

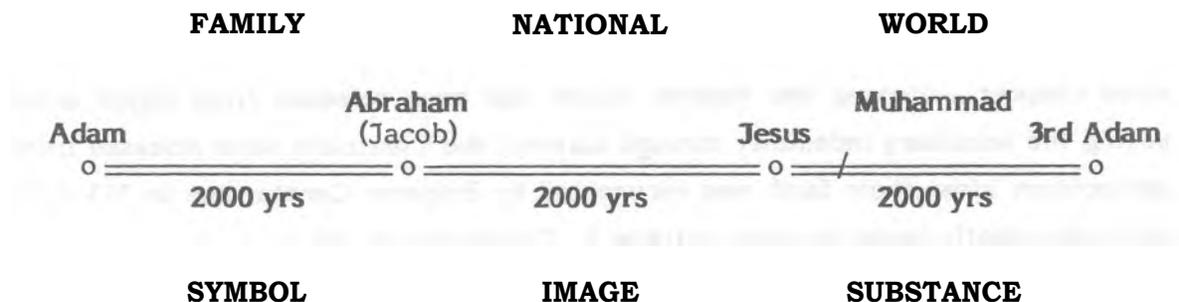
CHAPTER TEN

JESUS TO THE PRESENT DAY

INTRODUCTION

So far we have traced the providential history for 4,000 years from Adam to Jesus. This period has been divided into two main 2,000-year periods. The pattern that became evident as we examined the unfolding of events in both periods, we shall again see repeated in the 2,000-year period of history since Jesus.

The first 2,000 years was the preparation period for the family-level Foundation for the perfected Adam, and the second 2,000 years was the expansion period of this foundation to the national and world-wide levels, so that the perfected Adam (Jesus) could actually come. The last 2,000-year period has been preparation for the third Adam to come and fulfill, in substance, the mission of perfected Adam (the restoration of fallen Adam and the creation of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth through the fulfillment of the Three Blessings).



In the drama of God's Dispensation for Restoration in the last 2,000 years, we see a central chain of interrelated events, all of them in preparation for the cosmic event of the third Adam's coming. One of the most important of these events was the emergence of Islam as a world-wide religion.

What was God's providence for Islam? What role was it to play in preparation for the third Adam? What is its role today? These and other significant questions concerning Islam will be dealt with in the following chapter.

Now we will trace the providential history as it has developed from Jesus to the present. The relationship between each providential period and its parallel period in the previous 2,000 year period will be shown as each period is introduced.

I. CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

Because Abraham, God's central figure, failed to faithfully complete the animal sacrifice, his descendents had to suffer 400 years of slavery in Egypt.

Because the nation of Israel, God's central nation, failed to accept Jesus as the perfected Adam, his spiritual descendents, the Christians, had to suffer 400 years of persecution.

Christianity began as an unwelcome Jewish sect, but found fertile soil in the gentiles of the Roman Empire. Rome, however, as a pagan state, had little sympathy for the new religion and frequently persecuted and martyred Christians for their faith. If the Jews had accepted Jesus, this would never have happened. Israel would have been the central nation of God's providence, very much as Arabia, once united by Muhammad, became the center of a new faith and a new nation.

The willing acceptance of martyrdom by so many Christians created the spiritual Foundation of Substance on the world-wide level, as discussed in the previous chapter. Just as the Hebrew slaves had been released from Egypt after paying the necessary indemnity through slavery, the Christians were released from persecution after their faith was recognized by Emperor Constantine in 313 A.D. and subsequently made the state religion by Theodocius in 393.

At the end of their captivity, Moses was sent as a liberator to form the Israelites into a nation. God's Word, as revealed in the Ten Commandments, became the basis for their life of faith. The tabernacle was given to them as a symbol of perfected Adam until the temple, and finally, perfected Adam himself could replace it. The Hebrews were responsible to remain united with it as an expression of their faith.

Jesus and the Holy Spirit have been used by God as the central figures for Christianity (the spiritual Israel) until the third Adam comes to fulfil the mission of perfected Adam. The words to guide the believers in place of the Ten Command-

ments have been the books of the New Testament, recording the life and words of Jesus and his early disciples and apostles. The Church replaces the tabernacle as the symbol of perfected Adam with which people must unite. Those people chosen to lead or inspire the church very of ten had a close spiritual relationship with Jesus, through which they were given God's direction.

