—

Jeremiah 16 is our next witness in the matter of the Jewish “double.” In many ways, the testimony is like that in Zechariah. The first thirteen verses constitute a horrible description of what Israel must suffer because of unfaithfulness.

¹³Therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, neither ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not shew you favour.

¹⁴Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

¹⁵But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

¹⁶Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

¹⁷For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.

¹⁸And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things.

Verse 13 ends with the summary, “I shall grant you no favor.” (NAS) This virtually introduces the disfavor period of 1845 years about which we learned in Zechariah.

Beginning in verse 14, Jeremiah does exactly what Zechariah did. He forecasts Israel’s restoration, showing that it will happen in a period of struggle during which the Lord will fish and hunt for them to bring them back into their land.

Verse 17 then summarizes the causes for the disfavor period and the experiences shown in verses 13-16. It reiterates that this is all a punishment for unfaithfulness. We repeat this point because of its importance to the concept of the “double” and the “parallels.” We must not forget that these chronological gems are not about the ages which were designed to find the faithful, but about the parallel punishments designed against the unfaithful.

The 18th verse introduces the word we encountered in Zechariah: “double.” The meaning is the same. A paraphrase of this important verse follows:

“Before I restore them to their land (verses 14, 15), I will punish their unfaithfulness for the same amount of time that I granted them favor (1845 years). As this favor period is closing, they again defile my mercies toward them. I give them Messiah’s sacrifice (A.D. 33), but they reject it and continue to offer the now-abominable carcasses of the typical sacrifices.” (Cf. Heb. 10:6.)

The Jews (even to this day) could not, and cannot, understand how the sacrifices of the Law (which God instituted!) could become abominations – the same word Daniel uses to describe the re-sacrifice of Jesus in the mass. But that statement regarding carcasses (verse 18), as obscure as it might seem on the surface, pinpoints the “double” to the week of the crucifixion. Zechariah made it clearer, by the reference to

*¹⁹O LORD, my strength, and my fortress,
and my refuge in the day of affliction, the
Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends
of the earth, and shall say, Surely our
fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and
things wherein there is no profit.*

*²⁰Shall a man make gods unto himself, and
they are no gods?*

*²¹Therefore, behold, I will this once cause
them to know, I will cause them to know
mine hand and my might; and they shall
know that my name is The LORD.*

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem; but there is no question that Zechariah and Jeremiah are pointing to the same week of events as the chronological centerpiece of the "double."

It is so corroborative to see the words which follow in verses 19-21. Just as Zechariah prophesied that God would, during Israel's double of disfavor, "speak peace unto the Gentiles," Jeremiah now does the same thing. Verses 19-21 show God's turning of favor to the Gentiles – thus setting up the "parallel" experiences of punishment for those Gentiles who prove unfaithful (like their Jewish counterparts). As Isaiah 8 told us, **BOTH HOUSES** would have those who stumble over Jesus.

In summary: Jeremiah has confirmed every lesson we learned from Zechariah. Israel's unfaithfulness would, at the time of the cross, result in their being cast off from favor for 1845 years during which time Gentiles would be grafted into favor – many, unfortunately, only to follow the unfaithfulness of their Jewish types.

—Isaiah 40—

¹Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

²Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her appointed time is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

We are familiar with the opening of this chapter for many reasons. Its first-advent implications are explained for us in the Gospels. Its second-advent implications are plain for us to see in its wording.

We again encounter the word “double.” It is not the same Hebrew word used by Zechariah and Jeremiah, but it is functionally the same – much as if we said “Again,” “Repeat,” or “Encore;” three different terms, one meaning.

Israel is once again the topic. But in THIS context, we begin AT THE END of the “double” – in 1878. This context is not focused on punishment, but on its end – on what follows it. Here we find an admonition to the disciples of Jesus, as the harvest time arrives, to INFORM Israel that its favor has been restored. The King James and NAS translations use “warfare” instead of “appointed time” in verse 2. Her “warfare,” unfortunately, is not accomplished. Both Zechariah and Jeremiah established that fact by showing the “double” ending in a time of strife. But, HER APPOINTED TIME, (1845 years) IS accomplished. As Isaiah says:

“for she HATH RECEIVED DOUBLE.”

Isaiah’s explanation is telling. It mightily supports the fact that “double” is a chronological word. How does it do this?

