

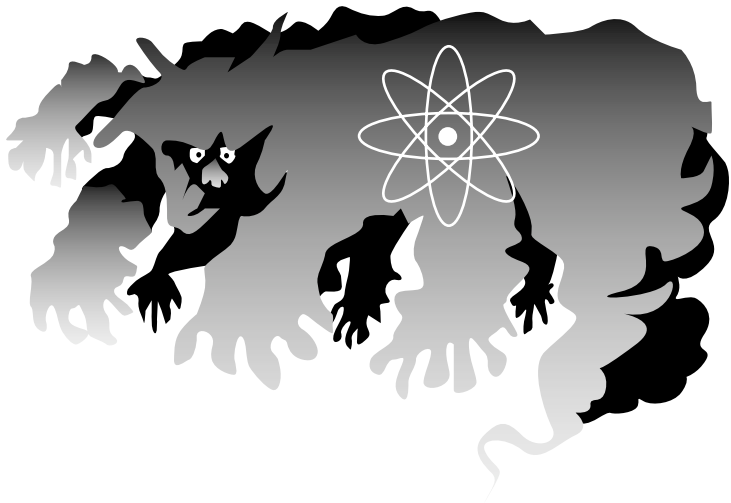
FROM
MILLENNIUM BUG
TO
MILLENNIUM BOMB



*Can Christ Come Again
Within the Next Decade?*

TIMOTHY TOW

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From Millennium Bug To Millennium Bomb

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Preface

Taking advantage of the unknown factor of the Y2K Bug, many Doomsday Preachers in America played on the simple-minded the almost certainty of the coming of Armageddon. Doomsday colonies were set up in mountainous countries where there were caves to hide. Those who fell to the ruse of these holy tricksters gladly surrendered their wealth to them, to their great loss.

Of course Christians are to be always ready for Jesus' Second Coming. But we are not that foolish as to follow these false Messiahs. For the Scripture has forewarned us against false Christs and false prophets. Jesus says, "For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many" (Matt 24:5).

In II Thessalonians 2:3, Paul further warns, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." Now we know from Daniel 9:27 that this age will end with a seven-year period leading to great tribulation. The Antichrist will arise and by his Satanic powers will demand worship and will be worshipped. Has this sign come to pass? Not yet. So we must not be tricked.

As to the Return of Christ, our knowledge is in tension. We know and yet we do not know. We do not know and yet we know. To play safe, we must always be ready. To be ready is to be busy about the Lord's business, and to give Him a good report any moment.

In order to alert our members and Christians at large, I have been moved to preach this series of seven prophetic messages under the caption, “From Millennium Bug to Millennium Bomb”. For wider circulation I have put them to print. These messages are beamed not only on Christians interested in eschatology, but also on inquirers into the mystery of our “Blessed Hope”. So, do not keep the saving knowledge of His Coming to yourself, but spread it to your unsaved loved ones and your friends by introducing this booklet to them. Maranatha!

Timothy Tow

General Signs

Chapter I

Breakdown of ecologic, economic, ecclesiastic and diplomatic spheres of life, and consummation of Gospel outreaches to the ends of the earth

Text: Matthew 24:3-14

(Message delivered at the Life Church 10.30 am Service, Dec 19, 1999).

In the materialistic thinking of the unregenerate man who is without God and without hope (Eph 2:12), Evolution is the doctrine of life. Since there is no beginning with God, there is no ending. Man is ever on the ascent. There is no limit to this upward climb. The marvels of the computer is one of the proofs of his ever on-going progress.

But, suddenly he is arrested by his own hand. This, by his leaving out two digits in the recording of dates in the computer system in order to save expenses. The year 1965, for example, is abbreviated to 65. This is all right until he comes to the year 1999. When the year 2,000 strikes the computer will register 00. This means going back to 1900. This throws the computer out of gear. Not knowing where to turn the mighty computer suddenly suffers a stroke! The computer dies!

In order to correct this error, a million million dollars is not enough to make the computer compliant. SIA has spent an initial

\$50,000,000 to bring their machines up to date. And how much more she has spent since then is a good question.

Following suit, a painfully humorous situation has punctured Thai Airways' boast of flying full-compliant against the Y2K Bug. They had many Thai VIPs booked to fly from Bangkok to Chiang Mai before midnight Dec 31, 99 to spend the early hour of Jan 1, 2,000 in the air just to show off. At the eleventh hour all the VIPs chickened out. The flight was cancelled! (Straits Times).

Because man has banished God out in his every endeavour, he is caught in his own craftiness. "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness" (1 Cor 3:19), "He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise" (Job 5:12).

Yet, he merrily swings along. He will go into a fling of abandoned orgies to celebrate the new millennium, rather than sober down and turn to his Maker for help in time of need. But, we who believe and trust in the living and true God are different. We dare not tread into the new millennium without washing our feet. Let us come to the year-end Watchnight Lord's Supper Service, before the clock strikes 12.

As we come to our Saviour these last few days before the new millennium breaks we are most conscious of the nearness of His Second Coming. There are cults which capitalise on this by preaching a doom's day message to fatten their own belly. While we cannot but be ready always to meet Him, we are also told to occupy ourselves in the Lord's business, while He tarries. We know and yet do not know.

How do we know that His coming is even at the door? There are the general signs listed in the Lord's Olivet Discourse according to Matt 24:3-16. The disciples asked, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" The answer is there will be a breakdown in every sphere of human endeavour in conjunction with the physical powers that

surround him: These physical forces will so break down that the Lord who created them must come also to save them. “For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else” (Isa 45:18). The Lord is coming again not only to save His own people but indeed also His creation. And He is “longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (II Pet 3:9). If Jesus has delayed His coming, it is because He is waiting for one like you to repent, and you have not?

There are general signs in four spheres of human life that we can observe to show that Jesus’ coming is imminent. First in the ecologic. Ecology means “the study of the interaction of people with their environment”. Under this heading are mentioned “pestilences and earthquakes”. A pestilence is “something evil or destructive”. Synonymous to pestilence are: plague, epidemic, scourge, blight. Of recent occurrence we have epidemics that made British cows mad, Hong Kong chickens by the millions with a flu that could kill humans, a red algae tide that attacked fish and only yesterday the plague that swallowed Malaysian pigs. But a worse pestilence is mowing down human beings like flies through Aids. This is sweeping Africa and Asia with highest incidence in Cambodia. Aids, which is a modern curse from God was not known before 1980. But the Millennium Bug is the worst of all, a software pestilence that engulfs our total economic life.