H. THE AGE OF CHURCH PATRIARCHS

After forty years of wandering in the wilderness, the children of Israel entered the land of Canaan to establish God's nation. They were led, beginning with Joshua, by judges who fulfilled the multiple roles of king, priest, and prophet. In spite of the inspiring pattern Joshua set in driving out all the evil kings and traditions from Canaan, the people, after his death, began to intermingle with the pagan Canaanites and worship their idols. Because of this, the providence to build the temple and receive the perfected Adam was postponed for 400 years.

In Christendom, a great north-westward movement developed to convert the Germanic tribes that had taken control of Western Europe. The Church, led by the patriarchs, was supposed to remain the purified symbol of the perfected Adam. However, its purity was lost through materialism and internal conflicts, and through allowing confusing elements of Germanic paganism to enter into their beliefs.

In this period the church developed five main centers: Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch, Constantinople and Rome. Since Rome was the most powerful, the Bishop of Rome was given the title "Pope" which distinguished him above the other bishops. However, the various churches were not fully united, but developed independently of each other.

HI. THE UNITED CHRISTIAN KINGDOM

The last judge, Samuel, anointed Saul as the first King of Israel. Saul's mission was to build the temple as the image of perfected Adam and unite Israel around it, so that in his forty-year reign he could lay the foundation to receive the

perfected Adam. When Saul failed, his mission was passed on to David and then to Solomon.

During this period, the functions of the king, prophet, and chief priest were divided between three individuals where previously they had been combined in the one person of the judge. The chief priest and prophet were to be obedient to the king.

In 800 A.D., Pope Leo III made Charlemagne Emperor of the first Christian Kingdom (second Israel). Charlemagne's mission was to unite Christendom around the image of perfected Adam — the Church. The Pope and Church Patriarchs were to unite with him in the position of prophet and chief priests.

As Saul's and then Solomon's failures marked Satan's invasion and the destruction of the United Kingdom, so did Charlemagne's, his sons', and his grandsons' failures mark the destruction of the Christian Kingdom.

As Solomon's kingdom was divided at his death, so was the Christian Kingdom divided in the generation of Charlemagne's grandsons. Because Satan had invaded, Cain-like and Abel-like factions had to be separated from each other.

IV. THE DIVIDED CHRISTIAN KINGDOM

Solomon's kingdom was divided into the northern kingdom (Israel) and the southern kingdom (Judah) at his death, marking the end of the 120 years of the United Kingdom.

The grandsons of Charlemagne divided the Christian Kingdom at the end of 120 years into the East Franks, West Franks, and Italy. Since Italy was controlled by the East Franks, there were essentially two kingdoms. The East Franks were blessed in the "Abel position" and became the Holy Roman Empire.

The divided nations, Israel and Judah, were punished for their disbelief (paganism) by being conquered by Cain-like nations (representing the satanic world).

In spite of inspiration from scholastics (led by Thomas Aquinas), Monastics (such as Saint Francis), and mystics (such as Therese of Avilla), the church failed to

turn from a course of growing materialism and corruption. During the Crusades, the church suffered defeat at the hands of the Seljuk Turks.

The Crusades were intended by European kings to reclaim the Holy Land for Christendom so that pilgrims could freely visit it. However, the repeated efforts (there were seven main expeditions) ultimately resulted in failure at great cost to Europe. This "punishment" lasted for a period of two hundred years.

V. PAPAL EXILE AND RETURN

Because Judah failed to repent and turn to God, it was made a captive nation by Babylon. The Israelites remained captive for seventy years before Cyrus liberated them and allowed them to return to Canaan. Another one hundred and forty years passed before they were ready to begin the period of final preparation for the perfected Adam.

Because the church failed to respond to either the internal stimulation of the scholastics, monastics, or mystics, or the external punishment of the Crusades, by repenting and turning to God, it was subjected to a period of suffering.

The king and Pope were supposed to unite forming a true Christian nation to which the King of Kings, the third Adam, could come. They failed and fell into conflict, resulting in the captivity of the Pope (representing Israel) in Avignon by the French kings (representing Babylon).

