

Conclusion

So what is Armageddon? It is a symbolic name for the place of judgement on the nations when Christ returns to establish God's throne. The centre of at least the initial conflict will be Israel. The invader will cover the land, appear triumphant, but will meet his end through Divine intervention. In that day of the battle of God Almighty the people will be delivered by God as they were through Gideon and through Deborah and Barak. The nations will be brought as sheaves into a valley for judgement and the chaff will be dispersed to the winds.

And why should this matter to us? Is this all just an interesting theological by-path of no practical value to us? Certainly not! Principally there

are two reasons why this subject is important to us as the servants of God:

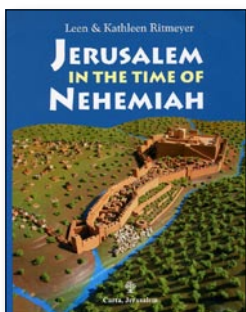
- 1 It gives us an insight as to God's estimation of the kingdom of men, and that should warn us against being seduced by the world around us;
- 2 The signs of the times give us every reason to expect that this day is near, and a clear picture of the judgements about to be unleashed will be a powerful stimulus to us to prepare for that great and terrible day before it is too late.

Let us, then, watch events as they unfold, encouraged that God is in control and that He will bring them to a climax soon when He intervenes to establish His Kingdom.

(Concluded)

A look at Jerusalem after the exile

John Nicholls



Jerusalem in the Time of Nehemiah.

Leen and Kathleen Ritmeyer (2005).

Published by Carta, Jerusalem.

Available from The Christadelphian, 404 Shaftmoor Lane, Birmingham, B28 8SZ.

Price: £13 plus postage.

THIS BOOK is a companion to several other books on Biblical archaeology by Brother and Sister Ritmeyer.¹ It is another excellent book on Jerusalem by the authors, giving an up-to-date summary of the archaeology of the Persian period when the temple was rebuilt and Nehemiah repaired the walls of Jerusalem. The reviewer is not aware of any books covering this period, and even the splendid volume by Hershel Shanks² has little to say about this period of Jerusalem's history.

The book under review has a wealth of illustrations and information, and is a delight to read. It begins with a helpful summary of written sources for the time of Nehemiah, beginning, of course, with the Bible books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther and the contemporary prophets Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. Notes on the Darius Inscription in Behistan, Iran, and on Herodotus,

Xenophon and Diodorus Siculus follow. A history of the period follows, which draws together succinctly the Biblical accounts. There is then an imaginative reconstruction of the period as seen through the eyes of a fictitious character called Ashur, who lived in Tekoa and whose great goal was to play his full part in the rebuilding of the damaged walls of Jerusalem, unlike the nobles from the same area (Neh. 3:5).

The bulk of the book, however, appears under the heading of "An Archaeological Tour of Nehemiah's Jerusalem". This part begins with a large coloured map of the probable course of the wall and the position of the rebuilt temple. This map refers to the gates and parts of the wall, and also to the archaeologists who located them, some in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem after the Six-Day War in June 1967 when this area became part of the State of Israel.

An account then follows of Nehemiah's wall, following the sequence given in Nehemiah 3. Little details given in this chapter are discussed by the Ritmeyers. For example, the Sheep Gate was close to the temple, and its possible identity with

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1. *From Sinai to Jerusalem*, reviewed [Dec. 2004, p. 467](#); *The Ritual of the Temple in the Time of Christ*, reviewed [Jan. 2005, p. 12](#); *Jerusalem in the Year 30 A.D.*, reviewed [Feb. 2006, p. 46](#).
 2. *Jerusalem: an Archaeological Biography*, Random House, 1995.

the Tadi Gate, referred to in the Jewish Mishnah, is considered. Nehemiah says that the high priest and his brethren the priests “sanctified” this gate (v. 1). The Ritmeyers suggest that, as leader of the nation, the high priest gave an example to the people by putting the protection of the temple of God before the defence of his own house. Interesting accounts of many of the structures in Nehemiah 3 follow, with phrases in the chapter being brought to life by recent discoveries.

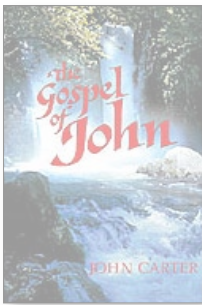
An attractive feature of this book (which can also be said of the other books in the series) is the coloured illustrations, reconstructions, photos and paintings that adorn it, including several of Brother Ritmeyer’s archaeological reconstructions

in full colour. The model of Nehemiah’s Jerusalem was made by students of Heritage College in Adelaide, and was designed and photographed by Brother Ritmeyer. This is not a dry-as-dust archaeology book, but something to share with our children and young people as we try to bring the far-off times of Nehemiah and Ezra to life.

This book is highly recommended to brethren and sisters, to our children and young people, and to our interested friends. Let the final sentence of the book also conclude this review: “It is one of the delights of Jerusalem archaeology that through its stones and dust we can reproduce in our imagination those scenes of Bible times and ‘hear the joy of Jerusalem afar off’ (Neh. 12:43)”.

The fourth Gospel expounded

John Nicholls



***The Gospel of John:
An Analytical Study.***

**John Carter (1943,
reprinted 2006).**

**Available from
The Christadelphian,
404 Shaftmoor Lane,
Birmingham, B28 8SZ .**

www.thechristadelphian.com

Price: £10 plus postage.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN presents us with many more challenges than do the other Gospels, and it is good to see that the excellent volume by Brother John Carter has been reprinted by the Christadelphian Office. Brother Carter’s book is an exposition and has good things to say about all parts of the Gospel written by the beloved apostle.

A new generation of readers might particularly find his comments on some of the ‘hard sayings’ of our Lord helpful when in discussion with interested friends. For example, Trinitarians are fond of quoting the very first verse of this Gospel to support their ideas, but a few moments’ perusal of Brother Carter’s comments soon enables one to demolish their erroneous ideas. On page 13, after citing Grimm-Thayer’s Greek lexicon, he writes:

“This is not free from theological bias; but with that discounted, we learn that bound up with *logos* [the Greek word translated ‘word’

in the first verse] is the thought of wisdom and power in action; there is thought and expression; there is design and execution. As Plummer says: ‘It means not only the spoken word, but the thought expressed by the spoken word; it is the spoken word as expressive of thought’. A word reveals thought: and the word of God is the revelation of His purpose. With Him is power to perform, and therefore there is involved the exercise of the energy by God for the fulfilling of His will”.

He goes on to say on the same page:

“Verses 2-13 are a parenthesis—a literary feature of this gospel. Passing over the parenthesis, we read, ‘And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth’ (verse 14). In other words, the Divine purpose unfolded at the beginning is being fulfilled in the manifestation of God in Jesus Christ. But the significance of verse 14 can only be fully appreciated when the thoughts developed in the parenthesis have been examined”.

This helpful book is recommended to a new generation of readers so that they can be helped to have a greater appreciation of the one who said, “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you” (15:12-14).