

## Chapter XIX

### EVENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SECOND COMING

There are a number of events that will occur in close proximity to the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to establish His Kingdom upon this earth. It seems that the first of these final events will be the gathering of the nations of the world against the city of Jerusalem to lay siege upon it during the final stages of the reign of the antichrist (Revelation 19:19). This assumption is based upon the fact that during this battle *the city [will be] taken, and the houses [will be] rifled, and the women [will be] ravished* (Zechariah 14:2). This cannot be a description of the battle that our Lord will fight at His coming, but appears to be a description of conditions that will exist in Jerusalem for an unknown period of time prior to the coming of our Lord.

We have seen that there can be difficulties in understanding the sequence of events associated with unfulfilled prophecies until certain aspects of the prophetic events have first been fulfilled. This can again be seen in one of Zechariah's prophecies: *And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be*

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

*left therein. 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 (Zechariah 13:8-9).* By interpretation this Scripture reveals that two-thirds of the nation of Israel will perish during the great tribulation period, but it does not tell us exactly how or when they will perish. It also reveals that the other one-third will be redeemed at the coming of our Lord (Zechariah 12:10).

We know that during the final three and one-half years of the seventieth week of Daniel, the world will know *tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be* (Matthew 24:21). This seems to be *the fire* described in Zechariah 13:9 through which one-third of the nation of Israel will be brought safely; but despite the safety of these, *the fire* of the tribulation will produce the deaths of many Jews and many Gentiles. It is impossible at the present time to know whether the greater number of the two-thirds of the Jews that will perish will perish during the tribulation proper, or during *the fire* of the gathering of the nations against Jerusalem before the return of our Lord.

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. *Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.* (Zechariah 14:1-4, emphasis mine)

We also know that the preservation of the one-third of the nation of Israel will begin at the mid-point of the tribulation, three and one-half years before this final battle. This number of Jews

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

will flee Jerusalem when the false prophet sets up an idol of the antichrist in the temple and demands that the world worship it (Revelation 13:11-15). It seems then that those who will flee will flee in obedience to the preaching of the one hundred and forty-four thousand. It also seems that those who will perish will perish because they will reject their preaching. Those who reject the preaching will fall into the same trap that so many of their forefathers fell into: they will practice idolatry in an attempt to save their lives (Luke 9:24; Hosea 2:12-13).

It is reasonable to assume that the preaching of the one hundred and forty-four thousand will be much the same as the preaching of our Lord during His earthly ministry. Our Lord was a minister to the circumcision (Romans 15:8). Since the tribulation period will be the final week of the seventy weeks of Daniel; and since these weeks were determined upon Daniel's people (the Jews) and upon Daniel's city (Jerusalem) (Daniel 9:24); and since the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy is called *the time of Jacob's trouble* (Jeremiah 30:7); it seems that the preaching of the one hundred and forty-four thousand will be primarily directed to the nation of Israel. This will ultimately produce their salvation and entrance into the Kingdom of God.

Therefore our Lord warned the Jews that when they see the abomination of desolation in the holy place they are to flee Jerusalem (Matthew 24:15-21). Our Lord also told them: *Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it* (Luke 17:32-33). Lot fled from Sodom (Genesis 19:17-26) and, interestingly, Jerusalem is called spiritual Sodom (Revelation 11:8). Those who refuse to worship the image of the beast will put their lives in jeopardy as did Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego when they refused to worship Nebuchadnezzar's image. Nevertheless they will be preserved in

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

the wilderness for the last three and one-half years of the tribulation, just as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were preserved in the *fiery furnace* (*Daniel 3:25*).

It also seems that this gathering of armies against Jerusalem may be the news event that will account for the media's coverage of our Lord's second coming to this earth. The Scriptures do not specifically state that there will be television coverage of our Lord's second coming. The concept of television would have been difficult to express thousands of years before its invention. Even so the Holy Spirit of God led the apostle John to write: *Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him* (Revelation 1:7, emphasis mine).