After seventy years of this exile from Rome (beginning in 1309), a period of conflict arose as to who was the rightful Pope. This conflict continued (there were as many as three Popes at one time) until absolute papal authority was restored to Rome in 1449.

The return of papal supremacy in the church marked the beginning of a period of persecution of religious reformers such as Wycliff and Huss. God was working to purify the church through the efforts of these laymen. The movement really began to gain widespread support when, in 1517, Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-five Theses, a criticism of the practice of papal indulgences, to the church door in Wittenberg.

This event marked the beginning of the Protestant Reformation and the 400-year period of preparation for the coming of the third Adam. The 210 years of papal exile and return (paralleling the Babylonian exile and return) had come to an end.

VI. PREPARATION FOR THE THIRD ADAM

To receive the symbol of the perfected Adam, the tabernacle, the Israelites endured 400 years of slavery. To receive the perfected Adam in image, the temple, they passed through the 400 years of the judges. To receive the perfected Adam in reality (because Solomon failed, the period of the Divided Kingdom was also claimed by Satan), the Jews had to pass through another 400-year period of preparation. At the end of this time, Jesus was sent as the Messiah — perfected Adam.

As discussed in the previous chapter, this 400 years, begun on the foundation of Malachi's prophecies, was a time of world-wide spiritual and material development in preparation for the cosmic event of the advent of perfected Adam.

Paralleling this, the last 400 years of human history have witnessed incredible development in the world. As the 400 years prior to Jesus' coming encapsulated and indemnified (horizontally) the 4000 years of providential history, so did the 400 years beginning in 1517 encapsulate the 6,000 years of providential history.

God has worked in this period to prepare man, spiritually and physically, for the arrival of the third Adam. We must examine the various aspects (religious, economic, political) of human development in this period to discover exactly how God has been preparing us for the cosmic event of our age.

Two movements marked the beginning of the 400 years of preparation for the third Adam: To begin external preparation, the Renaissance, and to begin internal preparation, the Reformation. These two movements developed in multiple directions to bring about the developed world we have today. Let us first look at the internal development begun with the Reformation.

A. Internal Preparation

The reformers were critical of the Roman Church because of the corruption they saw in it. Examination of the Bible itself showed them that the Church had drifted a long way from its intended purpose. Instead of lifting people up with the truth of God, it bound them in ignorance. The Bible was only available for study to those who knew Latin (mainly priests and monks). Even the services held in Latin were unintelligible to the laity, and through their ignorance the church was able to assert its authority over all its members. Anyone who would displease the church could be excommunicated (forced to lose their church membership). The people were taught that once excommunicated they were bound for hell, and that the only way to avoid such a horrible destiny was to pay the church a certain indulgence as a means of restoring their membership.

It was this practice of charging papal indulgences that was attacked by Luther in his Ninety-five Theses, but it was only one of many grievances held by many sincere Christians.

The Reformation encouraged the translation of the Bible into native European languages and the emergence of different Protestant denominations, each denomination seeking to establish the most proper form of Christian faith and life based on its interpretation of the scriptures.

This division of the church developed because the Roman church, placed by God in the "Abel position," failed to fulfill its mission and never repented of its evil practices. The Abel position was passed on to the western Reformation churches. The Reformation forced the Roman Church to look at itself more critically which resulted in a counter-reformation.

Since the third Adam is to come on a world wide foundation, the European church has had the mission to evangelize the world to prepare for him. This mission was carried out largely through the missionary movement which rapidly developed in the nineteenth century.

Through the increase in literacy, an ever growing percentage of believers has been able to study the Bible directly and thus develop an independently strong belief. The use of native languages in services and the later development of the Sunday-school system of religious education also have contributed to the intensification of understanding and preparation for the third Adam. Since each person will

be responsible to respond to him directly from his own belief and conviction, such widespread religious education has been most important.

In the Christian community, there has been an ever-growing expectancy of the coming of the third Adam. Interpretation of Bible prophecies as well as personal revelations have contributed to this feeling, leading to the conclusion that the world-wide church is more expectant of the Lord's coming than it has ever been. The reason for this is that the 2,000-year preparation period has come to an end, and the time has arrived in which God is working to establish the Kingdom of Heaven centering on the third Adam.

