



The Times of the Gentiles 3

More on Jerusalem

Luke 21:24 (AV) — 24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Luke 21:32 (AV) — 32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

Some Adventist historical views on the
times of the Gentiles:

Our Saviour, also, declares, [Luke xxi,24,] that the Jews “shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” The times of the Gentiles will not be fulfilled till the end of time. (James White, *The Review and Herald*, May 9, 1854, p. 123.5)

This then is the good news and glad tidings; the Gospel of Christ published to the Gentiles, or as Jesus said, “And these good tidings of the reign shall be published through all the world for the information of all nations, and then shall come the end.” Matt. 24:14.

What end? See 3d v. “The conclusion of this state,” (Campbell’s trans). “And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be over.” Luke 21:24. (Joseph Bates, *Second Advent Way Marks and High Heaps*, pp. 83.4)

From the text it is evident that “the times of the Gentiles” reach to the coming of the Lord to judge the world. In announcing this second destruction of Jerusalem, the Lord told, as at the first time, what would take place at the end of the period of desolation. The Jews had had their time in which to accept the position and work to which God had called them, and had misused it, not knowing the time of their visitation. . . . The Gentiles comprise all nations, so that the termination of their time must necessarily be the end of the world. That is the coming of the Lord, “to give to every man according as his work shall be (E. J. Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, p. 486.2).”

Christ proceeded to tell them (from verses eight to twenty-four) what signs there would be which should precede the destruction of Jerusalem. The language is so plain that it cannot well be misunderstood. “Let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains.” “For there shall be distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

All these predicted events have most certainly come on the Jews and Jerusalem. That devoted city is yet trodden down of the Gentiles; therefore, the prophecy has not yet expired. This, then, is my answer to those who would contend that the prophecy ended with the destruction of Jerusalem; it is not so, for it is yet in the course of fulfillment. In order to show that the prophecy ended then, it must be proved that Jerusalem ceased then to be trodden down of the Gentiles. (Josiah Litch reprinted article in *The Review and Herald*, June 23, 1863, p. 25.15)

“Times of the Gentiles” is the period of their triumph over the church, holding it in bondage. It is shadowed forth by the metallic image of Daniel, second chapter, beginning with the Chaldeans, and ending with the Romans, in the entire destruction of the Gentile governments of the earth, and the setting up of the kingdom of God to fill the whole earth. (Josiah Litch reprinted article in *The Review and Herald*, June 23, 1863, p. 25.16)

We also read that “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” Luke 21:24. **Jerusalem has never again come into the possession of the Jews, and will not until “the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” This will be when the work of the gospel is finished.**

(James Edison White, *The Coming King*; 1898)

“Uncle Arthur”

The recent dramatic restoration of the nation of Israel has focused the attention of mankind once more upon Palestine. Many Christians have mistakenly permitted themselves to believe that the return of thousands of unconverted Jews to their native land is in fulfillment of the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not realizing that, since the death of the Son of God on Calvary, there is no salvation, nor any eternal homeland, except for those who believe in him and accept His sacrifice.

“Uncle Arthur”

However, there is one prophecy concerning Palestine that we should all be watching with special care. Said Jesus, “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled Luke 21: 24.”

“Uncle Arthur”

For nineteen centuries Jerusalem has been trodden down of the Gentiles. It is still trodden down of the Gentiles.

Despite the amazing prowess of the Israeli troops, the ancient city of Jerusalem is still in their Arab hands. A

Mohammedan mosque still stands upon the site of Solomon's temple. Victorious as were the forces of Israel in every other part of Palestine, they failed to take the most dazzling object of all. Mysteriorously they were held back from achieving this most cherished goal, this culminating triumph, as by an unseen hand.

“Uncle Arthur”

What could be the reason? Only that the times of that
Gentiles are not yet fulfilled.

Centuries ago Israel was not permitted to enter Palestine
for a certain time because “the iniquity of the Amorites”
was “not yet full” (Gen 15:16); that is, not until the
probationary time allotted to the Amorites had run out.