The concept that every eye would be able to see the Lord at His coming was scoffed at by the critics of the Scriptures prior to World War II; but with the development of television broadcasts and reception, the advancements in rocket science, and the *Space Race* after the war, the world was launched into a new age of world-wide television via satellite communications. Consequently the concept that every eye could see the Lord at His coming is no longer scoffed at. If anything it is ignored because it has become commonplace in the comfort of their own homes for the majority of the world's population to be able to watch world-wide events as they take place. Even so there is nothing in Scripture that demands that this will be the way that every eye shall see Him, but it is reasonable to assume that this will be the way because God has rarely used miracles to accomplish His will when it was unnecessary to use miracles.

The actual coming of our Lord is predicated upon the fulfillment of the many promises throughout the Old and New Testament Scriptures of our Lord's coming to establish His Kingdom

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

upon this earth. It is also predicated upon the promise of the angels (as our Lord ascended into heaven after His resurrection from the dead): *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven* (Acts 1:11).

While the purpose of our Lord's coming is to establish His Kingdom and to bring to fruition all of His promises associated with His Kingdom, He must also defeat the antichrist and his armies. It seems then that the second event associated with the coming of our Lord to the Mount of Olives will be the battle of Armageddon, when our Lord will go forth to battle against those nations that will have gathered themselves against Israel in the city of Jerusalem.

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

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.

And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. *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. (Revelation 19:11-21, emphasis mine)

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

The day of the Lord will fulfill the many prophetic judgments against the nations of the world that have been described by the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Zechariah, and others. The day of the Lord is synonymous with the second coming of Jesus Christ. Thus the day of the Lord will be a day of blessing to those who will be redeemed at our Lord's coming, but to everyone else it will be a terrible day of judgment: *Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him* (Amos 5:18-19).

The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him. Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. *And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.* In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness.

And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God. In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem. The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah.

*In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem;* and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.*

And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: *and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.* In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart. (Zechariah 12:1-14, emphasis mine).

It seems then that during this battle, when the Lord will come to fight against the nations gathered against Israel, that all that Israel has heard preached concerning the Christ will then come together. She will look upon the One Whom she pierced and be saved. Thus the third event associated with the coming of our Lord will be Israel's salvation (Romans 11:26-27). *This is the day that the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it* (Psalm 118:24).

This is not a change in God's method of salvation. God is Immutable (Malachi 3:6). God has always saved those that believe by the preaching of the Word of God (I Corinthians 1:21) and by the quickening power of the Spirit of God (Ephesians 2:5). Men have never been saved by miracles or special events, even though miracles or special events may have been in evidence at the time of the salvation of some. The faith that brings salvation always comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17). Thus Israel's salvation can be compared with the salvation of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost. These Jews had seen the manifestation of the gift of tongues, but each individual who came to salvation that day, came to salvation because they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 10:10). So throughout the tribulation period, the one hundred and forty-four thousand will preach the gospel (Romans 10:14) throughout the cities of Israel (Matthew 10:23). This will produce the salvation of some (Revelation 7:13-14), and it will prepare the nation of Israel for its salvation at the coming of our Lord.

This means that Israel's salvation can also be compared to the salvation of Saul of Tarsus. Saul heard our Lord preach and he also heard Steven preach, but when he heard them preach he

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

was not saved. His salvation came later. Saul was on his way to Damascus when the Lord met him in a blinding light and said: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do* (Acts 9:4-6). God then sent Ananias to Saul. He laid his hands upon Saul and by the power of the Holy Spirit Saul received his sight. He was then baptized, which indicates that he had also received his spiritual sight: for he was filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17-18).

Thus after Israel has been confronted with the preaching of the Word of God and the actions of our Lord at the battle of Armageddon: *... it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, but let your hands be strong. For thus saith the LORD of hosts; As I thought to punish you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the LORD of hosts, and I repented not: so again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not* (Zechariah 8:13-15).