B. External Preparation

Preparation for the Reformation can partly be attributed to the Italian Renaissance that preceded it. The hedonism and secularism that characterized the Renaissance were themselves reactions to the other-worldly and dogmatic nature of the church. The mental atmosphere created by the process of separating from the limiting paradigms of church doctrine was one of fresh interest in our physical world and the potential that man himself has to know and enjoy his natural environment.

Some liberated minds who were critical of the church establishment ushered in the Protestant Reformation, while others who were interested in scientific discovery created new political and economic systems. These various forces of change represented a virtual historical explosion that instigated development in western Europe and the whole world which has been unparalleled in history.

1. Political

The last 400 years have seen remarkable political developments. Through peaceful evolution and violent revolution, nation's political maps have been transformed into shapes that no one of the sixteenth century could have imagined possible.

It is beyond the scope of this book to attempt to trace the details of this development, but the result is important and relevant.

Two main types of political systems have emerged that stand in a Cain/Abel relationship to each other. The Cain-type system is exemplified by communism

based on Marx's dialectical materialism. As an atheistic, amoral political system, it allows no room for the development of God's ideal world, and therefore is of a Cain-like nature.

On the other hand, the western democracies have provided an environment of religious freedom, since their formation was largely inspired by Christian idealism. Although far from perfect, they are Abel-like in guaranteeing an environment of freedom needed by God to allow His work of re-creation to proceed.

That these two political types now stand opposed to each other on a global scale is significant of the final confrontation between God and Satan. Satan's greatest effort to control the world is manifest through the communist world's goal of world-wide expansion. To counter this evil force, God is using the free world.

The free world itself is presently hampered most severely by its own ideological crisis. It is aware of the value of human rights and freedoms, but not of the ultimate solutions to these problems. Without this more substantial understanding, the free world is unable to take an aggressive stand for good and work effectively to free the world of its many ills. It is the role of the third Adam to give this direction to the free world, and it is the responsibility of the free world to respond.

2. Economic

Of the many forces that have transformed the face of the earth in this past 400 years, economic growth is probably one of the most significant. Of the various economic factors involved in the change, the industrial revolution was the most important.

The advent of modern technology has brought the different branches of the family of man into direct contact with one another. The transportation of people, goods, and information has become so rapid that mankind is now forced to think on a global level. Never again will the behavior of one nation or people be completely independent of other nations and peoples.

The providential purpose behind this great economic development is the facilitation of the third Adam's work. He must spread God's truth and the message of restoration to all corners of the earth as quickly as possible.

3. Scientific

The sixteenth century saw the dawn of the modern scientific age. Initiated by Copernicus and substantiated by Galileo, the quest for knowledge of our universe through careful observation, measurement, and experiment soon became a central preoccupation in the new Europe. An important factor that contributed to the acceleration of scientific development was its separation from the world of religion and its devotion to empiricism.

Scientific development has gone hand in hand with economic development to create the advanced technological world that we now live in. In addition to supplying us with ever more comprehensive information about our cosmos, science has directly contributed solutions to many of the complex problems that have stood in the way of man's material development.

The providential purpose behind the evolution of science is to help man to comprehend the cosmos and its Creator in a deeper way, and to help prepare the world externally for the third Adam.

4. General

Around the beginning of the sixteenth century, Europe seemed to come alive in an unexpected way. Explorers and conquerors, first from Spain and Portugal, then Holland and England, discovered and settled formerly unknown parts of the world such as North America and the Far East. These contacts developed through trade and missionary activity. As the West rapidly developed, the whole world became dependent on it for its technology.