As to earthquakes, the year 1999, the last of the old millennium, seems to bear the brunt accumulating through previous years. Two mega quakes hit Turkey with the loss of over 18,000 in the first. Two powerful ones toppled Taiwan and two most recent ones that occurred only last week shook the Philippines. Two is confirmation. God is speaking but man is not listening (Psa 62:11). During this year there were other tremors in California and more recently, in Vanuatu, South Pacific Islands, near Fiji. Earthquakes will increase in intensity and frequency in the new millennium for sure to awaken

us to Christ's Second Coming. "Come, behold the works of the Lord, What desolations He hath made in the earth... Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth" (Psa 46:8,10).

From the ecologic to the economic. This is where famines come in. For over two years the economy of the ten Asean countries extending to Hong Kong and South Korea has been badly battered. This has resulted in many riotings for food in Indonesia. Even in our favoured Island of Singapore, earning a livelihood is a constant struggle for survival.

In Eastern India and Vietnam that have been submerged by torrential floods, famine follows, not to talk of the drowning of ten thousands in India and hundreds in Vietnam.

The black horse of famine is riding high also after the red horse of war has come. Famine is the lot of increasing thousands of war refugees from year to year.

A third sign of Christ's Second Coming is in the Ecclesiastic. It occurs right in the Church. As famines are a result of breakdown of the economic system, so apostasy from the faith has brought in many false Christs and false prophets. Many high churchmen today refute the very fundamentals of the faith such as the Virgin Birth of Christ and His Blood Atonement and Resurrection. "These deny even the Lord that bought them" (II Pet 2:1) 90 per cent of the Bishops in England are modernists and liberals. (One Bishop of Durham I heard over BBC denied the Virgin Birth and Resurrection of Christ. At a Conference of 50 English Bishops thereafter, 45 Bishops voted for the Bishop of Durham.) Are these not false Christs and false prophets in the Anglican clergy? Wolves in sheepskin?

The coming together of Evangelicals and Catholics in the signing of the ECT documents, 1994 and 1997, is another denial of the Faith. The latest is the return of Lutherans to the Roman Catholic Church, dealing a final death blow to the 16th Century Reformation. Then there are the many charismatic leaders such as Benny Hinn practising

“slaying in the spirit”, which Wang Ming Tao has declared to be the work of Satan.

Persecution of the Church will also be intensified. There will be betrayals within the Church itself. This we have seen under Mao’s Cultural Revolution. But it can come upon the Church anywhere, any time. Are we prepared for this?

The fourth general sign of Christ’s Return is in the breakdown of diplomatic relations. Thus, wars flare up. Nations shall rise against nations, and kingdoms against kingdoms. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars. Since the end of WWII over a hundred wars, big and small, have been fought with millions upon millions killed. Cambodia our near neighbour, with two million souls crushed to death under the Pol Pot regime, is still hurting from the ordeal. There is the total destruction of East Timor just a few months ago, and now fierce fighting between Christians and Muslims in Ambon. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed. No sooner is Kosovo in Eastern Europe stabilised than Russia has opened up on Chechnya. And so, we can expect more wars in the offing. One of these days they will flare up into WWIII. (Rev 9:15) That will be the beginning of the end. The coming of the Lord can no more be delayed when WWIII breaks out! (Dr Walvoord of Dallas Seminary interprets Rev 9:15 to be the fateful outbreak of WWIII and I agree with him).

While all these evil forces are at work, God’s children will counter with a great burst of missionary energy. “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.

This is markedly seen after WWII, when the bulk of Singapore Churches which were under the various missions from the West had now become self-supporting and independent. Instead of being receiving Churches they have now become sending Churches. Most outstanding among Asian Churches are the Koreans. Truly they are the foremost missionary-orientated Churches in Asia if not in the world. They have now 7,000 missionaries sent into 120 countries

according to a latest report. It is said wherever you go in the world you'll find a Chinese restaurant, and now, wherever you go into the world you'll find a Korean Church.

“For a witness unto all nations” is the main emphasis of the revitalised Great Commission which I have called “The First Command to the Church”. Here, let me keep you informed of what Life Church has done for ASEAN MISSIONS. ASEAN is made up of ten nations: Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Singapore, Brunei, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos. Do you know who are your missionaries and to what country they are sent?

They are:

1. Indonesia : Roska (Batam); Yusniar (Jakarta).
2. Malaysia : Kim Kah Teck (West); Bong Boon Chong (East).
3. Thailand : Nirand (Jess) with newly acquired property.
4. Philippines : Part support of Helping Hand (FEBC graduates).
5. Singapore : Life Church, the sending Church.
6. Brunei : Peter Wong (part support).
7. Myanmar : Thawm Luai, Andrew Kam.
8. Vietnam : Minh (FEBC student) and Kiet (under Sharon).
9. Cambodia : David Koo, Surish, Moses Hahn, Jonathan Lee, Jimmy Rim.
10. Laos : Chan Pui Meng (Tent-maker).

Beyond ASEAN, to the uttermost part of the earth, is Ho Heng Sau to Saipan. Besides we support with our funds fraternal missions such as Kenya, West Africa, and the Holy Land. You can see how the spirit of accelerated missions has moved our Church to action. Have you also heard His Call, to hasten with the Gospel to every nation? Yea, to the ends of the earth. Rev Djunaidi, one-time foremost missionary labouring with us in West Kalimantan but now retired said this, “If every Church will be a sending Church, you send your

missionaries and I send mine, here, there, and everywhere, the task will be quickly done. We thank God for an increasing number of tertiary-educated students from our own B-P Churches now joining FEBC to study for the ministry. From the point of view of established, registered BP Churches, we have over a dozen in Malaysia and three dozens in Singapore. These each one has its own missionary program, praise the Lord.

The Lord's Coming draweth nigh. All the more let us hasten with the Gospel. While He tarries we are to occupy till He comes. Amen.



Special Signs

Chapter II

The Restoration of Israel as a nation and victories over her Arab enemies

(Message delivered at the Life Church 10.30 am Service, Jan 2, 2000).

Of all nations in the world God chose Israel to be His witness. Israel is called His first born (Ex 4:22). God first called Abraham, “And I will make thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make Thy name great and thou shalt be a blessing ...” (Gen 12:12). So in Israel, God caused Abraham’s grandson to multiply to a great nation in the time when Moses led them out of Egypt.

But the greatness of Israel as a nation depends on whether she would walk in the way of the Lord, “And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth” (Deut 28:1)

“But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee” (Deut 28:15). “And it shall come to pass, *that* as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other;

and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, *even wood and stone*” (Deut 28:63,64).

“And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then Jehovah thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee. If *any of* thine outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will Jehovah thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: and Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers” (Deut 30:1-5).