1. First of all, there would be little or no meaning to claim that Israel received “twice as much” of anything! We have no scriptural equivalent (other than time) to explain this word, “double.”
2. Secondly, Isaiah is clearly using “double” as a reference to “appointed TIME.” He is saying DOUBLE EQUALS TIME. (“TIME is accomplished FOR she hath received DOUBLE”.)
3. Compare Psalm 102:13, and notice the word “favor” in connection with the double. This Psalm is a stunning confirmation of the “set time” – 1878.

Following the first two verses, Isaiah, as did Zechariah and Jeremiah, points to restoration: the soon-to-be “highway of holiness” of Isaiah 35, the leveling of social and economic inequalities, the straightening out of man’s crooked ways, and the understanding of God:

“And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth

| of the LORD hath spoken it.”

—What Have These Three Testimonies Shown Us?—

1. These three texts have shown us the BASIC PROPHECY: Israel was to experience a punishment of disfavor for 1845 years. After this, it would be restored.
2. With the help of Isaiah 8, we have seen that the same 1845-year period would develop a parallel class of unfaithful Gentiles.
3. We have seen, as a result, that the BASIC PROPHECY is not about the calling and the development of the FAITHFUL. THAT is the purpose and definition of Jewish and Gospel Ages – but NOT of parallels or the double. The parallels are about the unfaithful.

—An Important Aside—

When we look at the chart we have drawn to illustrate the FAVOR and DISFAVOR periods of Israel, and when we see that history has PROVEN each half to be 1845 years in length by confirming the length of the second half with the establishment of PETACH TIKVAH, WE SEE AN ENORMOUS CONFIRMATION OF THE TOTAL CHRONOLOGY.

By one single prophetic line of testimony, all of the other chronological conclusions of Old Testament times as presented by Bro. Russell are demonstrated to be flawless.

What do we mean? Jacob’s death to Jesus’ casting off of Israel is 1845 years. We know this not by Old Testament calculations alone, but more securely by the fulfillment of the “double’s” second half (33-1878). Thus the period of Jewish FAVOR (1813 B.C. – A.D. 33) must total only 1845 years. This time includes the sometimes-questioned periods of the division of the land, the period of Judges, the period of Kings, the Desolation, and the secular history following Cyrus’ decree. If any one of these periods is different from Bro. Russell’s calculations, the total would not be 1845 years. Thus, by the prophecy of the JEWISH DOUBLE, the Lord has LOCKED IN our understanding, our faith, and our calculations. What a prophecy!

CHAPTER THREE PARALLEL EXTENSIONS

—Where Are We?—

We have seen the BASIC prophecy of the Jewish Double. It is impressive. The two halves take us respectively to A.D. 33 and A.D. 1878 – the two points at which rejection of the unfaithful systems occurred. Except for a remarkable prophecy in Daniel, we would know nothing else about parallels. Without Daniel’s additional information, however, we would still be richly blessed in understanding what we have already reviewed. But, by the Lord’s grace, Daniel does EXTEND the parallels for us. (Perhaps a word better than EXTEND would be ELABORATE. That might keep us from seeking further extensions!)

A word of caution is in order. We like to speculate, and we often, given the impetus of an idea, come to grand conclusions based on nothing but speculation. A good disciple and student of the Word will try not to do this. As we look at the possibility of extending the parallels, it is imperative that we scripturally document each extension we make. It is also imperative that we read no more into the extensions than was intended. Bro. Russell openly admitted that he read too much into the information. It is now up to us CAUTIOUSLY to read correctly and to be blessed thereby.

—Daniel 9:24-27—

Daniel 9 is the prophecy we usually call “The Seventy Weeks.” It is NOT ABOUT THE “DOUBLE.” Therefore, strictly speaking, it is NOT ABOUT THE “PARALLELS.” It is, however, about Israel, and it actually mentions the date of Israel’s casting off as was proven by the “double.” We are, therefore, justified in using it as a description of EVENTS WHICH SURROUND the central “double” date of A.D. 33, and, therefore, as a legitimate part of things which expand comprehension of Israel’s rejection and punishment. The rejection and punishment of the OTHER HOUSE (rejected Christianity) should logically have its own parallel events.

It was Bro. Russell’s conclusion that the parallels “follow the nominal house(s).” The simple, basic, 1845-year parallels do this. Since the 70-weeks prophecy is ABOUT the rejection of the nominal “house” of fleshly Israel, this prophecy seems, as Bro. Russell suggests, a viable part of the parallelisms. We do note in Daniel 9:24 that the period of FAVOR for the Christian “house” is alluded to in the anointing of the most holy ones. That this prophecy includes things Christian is also proven by the fact that the 70-weeks prophecy is not a complete prophecy in itself. It is a description of the first 490 years of the “Cleansing-of-the-Sanctuary” prophecy of Daniel 8:14 – a prophecy which has its termination in A.D. 1846, and which is decidedly about Christianity, and not about Israel.