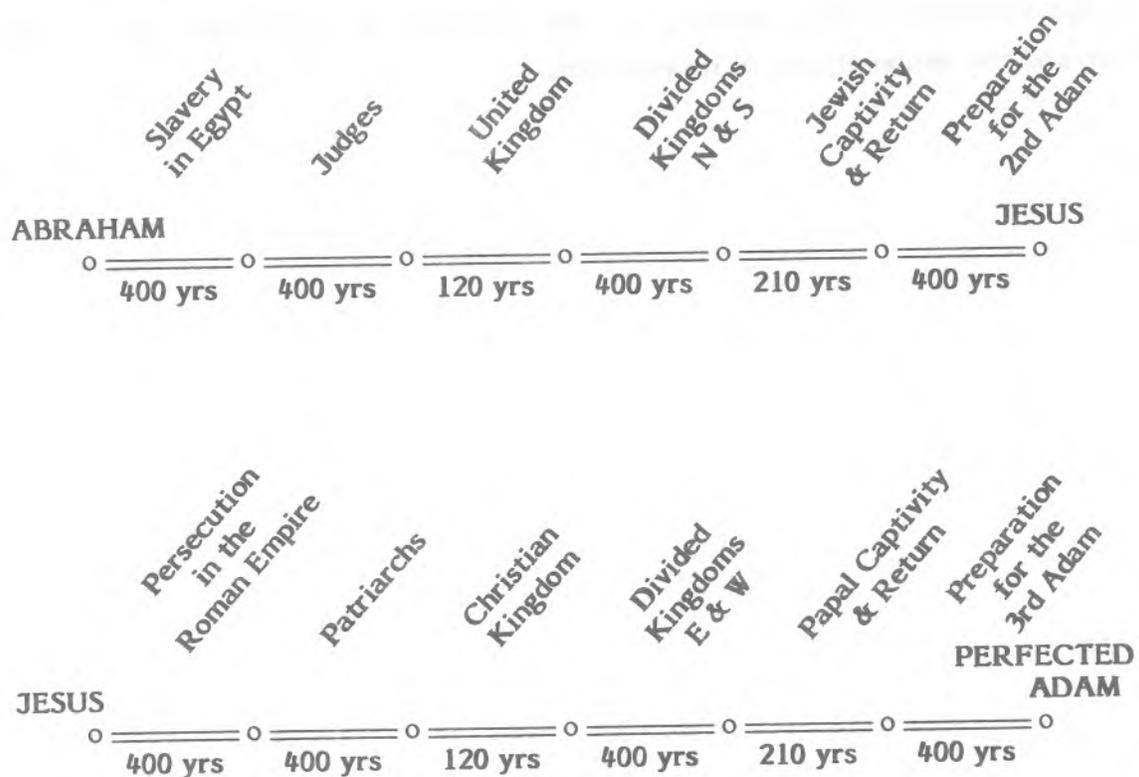
God has inspired man to develop his environment and surmount the barriers of time and space in order to prepare the twentieth-century world (at the end of the 400 years of preparation) to receive the third Adam. Through internal development we have been set free from useless dogmas and superstitions, and challenged to understand God directly, of our own volition. Through external development the means have been prepared for the truth which the third Adam brings to spread to all parts of the world as quickly and effectively as possible.

With what we have learned from the history of restoration, it is our responsibility now to be prepared to receive the third Adam and the truth he brings.

CONCLUSION

We have seen in this chapter how God's providence has developed in the past 2,000 years.

The major events that led to the coming of Jesus have been paralleled by the major events leading up to this time as the arrival of the third Adam. From this parallel development, it is clear to us that God is actively involved in the historical development of man, and that His desire is to accomplish His will on earth.



As we have shown throughout this discussion of history, the key to the fulfillment of God's purpose is in the hands of man himself. When we fulfill our portion of responsibility, God is able to work through us to achieve His purpose.

We are living at the most important time in history, for this is indeed the consummation of history, and the time God has chosen to send the third Adam and establish His Kingdom on earth. We, therefore, are the most privileged people with

the greatest responsibility. We have the advantage of knowing the purpose of history and how to fulfill our responsibility now.

Since we are at the conclusion of the third 2,000-year period of preparation and are expecting the third Adam, we know that this is the time God expects to achieve His purpose. Because the means of human destruction are now so developed, it is absolutely imperative that they not be used by satanic forces to bring unspeakable suffering on humanity. The only alternative is a world centered on God.

The next chapter will discuss the important role of Islam in the last 2,000-year period of preparation. The final chapter will then examine the significance of specific twentieth century events, and the conditions to be fulfilled by the third Adam and the nation chosen to receive him.