

The Berean Christadelphian

A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the exposition and defence of the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints, with the object of helping to make ready a People prepared for the coming of the Lord. Opposed to the unscriptural teachings of the papal and protestant churches of the world.

Edited and Published by:
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“They received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many believed.”—Acts 17: 11.

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We are anxious to send the Berean FREE to any desiring it that way. Please do not hesitate to request it. If you know of any who might like it, please send us their names.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

NEWPORT, Mon., England—3 Constance St.—Memorial 10:30 a.m.

Greetings in Jesus' Name!

We have enjoyed the company around the table of the Lord for a few Sundays of bro. Jim Truelove of Richard, Sask., who has helped us in the understanding of the fight for the purity of the Faith on the American continent, and has exhorted us at the memorial meeting.

It is in such times as this that we realize that we are not alone in our fight for the Truth but that others of like mind, though so far away, are near together in the same bonds of the covenant—fighting the same fight of Faith, living in the same hope of a part in the Kingdom of God, praying that we may be found acceptable at the judgment seat of the Master.

We send the united love of the few in Newport to the Brotherhood throughout the world. May God bless us all, and keep us in His Way to the Kingdom.

Your brother in Christ,

—D. K. Williams

* * *

VANCOUVER, B.C.—8091 Selkirk, Vancouver 14—Memorial 12 noon.

THIS ecclesia consists of bro. Ralph N. Hobkirk, sister Mary Newton and sis, Henrietta Randell. The address given above is the home of sister Randell, where we meet each Sunday at twelve noon.

On Jan. 12 we had the pleasure of the company of bro. & sis. Arthur Tilling, bro. & sis. David Burnett and sis. Tilling Sr., all of Portland, Oregon. Bro. Burnett gave us a stimulating exhortation on the subject of "Love." It gives us a great uplift when any brother or sister from out-of-town pays us a visit.

—bro. R. N. Hobkirk

California Fraternal Gathering

Dear brethren and sisters:

Greetings in Jesus' Name.

The Southern California ecclesia has decided, if the Lord will, to hold a Fraternal Gathering on Nov. 27, 28 and 29, 1964. The days which are left to us are full of evil and temptation, and all endeavours to strengthen our minds and bring us closer knit together in the bonds of the Truth are necessary for our eternal salvation.

The committee for the Gathering are: bro. John Randell, chairman; bro. Ellis Higham, secretary; bro. Paul Sharp, treasurer; sis. Beth Higham, accommodations.

The Brotherhood is cordially invited. Please address all correspondence to: bro. Ellis Higham, Apt. 2, 1729 Raymond Hill Rd., South Pasadena, Calif. 91030.

1964 Fraternal Gatherings

(If the Lord Will)

HYE, Texas: July 27 to August 2

Write: Bro. C. Banta, 815 Boston Ave., Deer Park, Tex., 77536

TORONTO: October 10 & 11

Write: Bro. G. Gibson, 294 Glebeholme Blvd., Toronto 6, Ont., Can.

EDITORIAL

Perilous Times Are Here

"Many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray. And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold"—Matt. 24:11-12 RV

AS long as we live in the world—although we are not of it—we are subject to many things that afflict the human race. In the days of Jacob, it was a famine that caused his sons to go down into Egypt to buy corn. Food was so scarce, Jacob feared that they would all die. Little did he realize what great blessing was in store for them when the days of suffering came to an end.

If we look at all the suffering that is in the world, especially that which has come upon us, we are apt to become discouraged, and feel that it is more than we are able to bear.

Should such a state of mind develop within us, it is our imperative duty to pause and think, and refresh ourselves by reviewing the lives of such men as Joseph, David and Paul.

Follow Joseph and observe him when only 17 years of age. Look at the anguish that comes up in his face when his brethren pounce on him, and push him down into a deep pit. Watch him as he is taken up and sold into slavery. For many days, he travelled with his captors, not knowing what was ahead of him. Finally, think of his days of imprisonment in Egypt.

Take the case of David, during the time in which he was persecuted by Saul. For many months, he was a fugitive living in dens and caves of the earth, while Saul pursued him. David's anxiety became so great that he almost gave up in despair, and said:

"I shall now perish by the hand of Saul."