From these lengthy quotations from Moses’ Word to the children of Israel we learn:-

- (1) Israel’s power and prosperity depends on whether she will keep and observe God’s commandments.
- (2) If Israel rebels against God in refusing to keep His commandments, God will punish them by scattering them to all nations to the ends of the earth.
- (3) If in their dispersal to the ends of the earth they will repent and return to their God, then He will have mercy and restore them back to the land of their fathers.

Now the history of Israel falls exactly into these three steps.

When Israel had grown to a great and powerful nation she began to backslide. She became so bad that the Northern Kingdom of Ten Tribes were scattered by the Assyrians and the Southern Kingdom of Judah and Benjamin were exiled to Babylon. After the Jews returned to Judah, having spent 70 years in Babylon, they became so bad

again that God had to destroy them in A.D. 70. In the years after this she was scattered literally to the ends of the earth, even to India and China. Since their diaspora, that is scattering to the uttermost part of the earth, they had been crying to their God to bring them back to their homeland. This resulted in the Zionist Movement founded by Herzl (1860-1904) to go back to Jerusalem.

After WWI the Jews began to return to Israel in earnest. When they suffered the loss of six million exterminated by Hitler in WWII, they all the more struggled to return to their Homeland. From a trickle in the beginning it swelled into a flood, even to this day.

Sad to say, there are the Hyper Calvinists and Amillennialists who are blinded by the misguided doctrine of the Church being the fulfillment of Israel. So all the Restoration promised by Moses to a repentant Israel is fulfilled by the Church. This runs counter to Paul's crystal clear statement that Israel, the original olive branch, far from being superseded by the Church, the wild olive branch, will in the end times be engrafted back to the Olive Tree (Rom 11). That literal Israel will be brought back to their Homeland is stated at least 34 times as reiterated in my booklet, "The Truth Shall Make You See".

Not only will Israel be restored in Palestine, ie the Holy Land, Isa 11:11-13 predicts that when they return to Israel, they will be one united nation and not like the Divided Kingdom of Ten Northern and Two Southern Tribes. They will wage wars against the Arab neighbours and win them all. This prophecy has been fulfilled before our very eyes from the time she gained Independence on May 14, 1948 through all the battles fought from 1948 to 1985. This prophecy is stated as follows:

And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah

from the four corners of the earth. But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them. And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make *men* go over dryshod (Isa 11:11-12,14-15).

Verses 11 and 12 say God will regather His people the second time from the four corners of the earth. Now the first time He regathered them took place after the 70 years exile to Babylon. The second time which is from the ends of earth is officially dated May 14, 1948 when Israel became a nation under the auspices of UN. At that time, Israel's population numbered only 650,000. The regathering process ever since to this day, a period of 52 years, has increased ten-fold to over 6 million with Jerusalem's inhabitants risen to 600,000. (The total Jewish population worldwide is 15 million, Paul Lee Tan).

v. 14 Immediately after predicting the Restoration of Israel as one nation the prophet Isaiah sees a war that erupts between Israel and her Arab neighbours. They occupy the ancient territories of the Philistines which is the Gaza strip and Sinai, the east which is Syria (II Ki 13:17); Edom, Moab, Ammon which is the Kingdom of Jordan, and the tongue of the Egyptian Sea includes the Suez Canal today.

Israel, on the very day of her declaration of nationhood was invaded by her Arab neighbours, Syria, Jordan and Egypt and even from Iraq. This was the War of Independence, fought as it were between a teenage boy who knows *kung fu* and four big hefty boxers. But God who had brought Israel from the ends of the earth was with Israel. Israel won against great odds and took over parts of Palestine that was partitioned for Jordan.

In all five wars were fought. But we shall mention two only, viz., the famous Six-Day War of 1967. At a loss of only 600 of her sons

Israel took the Golan Heights from Syria, a big chunk of the West Bank from Jordan and the Gaza Strip and Sinai from Egypt.

An interesting episode of the Six-Day War was a bet between a teacher of our Chinese Service and his friends. I told him Israel must win because of Isaiah's prophecy. Believing what was pointed out to him, he bet with fellow teachers of a Chinese School who stood for the Arabs. When the War was over these teachers for the Arabs had to give him a treat. He chuckled, "He who laughs last laughs best."

The other War is the Yom Kippur War (War of the Day of Atonement, 1973). In this war Israel was badly mauled with the loss of 2,500. Nevertheless, God being on her side, she fought back so that the Egyptians were totally routed. Moreover Israel crossed back from the Suez Canal into Egypt. Cairo, only 25 miles away, was within the range of Israel's heavy guns. In the Yom Kippur War, Jordan, having lost heavily in the Six-Day War of 1967, kept still like a mouse. This was also of the Lord's doing, for if Jordan entered the War this time, Israel would have to fight on three fronts.

That Israel has maintained supremacy over her Arab enemies is seen also in her destruction of Iraq's Osirak nuclear power plant in 1981. The rescue of 103 Israeli hostages from Palestine terrorists at Entebbe Airport in Uganda in 1976 at the loss of only one life, while all seven hijackers plus some forty Ugandan troops were eliminated. During the Gulf War of August 1990, Iraq's scud missiles did rain down on Israel but the loss sustained was negligible. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord" (Isa 54:17) Amen.

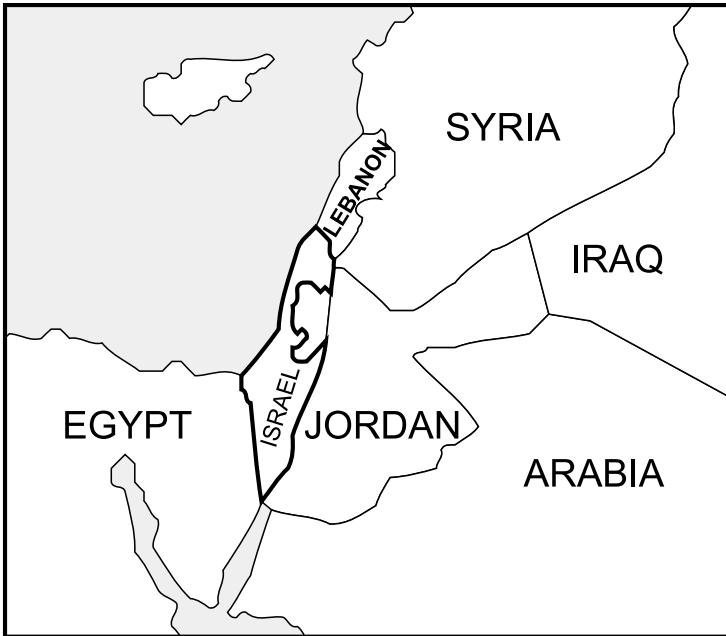
In grateful response to the God of Jacob who has pardoned Israel and helped her win her wars against the Arab enemies Isaiah 12, which follows immediately Isaiah 11, testifies:

And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee:
though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away,

and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God *is* my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH *is* my strength and *my* song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this *is* known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great *is* the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee (Isa 12:1-6).