—The Details—

²⁴*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*

In Daniel 9:24 we are informed that the first 490 years (70 weeks) of the Daniel 8 prophecy are SET ASIDE to accomplish certain things regarding fleshly Israel. The detailed meanings of the items in this verse are made abundantly clear in Volume 3 of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and are not our subject here.

²⁵Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

²⁶And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

²⁷And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Beginning with the 25th verse, the angel gets down to the chronological nitty-gritty of the prophecy. To paraphrase the pertinent parts:

Vs. 25:

From Artaxerxes command in 454 B.C. until Jesus appears as Messiah (A.D. 29 at Jordan) will be 483 years (69 weeks of years).

Vs. 26:

After Messiah appears, he will die! – but not for himself. Later, Jerusalem will be destroyed by an invading prince —

Vs. 27: But, back to the details:

Once Messiah has appeared, he will confirm that this promise of the entire 70 weeks is exclusively for Jews – even though in the midst of the last week, in A.D. 33, he will show the rejection of the typical sacrifices by replacing them with his own truly-efficacious sacrifice. It will be a down-hill experience for natural Israel from that point forward until the whole Jewish polity is desolate.

—Examining the Details—

We want to notice first that this prophecy deals with Israel BEYOND its rejection. Zechariah and Jeremiah, deal with a period extending only to A.D. 33. In Daniel’s prophecy, that is the middle of the 70th week; but Daniel carries his prophecy to the end of the 70th week (A.D. 36) – even including non-dated implications beyond that point.

We must ask, then, how does Daniel’s prophecy relate to the Double? It changes nothing in the BASIC PROPHECY. Daniel, along with Zechariah and Jeremiah, points to A.D. 33 as a rejection of the old. What Daniel does do additionally is to point to occurrences 3 ½ years BEFORE and 3 ½ years AFTER our primary “double” date. He is showing PREPARATION for and RESULT from the rejection.

In support of the 40-year parallel (despite the weakness of direct scriptural testimony in support of it as a parallel), we have a good deal of scriptural evidence of the import and meaning of the number 40. It is a number which consistently means a complete period of testing. Thus, although Israel was approached for testing in A.D. 29, and although it officially lost its favor in 33, its physical-political destruction did not begin until 40 years had passed. Likewise, although Christendom was approached for testing in 1874, and although it officially lost its favor in 1878, its physical-political destruction did not begin until 40 years had passed.

The text in Revelation 19:11 seems, then, the Christian parallel for the undated events of Daniel 9:26. Revelation specifies two parts: “He (1) judges (for 40 years) and (2) (then) wages war.”

Remember, however, we are building a parallel here not warranted by any date in Zechariah, Jeremiah, Isaiah, or Daniel. It may not exist.