Last of all, we look at the apostle Paul. If we would know how he suffered, all we have to do is look at the 11th chapter of 2 Corinthians. Think of it! Five times he was given thirty-nine strokes of the lash; three times he was beaten with rods; and once he was stoned.

These were terrible, barbarous forms of punishment, and brought cruel and intense suffering upon the victims. But in spite of all the brutal affliction through which Paul passed, he was able to say—

"I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are **not worthy to be compared** with the glory which shall be revealed in us"—Rom. 8:18.

* * *

ALTHOUGH there is much suffering and sorrow in this life, we must remember that if we are faithful we stand related to the glory to be revealed when Jesus returns to take unto himself his kingdom. It is a glorious future that will be free from evil—a future of glory and everlasting joy, for—

"The earth shall be **FILLED** with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas."

That is not a figurative form of speech; it is a plain literal fact. To emphasize it, here is a beautiful word-picture given to us by Isaiah in 51:11—

“The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and **everlasting joy** shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.”

That is only a brief insight into the glorious future that awaits those who love and serve the Lord in truth. Do we realize the greatness, the beauty, the radiance, the splendour, the MAGNIFICENCE of the mental picture the Bible unfolds before us?

The fact is, our ability to comprehend this dazzling picture is sadly limited, for our minds are incapable of the penetrating perception required. Quoting from Isaiah, Paul explains this in 1 Cor. 2:9—

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

* * *

AS WE look abroad over the Christadelphian world, it almost breaks our heart to see so much indifference and laxity regarding the things of the Truth. Surely it is a time of warning, counsel and exhortation! A time to warn against unfaithfulness, and a strong appeal for diligence in our profession of faith is required in each one of us.

It is our conviction that one of the outstanding reasons for so much indifference and laxity, is because too many are taking on the Name of Christ who do not possess a thorough knowledge, belief, and appreciation of the first principles of the oracles of God. This is a great misfortune to both themselves and the group they enter. When they come in contact with erroneous teaching, they are unable to discern it, and become easy victims to those who will distort the Truth.

If we look back from sixty to eighty years ago in the records of the Christadelphian body, and compare them with the worldly and "scientific" grandiloquence that characterizes some of the writings that appear in magazines today, we will discover that many have lost the divine fire and transforming power of the Gospel and have drifted into a form of godliness that exhibits very little difference from the so-called Christian religions.

We realize that this is a strong statement to make, but we are certain it is true, and feel duty-bound to proclaim it. If any are in doubt, all they have to do is search and read for themselves.

That we are living in an age when the Lord can be expected at any time is an unshaken conviction. One of Paul's prophetic statements concerning this period is—

"That in the last days perilous times shall come."

That is, times of stress and subtle dangers. If we look abroad in the earth, and consider well the unrest that exists, surely we must realize that we are in that period. With the coming of the Lord so near at hand, we should stand ready and eager to—

"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise."

But are we? Are we wholeheartedly in the Truth, or have we lost our first love so that our religion has become like that of Christendom—just a place to go to on Sunday?

We are not eager to enter His Kingdom if we are not eager to attend all meetings for study and worship, and mutual strengthening at the present time.

Do our habits, and way of living, cause our neighbours and business associates to realize that we live strangely different from other people?

These are reasonable and sensible questions to ask ourselves, for is it not far better to bend every effort to "make our calling and election sure," than to have all that the world can offer, or to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and then discover, when Jesus comes, that we have lost a place in the Kingdom?

What are the reasons for the present saddening conditions? The reasons are numerous, but basically the same, and have their foundation as indicated by Jesus in Matt. 24:12—

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of (the) many shall wax cold."

Jesus speaks of the last days as being a time when many who were once faithful will be found at his coming to be "eating and drinking with the drunken." What does this mean? One brother has summed it up in this manner;

"It is so easy in these prosperous days to be carried away by the intoxication of the present—to eat and drink with the drunken—not only by the world's endlessly increasing pleasures and entertainments, but also by the pressure of daily work and the endless complications of modern life.