“Uncle Arthur”

It may well be that the same principle applies today, on a wider scale. If so, then Jerusalem is to remain trodden down by Gentiles till the probationary time of all Gentiles has run out. If this be correct, how much hangs upon the fate of this ancient city and the power that occupies it! (Arthur Maxwell, *Our Firm Foundation*, pp. 230, 231; 1952)

20th Century Bible Course
Lesson 5 entitled, “Time Running Out,”

2. What sign did Jesus give that would indicate when the destruction of the city was at hand? Luke 21:20

20th Century Bible Course

Lesson 5 entitled, “Time Running Out,”

The city of Jerusalem was surrounded by the Roman armies in A.D. 66. After a period of time the army withdrew and the Christians, recognizing the sign given by Christ (Matthew 24:15-20, NT 25 [18, 19]) fled the city and did not return. In A.D. 69 the Romans returned, and destroyed the city in A.D. 70. Nearly a million people died or were sold into slavery at that time, but not a single Christian died.

20th Century Bible Course

Lesson 5 entitled, “Time Running Out,”

They watched for the sign Christ had given and obeyed His instructions. The temple was burned to the ground as Christ had foretold (even though the soldiers had orders not to destroy it). Christ foresaw the future and outlined it to His followers so that they could be saved.

20th Century Bible Course
Lesson 5 entitled, “Time Running Out,”

3. How long did Christ say that Jerusalem would be trodden down? (verse 24)

20th Century Bible Course

Lesson 5 entitled, “Time Running Out,”

Old Jerusalem and the temple site has been occupied largely by the Gentile nations until 1967 when the Jews took possession of it in a “lightning victory.” This portion of Christ’s prophecy was fulfilled in our day!

Jean Zurcher's book, *Christ of the Revelation*

We shall not linger over the numerous signs given by Jesus in this discourse. One only will occupy our attention, the one that especially deals with time. Even in our days it constitutes a critical point in the political world: Jerusalem. In fact, Jerusalem is both the beginning and the culmination of Jesus' prophecy. For Him, as for Daniel the prophet, the history of nations, as that of the people of Israel, is written in the setting of the tragic history of Jerusalem.

Jean Zurcher's book, *Christ of the Revelation*

The latter is the sign by which the fate of the former is determined. So having predicted the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews “into all nations,” Jesus declared, “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled (Luke 21: 24).”

Jean Zurcher's book, *Christ of the Revelation*

Few today would deny the precision of this prophecy. The destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies in AD 70 is a historical fact commemorated on the triumphal arch of Titus in Rome. The dispersion of the Jews among all nations is still a reality.

Jean Zurcher's book, *Christ of the Revelation*

As for Jerusalem, nineteen centuries of history should provide adequate proof that it has been “trodden down of the Gentiles” –first by the Romans, then by the Arabs, next by different Christian nations during the Crusades, fourth by the Turks up to the end of the first world war, then by the British, and finally by the Jordanians until the Six-Day War in June, 1967.

Jean Zurcher's book, *Christ of the Revelation*

This prophecy of Jesus was a sign for the Christians of the Apostolic Church, who lived at the beginning of the times of the Gentiles, and it remains a sign for us who live at the end of the times of the Gentiles. Again, we must know how to discern its meaning.

Jean Zurcher's book, *Christ of the Revelation*

It is not a matter of our seeing in the return of the Jews to Palestine and in the Israeli conquest of Jerusalem a sign of the approaching conversion of the Jews, as so many Christians think. Nothing in Jesus' prophecy allows such an interpretation.

Jean Zurcher's book, *Christ of the Revelation*

However, if we cannot see that Jerusalem is an exceptional sign of the times, then might we not be placing ourselves in the same position as the religious leaders who knew how to “discern the face of the sky” but could not discern the obvious “signs of the times”?

Jean Zurcher's book, *Christ of the Revelation*

In order for us to understand Jesus' statement, three questions need answering. First, what exactly does the expression "the times of the Gentiles" mean? Then, what should be understood by the fulfillment of the times of the Gentiles? Finally, what connection is there between the retaking of Jerusalem by the Jews and the fulfillment of the times of the Gentiles?

Jean Zurcher's book, *Christ of the Revelation*

As I understand the Biblical language, the times of the Gentiles is the period set aside by God for the evangelization of the heathen nations. It is not the time needed for them to be converted to Christianity, as some think, but for them to hear the gospel. It is in this sense that Jesus said: "This gospel the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness onto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14).