—Charting What We Have Found—

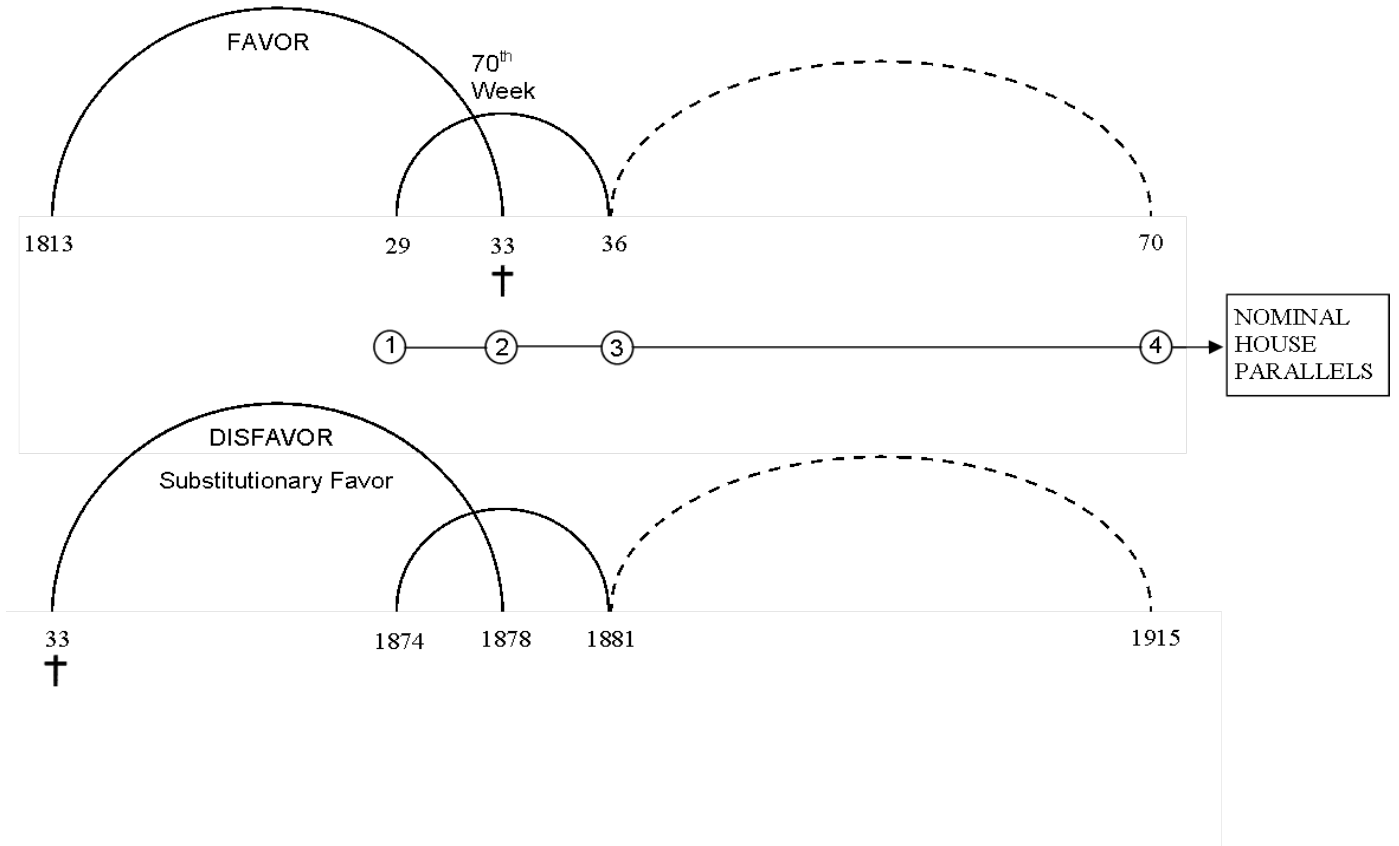
On the next page is a chart which adds Daniel’s testimony to the parallels we learned from Zechariah, Jeremiah, and Isaiah. This time we have the periods drawn OVER each other instead of BESIDE each other in order to make the visual impact stronger.

We can see the BASIC PROPHECY in the left-most arches. In the center arches we have Daniel’s three plainly-stated dates and their corresponding modern parallels. As we have seen, Daniel gives us REJECTION-PREPARATION dates 3 ½ years prior to rejection; then he gives us REJECTION-RESULT dates 3 ½ years subsequent to rejection.

Even though the right-most arches are only questionably a part of the parallel, we have included them (though DOTTED!) as part of the picture which most of us accept.

In the center are four circled numbers. Please consider the chart carefully. We will then re-consider the definitions suggested for the parallel points marked by these numbers.

EXTENSIONS FROM THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL 9



—Before Giving Definition to the Parallel Points—

We have already suggested definitions for these parallels. It is important, however, to reason on them carefully. Bro. Russell's strong caution that these parallels are about the NOMINAL HOUSES is eminently appropriate. One of our communication problems regarding the parallels is that we frequently INSIST on applying the parallels to the FAITHFUL. But, as we have seen, the prophecies are all clear: the "double" (or the parallel system) IS ABOUT REJECTION OF THE UNFAITHFUL.

There is no question that the rejection of the unfaithful will have an effect on the faithful. Thus, we can be certain that the propheesied dates will affect the faithful. But we MUST determine those effects FROM OTHER PROPHETIC SOURCES, otherwise we are in danger of mis-using the double (parallel) prophecies. For instance, it is TRUE that the sleeping saints are raised in 1878. It is ALSO TRUE that determining this event is partly by ITS RELATIONSHIP to dates established BY THE DOUBLE. (See Revelation 14:8 and 13.) But the parallels ARE NOT ABOUT the raising of the sleeping saints; they ARE NOT ABOUT the faithful!