One last question to the HyperCalvinists and Amillennialists, Where is the Church mentioned in this Hymn of Praise for the Restoration of Israel?

Map of Israel



Chapter III

Israel's enforced peace with Arab enemies, for three-and-a-half-years during tribulation week.

(Message delivered at the Life Church 10.30 am Service, Jan 9, 2000).

“And 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” (Dan 9:27).

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matt 24:15-21).

Daniel is the prophet of the end-times. In the last days before Jesus returns to earth according to him, there will be a period of a week of years, that is seven years, when the World Dictator will rule (Dan 9:27). Why he will be the acclaimed World Leader is that he is the one who can bring peace to “many”, particularly to Israel and her Arab enemies. This peace period, however, is short-lived, only three-

and-a-half-years, the first half of the last seven years before Jesus Christ returns.

When Jesus returns He will put down all rebellion. He will judge those nations that try to destroy Israel. He will bring in a thousand years of peace.

Now, in our last message, we noticed that Israel would win all the wars against her immediate neighbours. This prophecy is fulfilled in our generation; before our eyes.

They are Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Israel has won the wars, but more important is to win the peace.

Though Israel had won a resounding victory in the Six-Day War of 1967 and a hard won victory over Egypt in the Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) War in 1973, in between she was constantly harassed by the enemy along three fronts – from across Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. The attacks came ceaselessly from the Egyptians, Jordanians, Syrians and Palestinians under Arafat from the Lebanese side. In other words the war continued in the form of guerilla attacks. The Palestinian uprisings are known as intifada and the extremists among the Palestinians are called Hamas. The Hizbollah operating from the Lebanese side are suicide squads from Syria. Thus, after the Yom Kippur War with Egypt, 1973, she tried to make peace, first of all with Egypt. This will save Israel from having to fight on three fronts, should war erupt again.

While Israel was desirous of making peace with Egypt, Egypt was now in the same frame of mind to make peace with Israel. “The king’s heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *as* the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will” (Prov 21:1). God moved President Anwar Sadat to make the dramatic journey to Jerusalem to meet his counterpart Menachem Begin in November 1977. He declared it was his “sacred mission” since both countries were technically still at war. This move so astounded the world that both Sadat and Begin were acclaimed Men of the Year in Time Magazine.

On March 26, 1980, Egypt and Israel formally signed a Peace Treaty, ending a state of war that had existed for 31 years. It was the first such peace pact between Israel and an Arab country. President Carter signed as witness for the US.

In his address, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat described the pact as “a new chapter in the history of the co-existence of nations”. Israel Prime Minister Menachem Begin declared that the third greatest day of his life. The first two, he recalled, were the declaration of Israel’s independence in 1948 and when Jerusalem became one city under Israeli rule in June 1967 (Paul Lee Tan).

Among major points of the Egypt-Israeli pact, signed on the US White House lawns, were:

- (1) Israel to withdraw from the Sinai over a three-year period.
- (2) UN forces to be deployed in the Sinai to monitor compliance with agreement.
- (3) After Israel’s withdrawal from the Sinai, both nations to establish normal relations and exchange ambassadors.
- (4) Israel ships and cargoes to be given free right of passage through the Suez Canal.
- (5) Egypt to end its economic boycott of Israel.
- (6) Israel to be allowed to buy oil from the Sinai fields.
- (7) Both sides to negotiate on Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip soon after the exchange of ratification documents (Paul Lee Tan).

Now, the question is, “Is it in God’s will that Israel and Egypt come to terms in the aforesaid Peace Agreement?” The answer is quickly found in the Sermon on the Mount, “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God” (Matt 5:9). For signing peace with Israel, Sadat was assassinated. He died in the service of righteousness, the death of a Martyr.

Another hero of peace is the late King Hussein of Jordan. In quite recent years before his death he signed a Peace Treaty with Israel. The blessing of the Peace Treaty were experienced in our pilgrimages to the Holy Land. As we travelled freely from Egypt to Israel, our entry from Jordan to Israel is now without any hindrance. Trade and tourism between Israel and Jordan began to double up, bringing prosperity to both countries.

The third country to make peace with Israel is now Syria. For over 50 years she was on no talking terms. With Israeli President Barak voted into power, who favours peace with Syria, Syria is now quite positive that peace can be attained in a matter of months – will it be under President Clinton? The bone of contention is Syria's demand of total return of the Golan Heights, while Israel would want retention of part of Golan for security reasons. Maybe, this will drag on into years, we cannot tell. But once peace is signed between Israel and Syria, Lebanon will follow suit.

The thorny question is still with Palestine's Yasser Arafat. Though Palestine has become autonomous, the matter of returning the West Bank to its people remains to be solved. America encourages both Israel and Palestine to come to terms, but Israel's persistence to build on West Bank territory remains a stumbling block. Eventually the Peace Treaty with Arafat will be signed, but will there be permanent peace? One bone of contention that crops up, time and again, is Palestine's claim to Jerusalem, which the Jews will never yield. Will this be the last straw that breaks the camel's back of an enforced peace of three-and-a-half years by the World Dictator?

One school of theology, however, insists that under the World Dictator, the Palestinians would be willing to give the holy Temple site to Israel. Under these terms the Jews will build their "tribulation" temple. Here the ancient rites of worship will be revived. Animals will be sacrificed.

But, suddenly, at the end of three-and-a-half years of enforced peace, Antichrist will become the "abomination of desolation spoken

of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (Matt 24:19) and “the man of sin” will exalt “himself above all that is called God .. so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (II Thess 2:3,4). This is the signal for the enforced peace to come to an end. War erupts.

It is then that the Jews are warned by the Lord to flee from the great tribulation to come. Most probably down the Jordan valley across to Jordan which will not be affected by war. “He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many *countries* shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, *even* Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon” (Dan 11:41).

Are we coming to the stage when Israel will make peace with all her Arab enemies under the aegis of the Superpower dominating the world today? We do not know whether “this is it”? But the peace overtures today are a pointer to that enforced peace of three-and-a-half years. If so, we are within the fateful decade before Christ comes again.

Behold, I come quickly! Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which come down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches. (Rev 3:11-13)

Chapter IV

WWIII erupts from Iraq. The Battle of Armageddon

Text: Rev 9:13-21; 16:12-16

(Message delivered at the Life Church 10.30 am Service, Jan 16, 2000).