Jean Zurcher's book, *Christ of the Revelation*

I believe that the times of the Gentiles began in AD 34, when the prophetic seventy weeks that God set aside for the people of Israel ended. The baptism of the first “heathens” –the Ethiopian eunuch and the centurion Cornelius – as well as the conversion of Paul as the apostle to the Gentiles mark the beginning of these new times when the gospel would be preached to the nations.

Jean Zurcher's book, *Christ of the Revelation*

And if I have understood the prediction of Jesus properly, this time will be “fulfilled” when Jerusalem will cease to “be trodden down of the Gentiles.” The fact that since 1967 Gentiles no longer have occupied Jerusalem means, therefore, that we are now living at the end of “the times of the Gentiles.”

Jean Zurcher's book, *Christ of the Revelation*

Jerusalem here constitutes the last sign of the times by which the Lord shows us that the history of this world is coming to its climax and that the restoration of all things is at hand (Jean Zurcher, *Christ of the Revelation*, pp. 71, 72; 1980).

Implications:

After the truth has been proclaimed as a witness to all **nations**, every conceivable power of evil will be set in operation, and minds will be confused by many voices crying, “Lo, here is Christ, Lo, he is there. This is the truth, I have the message from God, he has sent me with great light.” **Then** there will be **a removing of the landmarks, and an attempt to tear down the pillars of our faith.** A more decided effort will be made to exalt the false Sabbath, and to cast contempt upon God himself by supplanting the day he has blessed and sanctified. This false Sabbath is to be enforced by an oppressive law. (*The Review and Herald*, December 13, 1892, par. 2)

Daniel 7:25 (AV) — 25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

The true people of God, who have the spirit of the work of the Lord and the salvation of souls at heart, will ever view sin in its real, sinful character. They will always be on the side of faithful and plain dealing with sins which easily beset the people of God. **Especially in the closing work for the church, in the sealing time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand** who are to stand without fault before the throne of God, will they feel most deeply the wrongs of God's professed people.

(Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 266.2a)

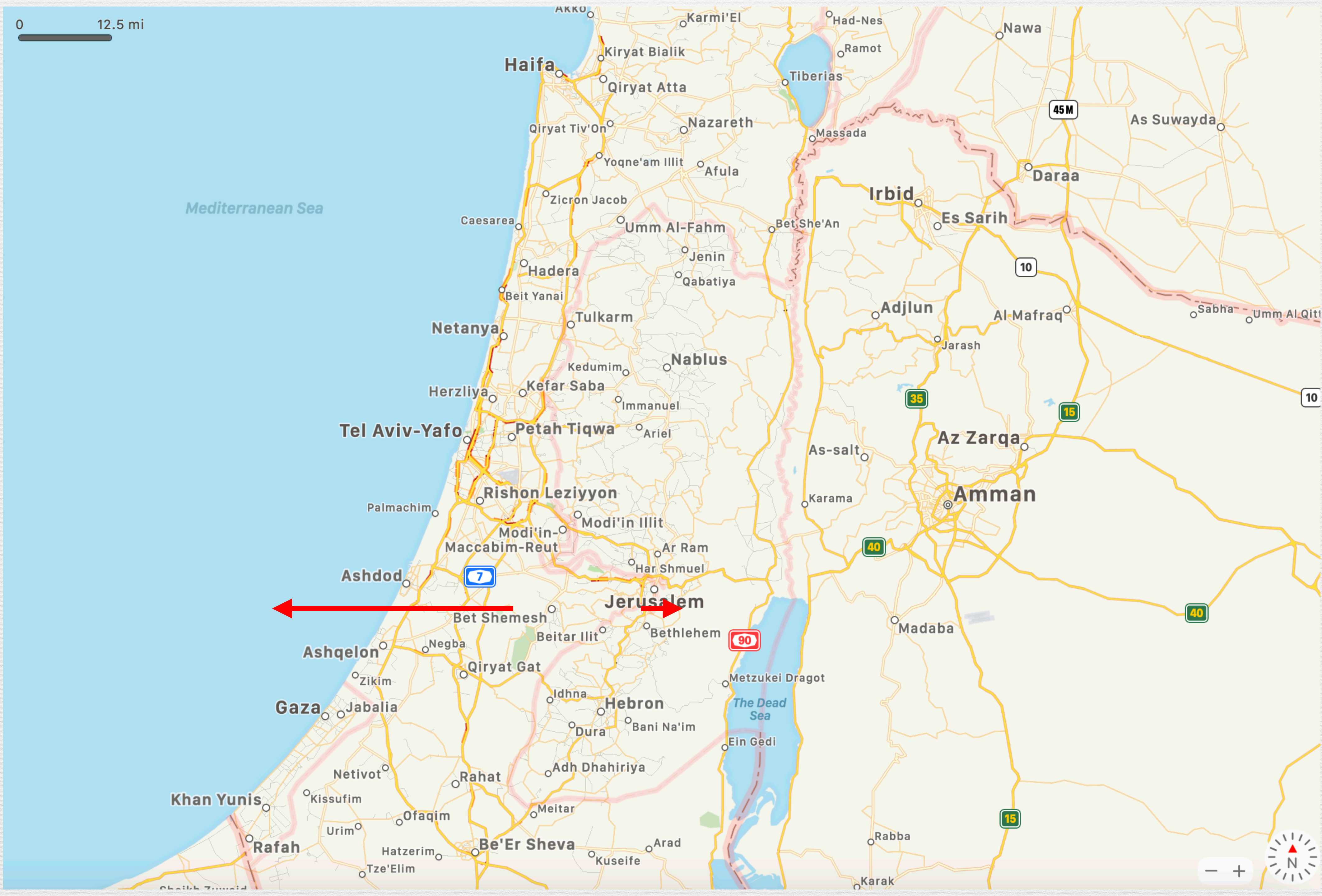
This is forcibly set forth by the prophet's illustration of the last work under the figure of the men each having a slaughter weapon in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side. “And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 266.2b)