And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: *and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.* (Zechariah 12:10-11, emphasis mine)

It is understandable, given Israel's historical relationship with Jesus of Nazareth, that when she is saved she will mourn as one mourns over the death of an only son. She will mourn because she will realize that when her Messiah came to her in His first advent: *He came unto his own*

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

[nation] *and his own* [people] *received him not* (John 1:11). So when she is redeemed Israel will come to realize that all that she has suffered as a nation since our Lord was upon the earth: the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.; the *diaspora* into the Gentile nations of the world; the pogroms at the hands of so-called Christians; the holocaust during World War II; and the judgments of the great tribulation period will have all come upon her because she rejected the Lord. She said, *We will not have this man to reign over us* (Luke 19:14); she said, *We have no king but Caesar* (John 19:15); she said, *Crucify him, crucify him* (John 19:6); and she said, *His blood be on us and on our children* (Matthew 27:25). Nevertheless, when her mourning is ended, she will know unspeakable joy when she realizes that the Lord that she once rejected has become her Savior and made her a part of His Kingdom by His grace:

Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. *For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.* (Isaiah 54:1-8, emphasis mine)

The fourth event associated with the coming of our Lord will come at the conclusion of the battle of Armageddon and after the salvation of the nation of Israel: *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had*

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

*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* (Revelation 19:20-21).

At about the same time that the false prophet and the antichrist are cast into the lake of fire, Satan will be bound for one thousand years. Both of these events are essential to the establishment of the Kingdom. The antichrist and the false prophet must be judged in the lake of fire to bring the tribulation period to its conclusion, and Satan must be bound and cast into the bottomless pit before the Kingdom age can begin.

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. (Revelation 20:1-3, emphasis mine).

Thus Satan will be bound and will not be allowed to deceive the nations for the entire period of the millennial age. Nevertheless, when he is loosed from the bottomless pit, he will deceive the nations once again (Revelation 20:7-8). This brings us to the next event in our observation of events in close proximity with the coming of our Lord: the judgment of the sheep and the goat nations. This judgment was described by our Lord in His Olivet Discourse. It is an important judgment, because the judgment of the sheep and the goat nations will determine who shall enter into the Kingdom besides the Lord and His saints.

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. (Matthew 25:31-46, emphasis mine)

We have previously discussed this judgment in our chapter on *The Olivet Discourse*. It is not necessary then to go into a detailed discussion of it here, other than to remind the reader that the sheep nations cannot be redeemed people as is commonly taught. They are individuals out of the nations of the world that shall receive a *righteous man's reward* (Matthew 10:41-42). This reward is entrance into the Kingdom age for good works wrought upon the brethren of our Lord. However their entrance into the Kingdom must not be confused with salvation.

Salvation is by God's *grace ... through faith*. It is *not of works, lest any man should boast* (Ephesians 2:8-9). *For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration,*

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

*and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:3-7). Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin (Romans 3:19-20).*

The difficulty in understanding who the sheep nations are arises from the last statement concerning this judgment in the book of Matthew: *And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal (Matthew 25:46).* This is a true statement, but it must be properly understood. The goat nations will be judged immediately upon the return of our Lord to this earth. The consequence of this judgment implies that the goat nations shall be put to death. Therefore at the end of the millennial reign of Christ, when the unsaved of all ages are resurrected, the goat nations will stand before the great white throne judgment and be judged according to their works. After that they shall be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:12-15). Thus, according to our text, they *shall go away into everlasting punishment.*

In contrast with them the sheep nations will enter into the realm of eternal life when they enter into the Kingdom with the Lord and with His saints. They shall enter this realm because they shall have received *a righteous man's reward* for their good works. (*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*) Even so there is a marked difference between the sheep nations and those who actually possess the righteousness of Christ. This difference will be seen at the end of the millennium when the sheep nations will be

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

deceived by Satan. This deception will come despite the fact that they will have lived in a perfect environment for one thousand years. The blessings they will have enjoyed will make no difference to them when Satan is loosed *a little season*. Their deception will be complete. Thus they will join forces with Satan to battle against the Lord and His saints. *And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever* (Revelation 20:7-10, emphasis mine).