In a New Year speech, President Clinton ushered the whole world under American leadership into a new peaceful Millennium. That is a politician's word, but the opposite is the truth.

The new millennium draws us nearer to Jesus' coming, and His coming is to put down those who try to annihilate his chosen ones, the Jews. The new millennium will see a world of conflagration of warring nations. As every nation is arming to the teeth it is no wonder that little Singapore has to do the same. The order of survival is, in time of peace, prepare for war.

As there is a time of war (and a time of peace), let us hear the words of the prophet Joel, "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong" (Joel 3:9,10). Joel is here calling Israel to battle against their endtime enemies.

In 1936 Colonel Douglas MacArthur was sent by the United States on a reconnaissance tour of the Far East. Having seen how Japan was feverishly arming herself for aggression, he returned to report, "Japan must fight America." It was a result he could not avoid

from the mounting evidence he gathered. As we see it, in the light of the prophetic scriptures, WWIII is also inevitable.

And there are so many flash points of war we can enumerate. Insofar as Asia is concerned there is the perennial struggle between North and South Korea, the tension between Mainland China and Taiwan, involving China with the U.S. In no lesser terms there is the contest between India and Pakistan over the Kashmere problem. The present punitive action by Russia over breakaway Chechnya, when it subsides, may see another flare up somewhere in Europe, as Chechnya came up no sooner had Kosova died down. It is like the Hydraheaded Monster. When you cut off one head, out pops another two.

So wars will continue, from one sector of the world to another. (Since WWII over a hundred wars have been fought, killing millions upon millions. Of recent memory is Cambodia, with two millions crushed to death under the Pol Pot regime). But the final outbreak of the Big One, WWIII, will not occur in the Far East or in Europe, but in the Middle East. To be exact from the Euphrates Valley (Rev 9:14). This is the view of Dr Walvoord, Chancellor of Dallas Seminary, and I agree with him.

Notice that from end of WWI to beginning of WWII, 1918 to 1939, there was only a respite of 21 years. From 1945 end of WWII to the present period of phoney peace is 55 years. WWIII nearly came to a head in the days of President John Kennedy vs Kruschev over the attempted positioning of Russian missiles in Cuba aimed at America. Because of American superiority, Kruschev retreated. Margaret Thatcher, in her days of premiership over Britain, thanked Big Brother Reagan for capping down the Soviet Union.

Although Russia is weakened, Yeltsin reminded U.S. she was still a nuclear power. This threat is repeated by Acting President Putin in his election speeches. The threat of direct confrontation is still there. If, because of her weakened condition, the 55 years of an uneasy peace the world has enjoyed is prolonged, there is still the

deception of peace and safety to watch over, for sudden destruction may come out of the blue. The warning of sudden destruction is Paul's prophetic utterance on how WWIII will come (I Thess 5). Are we prepared as are required of the Boy Scouts?

According to prophecy Satan is intent on destroying Israel in the final War of mankind. This is vividly portrayed in Revelation 12, "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman (Israel) which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent" (12:13,14). This refers to the second half of the seven years of Antichrist rule when WWIII will last 3½ years. Israel will take refuge across the River Jordan to shelter in the rock-caves of Edom, Moab and Ammon in present day Jordan—"but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon" (Dan 11:41).

While WWII lasted six years, WWIII in which nuclear arms, chemicals and bacteria are used will be shorter. And when will it break out? At the sounding of the sixth trumpet at the great river Euphrates. "And the four angels (*signifying universality*) were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand" (Rev 9:15,16).

Is this not history repeating itself? When Saddam Hussein attacked Kuwait in August 1990 and the Allies came to Kuwait's rescue, Iraq's defence was turned around to face a new enemy. Yet, her avowed determination was simultaneously to destroy Israel. Iraq rained down scud missiles on Israel short of poison gas for which Israel was prepared, but because God was on Israel's side the damage incurred was slight.

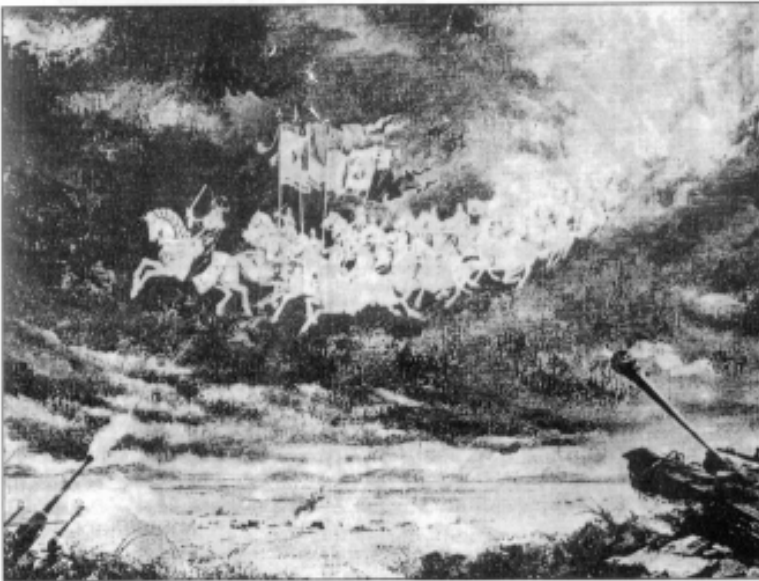
Iraq lost the war, but why did not President Bush pursue further till Saddam Hussein was toppled? Why was he spared to live up to this day? He is still a young man and his resolve is fight America and extinguish Israel.

Will it be under his leadership when WWIII is declared “for an hour, and a day, and a month and a year?” Notice this takes place at the blowing of the sixth trumpet when war has been raging in other parts of the world. The climax comes to the Euphrates Valley at this late hour when “the way of the kings of the east might be prepared” (Rev 16:12). Who are the kings of the east, that is, east of Israel? Syria is northeast of Israel and comes into orbit of the east (II Kings 13:17). After Syria there are the Muslim countries Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan which leads to China. It will be a contest between East and West, yea, involving “the kings of the earth and of the whole world” (Rev 16:14). There will be virtually no neutral nations, only two opposing armies totalling 200 million men. The description of the armour of these fighting horsemen is also up-to-date. “And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses *were* as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails *were* like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt” (Rev 9:17-19). The contending armies come to a final clash at Armageddon.

Where is Armageddon? Armageddon is the Greek for the Hebrew Har-Megiddo (Hill of Slaughter). It commands a plain between Haifa and the north Jordan Valley, a battlefield from time immemorial. This battlefield in the final World War stretches from Megiddo in the north to Edom in the south, to Eilat on the Red Sea (a distance of 200 miles). Rev 14:14-20 tells of a river of blood extending this whole length of battlefield, the height of the flow of

blood rising to the horses' bridles. Jerusalem is in the centre of the carnage.

