

NOT FULFILLED IN CHARACTER OF GOSPEL

Certainly the promises given in these and many similar passages do not refer to this present age. I am amazed to see in a commentary the statement that these prophecies are fulfilled in the character of the Gospel. Truly the Gospel is peaceful in its character. But the character of the Gospel is not the fulfillment of these glorious prophecies of a time of external peace and safety. In the fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian era, when the Roman peace was triumphant almost everywhere and war was temporarily almost unknown, there were writers who in their enthusiasm tried to show that these prophecies were already then fulfilled through the peace that was established in the earth. But the invasions of the barbarians from the north and the outworking of the decadence that was so widespread in the luxurious life of the later Roman empire, soon put an end to all such hopes. The Middle Ages came, with almost universal war and danger, upheaval and turmoil. This prophecy certainly was not then fulfilled. Then the time came in our modern days when arbitration commissions were set up and nations made treaties to settle disagreements by peaceful measures. In 1914 the statement was made by many that a great war would never come again. Arbitration was so firmly established that the nations would never again have a great war. Even as people were talking thus, World War I broke out -- the most universal and destructive war that the world had seen up to that time. No, this prediction has not yet been fulfilled. But God has spoken. We can know that it will come to pass, and that God will establish that time of external peace and safety when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

A UNIVERSAL KINGDOM

We shall glance at some of the evidence for a third feature of this kingdom. It is to be a universal kingdom. The verse that I have just cited brings this out very clearly. "*As the waters cover the sea*" -- there is not a square inch at the bottom of the ocean that does not have water above it. The entire sea is covered with water; and the entire earth, without exception, "*shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord.*" Could the universality of the promised kingdom be made clearer? Psalms 2 and 110 stress this aspect.