The more controversial question of the "harvests" rests on the same mis-use of parallels. We have not seen any sort of reference to or even hint of "harvests" in the prophecies we have examined. We have even seen that the whole question of a 40-year period in the parallel prophecies is, at best, tenuous.

"Harvest" has nothing directly to do with THE REJECTED! One harvests in order to collect the valuable crop. The unfaithful are not valuable. The whole concept of a 40-year harvest came into being, as earlier mentioned, because Bro. Russell functionally saw 1914 as THE END – an end that just happened to be 40 years after Jesus' return; an end that just happened to be when Gentile Times were to conclude; and, therefore, "the end of the age" (as Jesus expressed it). But Bro. Russell was (as he openly admitted), wrong. The "age" (as he had shown on the Chart) would not end until the church was complete. Therefore, (again as he stated), the harvest did not end in 1914 (R5950), AND THE PARALLELS HAD TO BE CLARIFIED as being about THE REJECTED ("the nominal houses") and NOT about the TRUE, the faithful. The parallels are in the ages; they are not the ages. Neither do they claim to define harvests.

The parallels must not be abandoned! They must be made conformable to the prophecies from whence they came – the prophecies we have just examined and found VERY CLEARLY to be only about the parallel rejections of the unfaithful Jewish system and the unfaithful Christian system. With this in mind, we can assign PROPER and CONSISTENT definitions to the parallel dates – definitions TOTALLY in harmony with the prophecies from which they come, and TOTALLY removed from making applications to the faithful.

—Giving Definition to the Parallel Points—

See the chart on page 56 as we refer to these numbered dates ("points").

POINT #1, A.D. 29 AND A.D. 1874

This point (as a parallel) is supplied only by Daniel 9. As we have seen, it is a point which is 3 ½ years before the rejection. (The rejection is the central or core point and objective of the "double" prophecies.) The purpose of this A. D. 29 point is stated by Daniel; it is "unto Messiah." In other words, Messiah appears on the scene. Daniel strongly (and immediately) suggests the reason for this

appearance: “Messiah shall be cut off.” These words are heavy with implication. They show Israel’s rejection of Messiah. In plainer words, the people refuse him and are, THEREFORE, judged unworthy and REJECTED. When we look carefully, we find the scriptures tend to explain everything! Daniel is telling us that the advent of Messiah was PREPARATION FOR REJECTION.

Daniel doesn’t go into another work going on during those 3 ½ years – probably because this work is not about the rejected. Jesus was preparing the foundation for the Gospel Age. He was selecting his Apostles and initial disciples. Just as Jacob left twelve sons to begin a new age at his death, so Jesus was preparing to leave twelve foundations to begin a new Israel at his death.

With this much information, it seems safe to define Point #1 as

“SECRET” PRESENCE TO TEST CHARACTER & TO PREPARE SPOKESMEN

Remember, the preparation of spokesmen is not about the rejected. We mention it only to show how the parallel’s events DO affect the faithful even though the parallels are not about them.

But, does this fit the parallel second-advent date (1874)? It seems to do so. Jesus examined Christianity and its reactions to the proclamation of his presence. And, Jesus prepared the Seventh Messenger and a core of disciples to announce the end of favor to the unfaithful Christian “house” and to announce the rediscovered truths then due.

POINT #2, A.D. 33 AND A.D. 1878

All that we have discussed has centered around these parallel dates. We have defined them! In a few words, this set of parallel dates represents

THE REJECTION OF THE UNFAITHFUL “HOUSES”

One caution: rejection is not destruction. The “houses” remain around, continuing to spread their erroneous information. This OFFICIAL, but not terminal, action of rejection is symbolized in Revelation by the two-fold use of “fallen.” “Babylon is fallen, is fallen.” The meaning is “fallen from favor.” (Two-fold repetitions in Revelation symbolize incompletion – i.e., “There’s more to come!”)