In this battle against Israel two thirds of her people will be killed. One third that survive will escape, as seen in Matthew 24:15-21 to Jordan where the rock caves for refuge are. At this moment of gravest crisis Christ will descend on the Mt of Olives to defeat Israel's enemies caught in a blind melee. "And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour" (Zech 14:12,13); (Zech 14:1-4). This is also described in Rev 19:11-16 where Christ is seen riding a white horse, followed by the armies of heaven. He conquers the armies of the earth by the



Christ's Second Coming

Word of His mouth. The awful climax is seen in the remaining verses of Rev 19:17,18. “And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all *men*, both free and bond, both small and great”.

In the final stages of WWIII, “the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath” (Rev 16:19). This refers to the War reaching a grand finale of total destruction. The great city which is Jerusalem is shattered into three parts by an earthquake, God’s E-bomb which triggers a chain reaction that topples all capital cities of the world, from New York to London, from Paris to New Delhi, from Rome to Madras, from Bangkok to Singapore, from Jakarta to Sydney, a judgment to the whole sinful world right “downunder”.

With the total destruction of man’s glory, Zechariah concludes, “And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one. All the land shall be turned as a plain . . . And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited . . . And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles” (14:9-11; 16).

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne” (Rev 3:20,21).

Chapter V

Christ raptures B.A. Christians at blowing of last trumpet

Text: I Cor 15:51-53; Rev 7:9-17; 10:7; 11:13-18

(Message delivered at the Life Church 10.30 am Service, Jan 23, 2000).

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality” (I Cor 15:51-53).

The Apostle Paul reveals to us this mystery of mysteries concerning a worldwide Event involving millions upon millions of born again Christians, both dead and living, who will be airlifted, superior to rockets, to meet Jesus in the clouds. This Event of Christians being caught up into the sky, by Jesus’ A-power (Ascension power) is known, in Christian terminology, as the Rapture. Rapture is a Latin word meaning “seizing and carrying away”.

This is also called the First Resurrection, when those who died in Jesus Christ, the born again ones, will rise from their graves with a new body, and we who are alive will be suddenly transformed and propelled by the same Ascension power that first airlifted our Lord to heaven.

To those outside Christ this is no more than a fairy tale. To us Christians, born again ones, this is our lively hope (I Pet 1:3). But, if you are not born again, only Christian in name, you will be left behind. “I tell you, in that night there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left” (Lk 17:34-36). If you are not sure of your salvation, why won’t you receive Jesus as your Saviour right now? Do not delay as it will be too late.

What is the rationale of this global catching away of born again Christians? Jesus’ second coming is at the end of this age, at the climax of the Third World War. The most terrifying weapons of war will be used. Nuclear bombs, chemical and bacteria bombs will be hurled. There is simply no shelter on earth to hide from the nuclear blast, not as in WWII. The only route of escape is skywards. Hence the Rapture, the airlifting of B.A. Christians, for we will be snatched by His Hand into the clouds, yea, into space, way up in the tranquil regions above the earth. There we will be safe until Jesus brings us back to earth to reign with Him a thousand years. It is our Lord, the Prince of Peace, who can end all wars. And, we who are given new bodies after the pattern of this Resurrection will die no more, but live forever more with Him.

Now, while we all wait for the Blessed Hope of His coming to take us up, there are different viewpoints on the timing of the Rapture. Generally, there are three.

- I. First there are the Pre-tribulationists, i.e. those who believe Christ will come at the beginning of the Seven Years when the Antichrist will rule. This view is popularised by the Scofield Reference Bible and the point where the Rapture will occur is Rev 4:1 which says, “After this I looked, and, behold, a door *was* opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter”.

Why the Rapture before Tribulation? In order to save us from bodily injury, “For the great day of his wrath is come (Rev 6:17). This saving from His wrath is repeated in Rev 11:18 and Rev 16:1. The Apostle Paul says further in I Thess 5:9, “For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.” To be raptured before the Tribulation means while the earth is at peace, all of a sudden, millions upon millions of believers will disappear from their jobs and their homes. Their unexpected, secret departure will bring consternation to their unbelieving loved ones and colleagues. This any moment coming of the Lord which is called imminent makes it doubly incumbent for us to be always ready. This is the oldest view.

- II. The second view of the Rapture is called the Pre-wrath Rapture. It is a breakaway from the first view. According to this view (by Marvin Rosenthal) God will pour out His wrath during the second half of the Seven Years under Antichrist rule. It begins with the opening of the Sixth Seal, by which come the cosmic disturbances (Rev 6:12-17) “And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” These cosmic disturbances occur sometime in the seven years of Antichrist rule, some time during the final World War of three and a half years. And the Rapture takes place with the opening of the seventh seal and blowing of first trumpets.

III. The third view is my view which I learned from my teacher Dr Buswell 50 years ago. It takes Paul's statement on our Rapture to occur at the blowing of the last trumpet. Now the last trumpet, in the light of Revelation, is the seventh trumpet. "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets" (Rev 10:7). What mystery of God should be finished or fulfilled? The mystery which Paul mentioned in I Cor 15:51-52, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed".

Now we come to the juncture in Revelation when the last trumpet is sounded, "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever ... And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth" (Rev 11:15-18).

Does this not refer to the mystery of the raising of the dead and the rapture of the saints in I Cor 51,52?

Now the blowing of the last trumpet which is the seventh in Revelation occurs before the pouring out of the wrath of God in Rev 16. So, we can also call the last trumpet rapture Pre-wrath Rapture. To identify our position we will call ours the last trumpet Rapture. But it is not the Pre-Tribulation Rapture wherein those raptured experience no Tribulation at all. We believe, however, that Christians will go through a period of Tribulation, even through the midst of Great Tribulation, "for we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). Throughout Church history Christians have all suffered for their faith, even unto death.

The worldwide, world-shaking Event, the sudden catching away of Christians out of a burning earth, is it not described in some part of Revelation? I have asked this question ever since I came into the study of Revelation. Yes, it is right here in Rev 7:9-17 “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

Who are these, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands? The answer is v. 14, “These are they which came out of **great tribulation** ...”. The saints saved in the blowing of the last trumpet, i.e. seventh trumpet, who have come out of the **great tribulation** of the final world war truly answers our question. We believe we must go through the Tribulation, short of the Wrath of God.

So there are three views, that of the Pre-tribulation Rapture, the Pre-wrath Rapture and the Last Trumpet Rapture. Which is the one that fits the Scriptural teaching? Whichever view you take be sure you can go when the Lord comes to take us.

