

Editorial

This issue of Historicism is the second of two whose theme topic is Ezekiel. The first (No.16/Oct88) appeared one year ago and contained papers on Ezek 4, 8-11, and 15.

In this issue there are two papers, drawn respectively from chaps.38-39 and 41. The first ("Ezekiel's Prophecy Against Gog") is an argument against the literalism that is so popular among Evangelicals. One point made in it is that end time prophecies cannot be studied separately from each other. Thus, the paper on Ezek 38-39 (below) should be seen as preparing the way for a later one on Dan 11:40-45 to appear in Historicism No.22/Apr90. If Ezek 38-39 and Dan 11 both describe last events, it is imperative that we develop a hermeneutic which will allow us to see what those prophecies have in common. There is only one second coming and therefore only one set of events to describe. More than this, we must understand those events before they occur.

For the Evangelical, global war is Armageddon and global peace is the millenium. I submit that global peace – if global apostasy is made a precondition for it – is in fact the opposite counterpart of what Evangelicals expect. It is the mechanism by which earth's kings are gathered together "to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon" (Rev 16:16) in order "to make war against the rider on the horse and his army" (Rev 19:19). The Rider on the horse is Christ and when He appears, that is the second coming (see vss.11-18). The gathering referred to above is not geographical in nature. It is a unity of purpose based on opposition to the expressed will of God.

The above two models for last events are radically different from each other, so we can be sure that one of them is wrong. But this fact should be taken as a call to dilligent Bible study rather than being made an excuse for doubt. My burden is that, in doing this study, we use hermeneutical tools broad enough to surround all of what the Holy Spirit says on the topic. Literalism is not one of them.

The second paper in this issue ("A Context for the Sanctuary Terminology of Ezek 41") prepares the way for a series of later studies on the book of Hebrews. During 1992, if Christ has not come, the overall focus of this journal will in fact be shifted from Daniel to Hebrews.

It is interesting to notice that Daniel looks forward in time, while Hebrews looks back to its Old Testament roots. Both books have captured the imagination of Seventh-day Adventists and both illustrate how Scripture is bound together as a unified whole. The Bible is more than the words of God; it is the Word of God. As such we must learn to hear it speak with one voice--and all the more when it speaks concerning last events.

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