POINT #3, A.D. 36 AND A.D. 1881

This point has been subject to more confusion than have the previous two. This has been due, in part, by attempting to read information about the faithful into the 1881 date. If we can retain our focus on these dates as being strictly regarding the parallels of the unfaithful, we will have relative ease in finding a good definition. We will suggest a definition first, and then attempt to defend it:

END OF SPECIAL FAVOR ENJOYED DUE TO A RELATIONSHIP TO THE REJECTED “HOUSE”

We may recall that we arrived at this set of dates only by Daniel’s prophecy. They represent the end of the 70th week. We MUST give attention to Daniel’s words (actually, the angel’s!) regarding the nature of the 70 weeks. He said they were “determined for thy people (Israel)” – i.e., SET ASIDE for the EXCLUSIVE dealing with Israel. By this very simple statement, ONE THING is inescapably defined about A.D. 36 – it is a date NO LONGER for Israel! Hence, as the Zechariah and Jeremiah prophecies

informed us, **THIS** is the point at which Gentiles are engrafted. Cornelius' conversion date **IS NOT A SPECULATION!**

When we examined Daniel's prophecy, we characterized this date as representing the **RESULT** of the **REJECTION**. What was the result of the rejection? It was two-fold; one **PRECEDING** 36, the other **AT** 36:

1. The 3 ½ post-rejection years were, as stated by Daniel, to "anoint the most holy." Remember, and this is important, the objective of the age is to gain its fruitage! Even though Israel was **REJECTED** in A.D. 33, the real thrust of the Apostle's early work was to find those who were faithful and carry them into Christ. "Anointing" the "most holy" (the faithful) was the granting to them of the holy spirit. This was not possible before Pentecost, and, hence, it applies after the rejection. This was not a work among the Gentiles, but only among Jews – the final fruitage of the age, the faithful "remnant" of a cast-off system.
2. The reaching of A.D. 36 changed things. We are thence past the "70 weeks" of promise to Jews. Gentiles now begin to come into Christ. But this explanation deals with people of faith. We must find an explanation for 36 and 1881 that deals with the rejected ones. That is the objective of the parallels.

Acts 19:1-12 provides a real-life explanation of the meaning of A.D. 36. It was true, until 36, that a relationship to the rejected house **STILL BROUGHT BENEFITS**. John's baptism was still valid and it, after 33, brought the holy spirit's anointing upon those who used it. But, as Acts 19 demonstrates, after the 70th week, being faithful and utilizing the benefits of the old order **NO LONGER GAVE A PERSON ANY RECOGNITION OR BENEFIT**.

What does this mean in 1881? A little reasoning is needed here. Bro. Russell summarizes the date as the end of the general call (or, sometimes, the more mis-leading "end of the high calling!") When we actually comprehend what he meant, all foreboding and mystery vanishes. Here is the epitome of his reasoning:

All through the Gospel Age, if you consecrated yourself to righteousness (plane N on the Chart of the Ages), you **AUTOMATICALLY** received an invitation to the high calling – an invitation to plane M on the Chart. When 1881 came, all things "automatic" during the age were no longer in effect. In other words, the call was no longer "general" – no more unquestionably open. It was "the end of the high calling" in the sense that the automatic invitation of the age **ENDED**, but not in the sense that the Church was complete – not in the sense that the age, itself, ended.

Bro. Russell reasoned on this further by postulating that by 1881, the faithful beyond the veil, plus the still-faithful on earth, constituted 144,000. His reasoning is not without merit. After all, that day, that total, **MUST** occur at some date before the actual 144,000 are selected. It is altogether reasonable that that date would occur simultaneously with the ending of a **WIDE OPEN** invitation. If the number is tentatively reached, justice and love **DEMAND** that the **WIDE OPEN** character of the call end; thereafter, a selective admissions procedure must be adopted: invitation only as openings occur.

But, again, a caution here! The whole question of selective admission is a question dealing with the faithful. The parallel date must deal with the unfaithful – the result of being cast off. That parallel is clear. In 36 or 1881, one associated with old Judaism or old Christianity may not say, “But you must accept me, I’m a Jew or I’m a Christian.” In essence, at these cut-off dates, the Lord has a reply somewhat like, “Who are you? I know you not!” In 36 and 1881, both Judaism and Christendom as religions became absolute strangers to God – as if they had never existed. The rules had changed! THAT is the parallel.