Three people were arguing about the right time of departure of the plane leaving Singapore for New York. Each was armed with a time-table. Irrespective of what time table they were holding, it is the one who had bought a confirmed ticket that went up the plane. Those without tickets were left behind. Do you have your ticket to heaven? Are you a B.A. (born again) Christian? “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (Jn 3:5) Amen.



The Two Witnesses

Chapter VI

Christ judges the works of Christians and rewards His faithful servants

Text: II Cor 5:10,11; I Cor 3:10-15; Rev 19:7-9

(Message delivered at the Life Church 10.30 am Service, Jan 30, 2000).

That there is a judgment of works for Christians is taught by the Apostle Paul in II Cor 5:10,11; also in I Cor 3:10-15 and by our Lord in the parables of the pounds and talents (Luke 19 and Matt 25). But we Protestants, stressing salvation is by grace through faith, and not by works as the Catholics do, have blinded our eyes to the doctrine of judgment of works. We take God for granted like unfilial children today.

In II Cor 5:10-12 Paul admonishes us, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that done whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men ...” This judgment seat of Christ takes place, logically, after the Rapture which was dealt with last week.

In I Cor 3:11,12, our salvation in Jesus Christ is compared to the foundation of a house. Our works are what we build thereon. If our works are good they are like gold, silver, precious stones. If our works are bad they are like wood, hay, stubble. In the day of judgment these works will be tested by fire. If a man’s work stands the test, he shall receive a reward. If a man’s work shall be burned he

will suffer loss. Though he will be saved, he is like one plucked out of the fire. He has absolutely nothing to offer back to the Lord.

Two parables taught by our Lord should show the severity of contrast between good and bad works.

The first is the parable of the pounds according to Lk 19:13-15 “And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.”

Now we all know the result of the Lord’s assignments. The first servant made from his pound ten pounds. He was highly commended for his initiative and given ten cities to rule. The second made five pounds and was likewise rewarded to rule over five cities. But the third returned the pound wrapped in a napkin, and in order to justify himself he said, “Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow” (Lk 19:20,21).

The reply that the Lord gave to this third servant is a heavy reprimand, “Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?” (Lk 19:22,23). So saying the Lord took away his pound and gave it to him who had made ten pounds. What a sorry plight that the third servant is going through. Is he not like what Paul says of one building with wood, hay and stubble and in the fire-testing he himself is barely saved from the fire itself?

The parable of the talents says practically the same as the parable of the pounds. In this parable the third servant is even cast into outer

darkness, also like one saved through the fire. God does not want us to be like Servant No 3.

The judgment of works will find many Christians heavily reprimanded. So, Paul reiterated, “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men ...” (II Cor 5:11).

Must I Go, and Empty-Handed?

1. *Must I go, and empty handed,
Thus my dear Redeemer meet?
Not one day of service give Him;
Lay no trophy at His feet?*
Chorus:
*Must I go, and empty-handed?
Must I meet my Saviour so?
Not one soul with which to greet Him—
Must I empty handed go?*
2. *Not at death I shrink nor falter,
For my Saviour saves me now;
But to meet Him empty handed,
Thought of that now clouds my brow.*
3. *O the years in sinning wasted!
Could I but recall them now,
I would give them to my Saviour—
To His will I'd gladly bow.*
4. *O ye saints, arouse, be earnest,
Up and work while yet 'tis day;
Ere the night of death o'ertake thee,
Strive for souls while still you may.*

We truly are justified by grace through faith, but Paul also stresses the importance of good works. In the three short chapters of Titus he mentioned good works six times. He told Titus to set an example to the Church, “In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works” (Titus 2:7). He exhorts the Church members “to be

ready to every good work” (3:1), “to maintain good works” (3:8), “also learn to maintain good works” (3:14).

The Apostle James puts it even stronger. For an example, he says, “What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone” (Jas 2:14-17). “Remember the poor” is an apostolic injunction which we do well to practise (Gal 2:10). As a Church, Lifers have sent Ten Containers filled with surplus clothings and food items costing ten-thousands of dollars to the relief of the poor. Those who have lovingly contributed have followed the pattern of the Apostolic Church sending relief to the poor brethren in Judaea (Acts 11:29).

Our missionaries who are labouring in the hardest places among the poor are giving of themselves unto good works. Our lay missionaries who visit the stations time and again are doing the same.

Those who cannot go but support them by prayer and money liberally are surely well acceptable to God.

Those who bring their tithes into the storehouse of the Church that there may be meat in mine house (Mal 3:10) are blessed with poured out blessings from windows of heaven.

“He that winneth souls *is* wise” (Prov 11:30). Every soul winner is a lover of both God and men. They also will be blessed. Visiting the sick and the down and out is highly commended. “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world” (Jas 1:27).

But works in ostentation, works of eye service, are to be burnt, like wood, hay, stubble. Works of faith, hope, love are silver, gold and precious stones.

A queue of brothers went to visit a sick brother in hospital. Each one said a long prayer, but the last in line said nothing. He gave him an envelope which contained \$100. Whose prayer was most accepted? Good works are also practical and effective. “Learn to maintain good works” (Titus 3:14). So “doing something good for Jesus everyday” is one of Life Church’s watchwords.

Coming back to the parables of the pounds and the talents, what good work is taught by our Lord here? As his injunction in both cases is to go trade and gain, we see plainly the need of initiative in the Lord’s work against slothfulness. In the parable of the pounds, each of the ten servants receives one pound. The one who has initiative makes ten pounds. The one who is slothful not only earned nothing but lost interest on the pound which he should have put in the bank. This is a picture of two types of members in a Church. One type will regard a new project of the Church with nonchalance. The other type with faith and vision will develop it to great profit.

Let us be reminded to be good workers for God that we may be well commended before the Judgment Seat of Christ. If our works for God are done in faith, in hope and love we will not go unrewarded.

The reward of saints is portrayed in Rev 19:7-9 as the marriage of the Lamb, where the Church, His wife, has made herself ready. This is the Rapture. Dressed in white linen which is the righteousness of saints, she is to enter into the joy of the Lord. Those who receive rewards each finds a seat at the dinner tables. What about those servants who make zero marks in their works, who are like the one-talent servant who buried his talent in the earth? They are also there, yet saved as by fire. In the same picture language of guests enjoying a good meal with the Bridegroom, these reprimanded ones would be the dish washers. Will you sit at the table or be a dish washer at the Judgment Seat of Christ? Some will reign with Christ in glory. Some will be assigned menial jobs. Where will you be in Christ’s Kingdom?