We have not included the judgment seat of Christ as a separate event that will occur in proximity to the coming of our Lord, because it seems that the judgment seat of Christ will have a three-part fulfillment. This cannot be proven, but it is suggested by the fact that the first resurrection has three parts (firstfruits, harvest and gleanings). The firstfruits were raised when Christ was raised from the dead (Matthew 27:51-53); the harvest will occur at the end of the church age, when the redeemed of all ages shall be raised from the dead (I Corinthians 15:51-52); and the gleanings will occur during the tribulation (Revelation 7:13-14) and with the salvation of the nation of Israel at the coming of our Lord (Romans 11:25-26; Zechariah 13:8-9). It seems then that each of these groups will be judged at the time of their resurrection so that when the final group is saved and judged, all of the redeemed of all ages will be gathered together to make up

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

the bride of Christ. This brings us then to the sixth and final event that will occur in proximity with the coming of our Lord: the marriage supper of the Lamb.

We have learned that many things that are written together in the prophetic Scriptures may not be fulfilled together. We have seen this principle again and again in our studies of the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Once again it is important to remember this principle so that we do not make an erroneous assumption regarding the timing of the marriage supper of the Lamb. This could be easily done because this marriage is mentioned in the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation just before the description of the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to this earth. Even so this placement is not chronological. We know this because such a placement does not fit the preponderance of the evidence found in the Scriptures. Consequently we have placed it sixth in the list of events associated with the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to this earth to establish His Kingdom.

The marriage supper of the Lamb cannot take place in heaven before the return of our Lord Jesus Christ to this earth, because such a placement would exclude all of the Jewish and Gentile believers of the gleanings from being a part of the bride of Christ. Our studies in the twenty-first chapter of the Revelation have revealed that the bride of Christ is composed of both Jews and Gentiles, and not just those of the church age as has been commonly assumed. We must not forget that the angel said to John, *Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife* (Revelation 21:9). After that the angel showed John *the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God* (Revelation 21:10). When John viewed the new Jerusalem, it had twelve gates named for the twelve tribes of Israel (Revelation 21:12), and it had twelve foundations named for the twelve

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

apostles of the Lamb (Revelation 21:14): and the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life (Revelation 21:24-27, emphasis mine). This last statement requires that the redeemed of all ages constitute the bride of Christ.

Thus our Lord spoke of the marriage supper of the Lamb when He spoke a parable about a man who made a great supper. This parable is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew and in the Gospel of Luke, with minor variations between the two accounts. Matthew refers to the supper as a marriage supper and Luke does not. Even so, in each account of the parable of the great supper, the attitude of the religious crowd in Israel is one of the key factors. They refused the invitation to the supper, offering one lame excuse after another to refuse the servant's invitation. The other key factor is the command to the servant after the original guests refused to come. The master told his servant to invite *the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind* to come to the supper, that it might be furnished with guests:

... A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, *Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse.* The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, *Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.* And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

unto the servant, *Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.* For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper. (Luke 14:16-24, emphasis mine)

This parable, along with its companion in the Gospel of Matthew (22:1-14), is primarily evangelistic in nature. Those who excused themselves from the wedding for one reason or another were the religious zealots in Israel who felt they did not need a Savior. Thus their refusal to come to the supper is a refusal of salvation in Jesus Christ. This is the point of the parable. Consequently the Lord commanded his servant to *Go out quickly into the streets of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind* that the wedding supper might be furnished with guests. This relationship is best illustrated by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Romans, comparing the nation of Israel to the New Testament church:

I say then, *Hath God cast away his people? God forbid.* For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of [Elijah]? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? *I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.*

Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompence unto them: Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

I say then, *Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.* Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; *how much more their fulness?*

For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and

## Events Associated with the Second Coming

might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, *what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?* For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

*Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God:* on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. *And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again.* For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; *that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved:* as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen. (Romans 11:1-36, emphasis mine)

Thus we know that the guests at the wedding in our Lord's parable are not guests in the normal sense of the word. They are those who will make up the bride of Christ, and the servant is the Holy Spirit. This means that the invitation to the wedding supper is the gospel of the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

Therefore before our Lord ascended into heaven He commanded the redeemed of this age to extend His invitation to the wedding to the whole world when He said: *Go ye into all of the*

### Events Associated with the Second Coming

*world, and preach the gospel to every creature.* So once that the final guests are brought to the wedding supper (with the salvation of the nation of Israel at the coming of our Lord) the residents of the new Jerusalem will be complete, and the marriage supper will usher in the millennial reign of Christ with all of His saints.