POINT #4, A.D. 70 AND A.D. 1914

Is this a part of the parallels? We have given arguments on both sides of the question. If it is, it certainly requires an explanation and definition. Perhaps it would accurately be described as

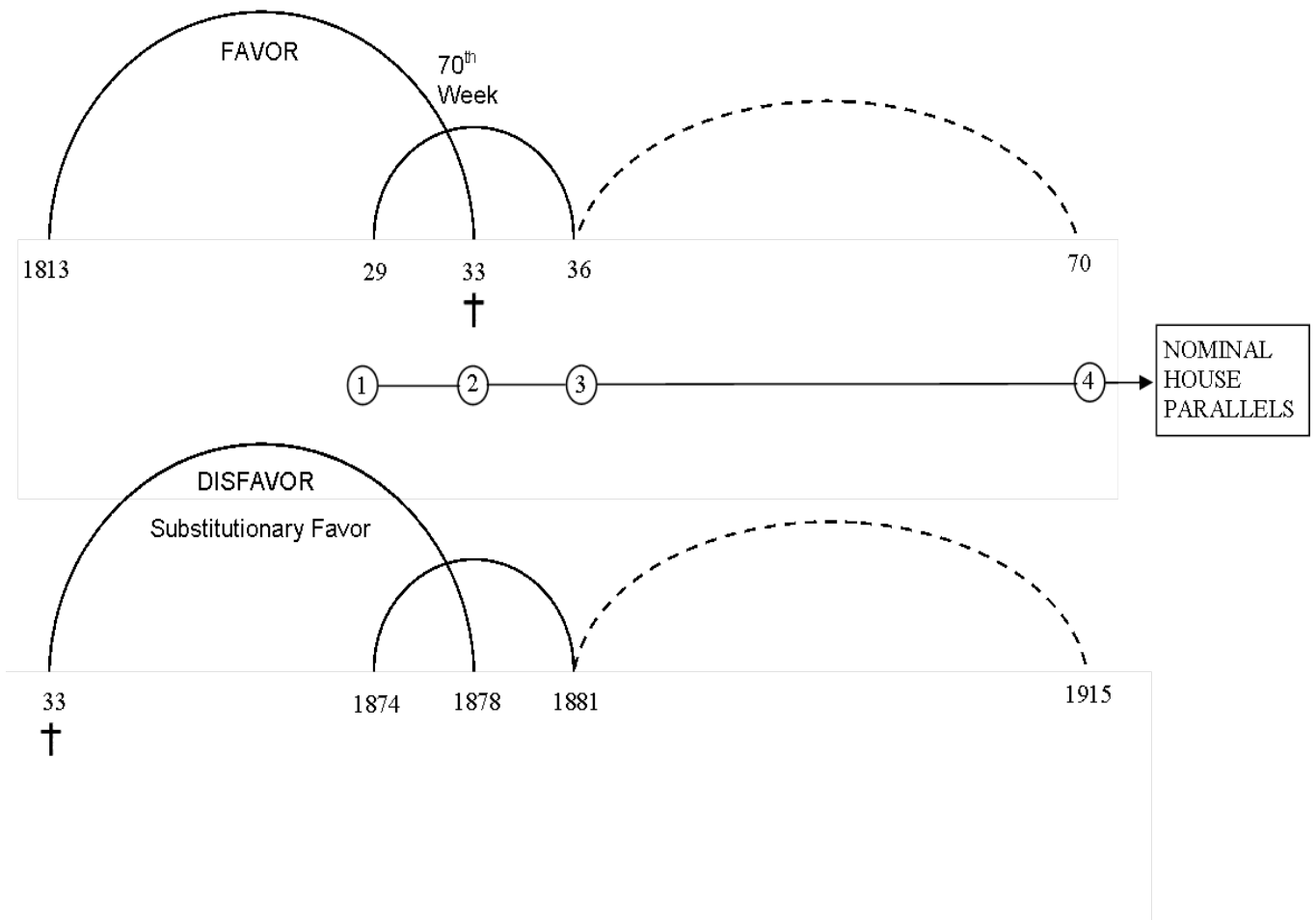
UNDERMINING AND EVICTION

But, in both cases, (70 and 1914) it would, of necessity, mark a BEGINNING without a specified ending, not an ACCOMPLISHMENT. Even though Titus brutally destroyed Jerusalem in rapid order, the Jewish tenacity went on for many years before it could be considered vanquished. Likewise, even though the First World War brought church and state to a functional end in rapid order, the “Christian nation” complex plagues the world to our day.

The tendency to try to find parallel endings to what was begun at these dates has plagued Bible students over the years. In R-5950, Bro. Russell even makes this attempt. All such attempts have failed. They have failed because the extension of parallels has no scriptural imprimatur behind it. We have seen that Daniel may have indicated not to take this question of parallel rejections beyond 36 and 1881. If we stretch his intent, the 69-70, 1914-15 parallel seems the greatest stretch that can be made. We have STUDIED the “double” (or parallel) prophecies. There ARE NO MORE! Other dates may (and do) occur in scripture, but not other warranted parallelisms.