Chapter VII

Christ descends on Mount of Olives to save Israel, and rule the earth a thousand years

Text: Zech 13:8,9; 14:1-5; 9-16

(Message delivered at the Life Church 10.30 am Service, Feb 20, 2000).

The Battle of Armageddon will climax in the final Assault on Jerusalem. All hell is let loose on Jerusalem as what has happened to Grosny in Russia's total war on Chechnya and ten times more. Two thirds of Israel will be killed according to Zech 13:8. In this hour of final destruction the children of Israel will cry and wail for Messiah. "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God" (Zech 13:9).

Suddenly, like lightning coming out of the east and flashing to the west (Matt 24:27), there descends on the Mount of Olives the Son of God riding on a white horse with the armies of Heaven to save Israel and punish her enemies. As Israel looks up to behold their Messiah they are so surprised that He is none other than the Jesus whom they crucified, and they will wail and mourn for Him. Now all repentant Israel shall be saved because they come to believe in Jesus as we Gentile Christians do.

With all their nuclear bombs, with all the laser guns, with all their germ and chemical weapons, Israel's enemies will be vanquished at a Word from His mouth. Remember how the Jews

went to Gethsemane to arrest Jesus that night. When they asked to take Jesus our Lord replied, “I am he,” they immediately fell backward, rolling to the ground (Jn 18:6). At this crucial moment, when Christ has descended to save Israel, at a Word from His lips, all Israel’s enemies will melt away. This is described in Zech 14:12-13. “And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem. Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.” God defeats His enemy by making allies to fall out with one another!

When the all-sacred feet of Christ touch down on the Mount of Olives this sinful earth will tremble in awe before a just and holy God. An earthquake of earthquakes splits the Mount of Olives into two. This is what I would call God’s E-Bomb. This sets off a chain reaction that topples “the cities of the nations.” From New York to London, from Paris to New Delhi, from Bangkok to Singapore, from Jakarta to Sydney, every capital city falls. “And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great” (Rev 16:18).

Israel’s enemies being now totally vanquished, there follows the aftermath of war. This is described in Rev 19:17,18. “And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.”

Then comes the War Crimes Tribunal, not before men but before the King of kings and Lord of lords. If the war criminals of WWII

could not escape judgment how much less the coming war criminals of WWII. In WWII God let Hitler judge himself by committing suicide with his mistress Eva Braun. Dr Goebels, his minister of propaganda, the false prophet, shot his wife and children and himself in another self-appointed judgment. Field Marshall Goering, the No. 3, being sentenced to death by the Allied War Tribunal, cheated the gallows by swallowing cyanide. On the Japanese side General Tojo the Wartime Prime Minister was hanged. So was General Yamashita, the Tiger of Malaya and Conqueror of Singapore hanged in Manila.

As for the Arch-War Criminals of WWII we have this prophecy. “And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh” (Rev 19:20,21).

There is this Wicked Triumvirate that brings war and misery upon the earth. The Beast (Antichrist), and the false prophet are sentenced first. What about Satan himself? The prophecy continues, “And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season” (Rev 20:1-3).

With the arch enemies of mankind disposed of, then is ushered in the millennial rule of Christ. “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years ... Blessed

and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years” (Rev 20:4-6). Let me ask if you qualify to reign with our Lord a thousand years?

Now if we turn back to Zechariah, we will see that the seat of Christ’s government will be Jerusalem. “And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited” (Zech 14:11). What will be the main occupation of men dwelling on earth during the millennium? Nations will queue up to worship the Lord Jesus in His Millennial Temple in Jerusalem. “And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles” (Zech 14:16). They will go by rocket-planes of triple-sonic speed. From Singapore to Jerusalem it might take only two hours!

By way of illustration, ever since the Jewish reconquest of Jerusalem in the Six-Day War of 1967, more and more Christian groups from around the world are going on Pilgrimages to the Holy Land. From Singapore, Life Church and FEBC have so far led nine pilgrimages to Israel since 1983. Next year 2001, we are planning a tenth pilgrimage. Isn’t this a harbinger of the coming new pattern of life under the Millennial Rule of Christ? For with perfect peace under the Prince of Peace, men will dwell in peace on earth, up to a thousand years. At a hundred years old he is called an infant (Isa 65:20).

There is a school of theology called Amillennialism which means No Millennium. These people believe that when Christ comes again, it will be the final judgment of men and angels. To them the one thousand years mentioned six times in Revelation 20 is not measured horizontally but vertically. But we believe literally what God’s Word says.

Why we will live and reign with Christ a thousand years is that God treasures His creation still. His salvation plan for mankind in this millennium future will work out His greater glory yet.

“But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else” (Isa 45:17,18).

With the deceiver of nations under chains so that he cannot instigate them to fight, there shall be no war. “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isa 2:2-4).

Life on earth will be restored to what it was in Eden. “And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands” (Isa 65:21,22).

The curse placed on the physical world will also be removed. “For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the

whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now” (Rom 8:20-22). But Isaiah foresees the coming deliverance during the Millennial Reign, “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord” (Isa 65:25).

Although Armageddon will destroy Israel, the God of Israel will yet restore it. He himself will sit on the throne of David and rule from Jerusalem for a thousand golden years of peace. Amen.



Lion and Lamb at Peace



TAKING ADVANTAGE of the unknown factor of the Y2K Bug, many Doomsday Preachers in America played on the simple-minded the almost certainty of the coming of Armageddon. Doomsday colonies were set up in mountainous countries where there were caves to hide. Those who fell to the ruse of these holy tricksters gladly surrendered their wealth to them, to their great loss.

Of course Christians are to be always ready for Jesus' Second Coming. But we are not that foolish as to follow these false Messiahs. For the Scriptures has forewarned us against false Christs and false prophets. Jesus says, "For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many" (Matt 24:5).

In II Thessalonians 2:3, Paul further warns, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." Now we know from Daniel 9:27 that this age will end with a seven-year period leading to great tribulation. The Antichrist will arise and by his Satanic powers will demand worship and will be worshipped. Has this sign come to pass? Not yet. So we must not be tricked.

As to the Return of Christ, our knowledge is in tension. We know and yet we do not know. We do not know and yet we know. To play safe, we must always be ready. To be ready is to be busy about the Lord's business, and to give Him a good report any moment.

In order to alert our members and Christians at large, I have been moved to preach this series of seven prophetic messages under the caption, "From Millennium Bug to Millennium Bomb". For wider circulation I have put them to print. These messages are beamed not only on Christians interested in eschatology, but also on inquirers into the mystery of our "Blessed Hope". So, do not keep the saving knowledge of His Coming to yourself, but spread it to your unsaved loved ones and your friends by introducing this booklet to them. Maranatha!



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