Daniel 11:45 (AV) — 45 And he shall plant the
tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the
glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end,
and none shall help him.

How to know when a word is used figuratively. If it makes good sense as it stands, and does no violence to the simple laws of nature, then it must be understood literally, if not, figuratively.

To learn the true meaning of figures, trace your figurative word through your Bible, and where you find it explained, put it on your figure, and if it makes good sense you need look no further, if not, look again (Miller's Works, vol. 1, *Rules of Interpretation*, p. 23)

Daniel 11:45 (AV) — 45 And he shall plant the
tabernacles of his palace **between the seas** in the
glorious **holy mountain**; yet he shall come to his end,
and none shall help him.



Daniel 9:16 (AV) — 16 O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.

Zechariah 8:3 (AV) — 3 Thus saith the LORD; I
am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the
midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called
a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of
hosts the holy mountain.

Isaiah 66:20 (AV) — 20 And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD.

Micah 4:1 (AV) — 1 But in the last days it shall
come to pass, that the mountain of the house of
the LORD shall be established in the top of the
mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills;
and people shall flow unto it.\

**Micah 4:2 (AV) — 2 And many nations shall come,
and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of
the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob;
and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in
his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the
word of the LORD from Jerusalem.**

Micah 4:3 (AV) — 3 And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and **they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.** (See also Isaiah 2:2–4)

But the Lord speaks in verses 6 and 7, as follows: “In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted.” “In that day,” when “many nations” are prophesying of peace and safety, the Lord’s remnant people are driven out and afflicted.

(James White, *Bible Adventism*, p. 26.2)

Joel 3:8–10 (AV) — 8 And I will sell your sons and
your daughters into the hand of the children of
Judah, and they shall sell them to the Sabeans, to a
people far off: for the LORD hath spoken it. 9
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: 10 Beat your plowshares
into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let
the weak say, I am strong.

In the balances of the sanctuary the Seventh-day Adventist church is to be weighed. She will be judged by the privileges and advantages that she has had. If her spiritual experience does not correspond to the advantages that Christ, at infinite cost, has bestowed on her, if the blessings conferred have not qualified her to do the work entrusted to her, on her will be pronounced the sentence: “Found wanting.” By the light bestowed, the opportunities given, will she be judged (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 247).

In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import--the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 19.1)

The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned, and God's people are to be true to the trust committed to them, (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 19.2; 1909)

The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.

(Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 11.2)

The End