Having examined each point in the parallels, one last look at the chart on the next page might help us to finalize what, from our considerations, appears to be the sum total of Biblical teaching regarding the parallels.

**THE PARALLELS of the JEWISH “DOUBLE” PROPHECIES AUGMENTED
BY DANIEL 9**



1. (29 & 1874) Secret presence to test character and to prepare spokesmen
2. (33 & 1878) The rejection of the unfaithful “houses”
3. (36 & 1881) End of special favor enjoyed due to a relationship to the rejected “house”.
4. (70 & 1915) Undermining and eviction begin

CHAPTER FOUR SUMMING IT UP

Now that we have examined the only scriptures, and all the scriptures, that specifically deal with the calculations of the double-parallel question, we should be able to lay aside our interpretive preferences, our excessive claims, and our imagined ideas concerning the subject.

Scripturally, only a very few things are certain about the parallels:

1. They are about the rejection of a body of unfaithful believers in both the Jewish and Gospel Ages.
2. They have ONE CENTRAL DATE in each age for that rejection: A.D. 33 and A.D. 1878.
3. Three-and-one-half years prior to and subsequent to these dates, events occur to
 - a. prepare for that rejection, and
 - b. to have a result from that action.

That is probably all that can safely be said. We can, with some evidence and faith, say that parallel dates, 40 years subsequent to the “preparation parallels” (A.D. 29 and A.D. 1874), may be legitimate – pointing to the beginning of a destructive process affecting each house.

—The Pastor’s Simple Summary—

We are all familiar with Bro. Russell’s 1916 Foreword to THE TIME IS AT HAND. On page v, he writes the now-famous words:

“Our mistake was evidently not in respect to the ending of the Times of the Gentiles; we drew a false conclusion, however, not authorized by the Word of the Lord. We saw in the Bible certain parallels between the Jewish Age and the Gospel Age. We should have noted that these parallels follow the nominal systems to destruction in both cases, and do not indicate the time of the glorification of the New Creation.”

These words should mean more now to us. Being analytical of his words, we can see several basic points:

- He separates ages from parallels
- He defines the parallels as being references solely to the nominal houses
- He retains his interpretation of the Times of the Gentiles, BUT HE SEPARATES THIS PROPHECY from the parallels. This is significant. Without the Times of the Gentiles prophecy, there is no stated parallel to Daniel’s invasion by Titus – effectively weakening or even eliminating the 40-year concept. However, we know that Bro. Russell did not go that far in his explanations. In fact, his words, “follow the...systems to destruction,” strongly implies his retention of a 40-year parallel.
- He separates the parallels from teachings regarding the completion of the church.

It may be of great surprise to many of us that these sentiments appear much earlier (1911). This is important in that it proves that the 1916 Foreword is not an excuse for any seeming failures in 1914. Note these words in R-4842:

“It should be clearly noticed that the parallels between the Jewish and Gospel Ages all belong to the nominal systems then [1st advent] and now [2nd advent], and if this is borne in mind, it will prevent our applying these parallels either to the gathering out [i.e., “harvest”] of the Gospel Church or to the gathering of the Lord's people out of Babylon now.” (Brackets and underlining added)

From this earlier version of his warning, we see another direction in his thinking:

- He says: Don’t apply the parallels to the harvest or the separation from Babylon.

How clear! And it is so much clearer because we consulted the scriptures!

—The Harvest—

There are, in the minds of those of us who defend the concept of a 40-year harvest, a number of explanations as to why this concept should be maintained. To those of us who do not accept the concept of a 40-year harvest, those explanations seem disconnected from reality and scripture. They seem difficult and arbitrary. They seem as though they exist to maintain concepts which were rejected after 1914. In short, simplicity seems the best answer – as long as it conforms to scripture.

Simplicity views the matter thus:

- The parallel (or “double”) prophecies are about punishments on the unfaithful “houses” of Judaism and Christianity. These prophecies give parallel dates and experiences so that the faithful are informed not to deal with the unfaithful systems at a certain point in time.
- The Jewish and Gospel Ages (in which the parallels occur) are not parallel. They are periods set apart for dealing with the faithful of each age.
- Each ends in a harvest of indefinite (or, at least, undefined) length, during which the Lord terminates the age by blessing the faithful and eliminating the apostate.

We can only appeal to the scriptures, as we have done herein, to arbitrate the differences. May the Lord bless us to that end.