"Above all, perhaps, it speaks of a state of confusion and intoxication—having the senses dulled and blurred—losing the clear distinction of the Truth—the fading of the recognition of the urgency of a clear, firm stand, a general lowering of the standard and burial of differences and general amalgamation—loss of the sense of the importance of clear separation from error."

The future holds for us either success or failure. Therefore let us watch and be sober, for the danger that faces us is as great as at any time in the past and we believe even more so. In fact, danger is constant, and we must be on the alert every day.

Under no circumstances should we trust ourselves in deciding how we should walk. The word of God must be our guide for—

"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY

TO MAKE the communities of Christ's brethren effective for their objects, Christ, by the Spirit, appointed and qualified a variety of officials, in the first century, whom Paul enumerates as Apostles, Prophets, Teachers. To these were given the ability to work miracles, gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversity of tongues. Their appointment by the Spirit made them the responsible overseers of the one body, whom the members were bound to obey.

This ministration of the Spirit, and this presence of divine authority in the ecclesias, continued during the days of the apostles, and the generation next ensuing. After that, an apostasy arose in the apostolic community, after the analogy of the case of Israel, in their first settlement of Canaan; who—

"Served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that He did for Israel" (Judges 2:7).

The apostasy prevailed more and more, as the Apostles, by the spirit, predicted would be the case (2 Tim. 4:1-4; 2:17), until all trace of primitive truth disappeared, and the spirit of the Lord was withdrawn from all association with an empty Christian name. Whatever genuine profession may have existed since then, has not been honoured by a return of the Spirit's witnessing and governing presence.

—**Ecclesial Guide**

The Man of Sin

“Who exalteth himself above all that is called God, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God”—2 Thess. 2

By **BROTHER JOHN THOMAS**

The Dragon, the Old Serpent, surnamed the Devil and Satan, being representative of Sin in its imperial constitution, as manifested in the past, present, and future, upon "the Habitable," or Roman territory; the Man of Sin is that dynasty—

"Whose coming was after the energy of the Adversary with all power, and tokens, and prodigies of falsehood, and with all the deceit of iniquity in them that perish"

(2 Thess. 2:9-10).

This is what he was in his coming, or presence. The power is styled, "the Man of Sin," not because it is to be found in only one man, but because it is sin pre-eminently incarnate in an order of men. This order occupying one throne, was to "be revealed" out of an apostasy from the original apostolic faith: but before its presence could be manifested, a certain obstacle was to "be taken out of the way."

No order of men such as the apostle describes, could make its appearance upon the territory of the Roman Dragon, so long as the constitution of the empire continued pagan. This, then, was the obstacle to be removed. While it continued, the elements of the new power were at work in the Christian body; but incapable of the exercise of political authority.

These elements are collectively styled "the Mystery of Iniquity," the open manifestation of which was withheld for a time.

When the "Red" or pagan aspect of the Dragon was changed for the "Catholic," by the victories of Constantine, the opposing power was removed. In fact, the Adversary, or Satan, now a professor of Christianity, took "the Mystery of Iniquity" under his patronage; and as he found paganism no longer fit for the contest against the apostolic Faith, he determined to change his weapon, and to fight it with the Apostasy in the name of Christ.

Hence, the first thing he did was to impose this Apostasy on the world as its religion. **He married it to the state, and established it by law.**

The National Establishment, as it now became, assumed the character of "Mother Church"; and the community in Old Rome, with its bishop now converted into the chief magistrate of the city at its head, claimed to be mistress of all churches.

The Apostasy being united to Satan, became the open enemy of God, and the worse-than-pagan persecutor of His Truth. Its name is Catholic; and since the division of the Dragon territory into east and west, and the great schism about image-worship, it is surnamed Greek Catholic, and Roman Catholic.

* * *

THE undivided Catholic Apostasy in its first establishment is represented in the Apocalypse by—

"A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars" (Rev. 12:1).

This woman, after nine months of years, or "a set time," and not long before she was clothed with the imperial robes, was "pained to be delivered" of her child, which had been conceived in her by sin.

As the betrothed of the Second Adam, the Serpent had beguiled her, and had corrupted her mind from the simplicity that is in Christ. Part of her body had embraced another Jesus, another Spirit, and another Gospel (2 Cor. 11:2-4); by which they were so corrupted that they were prepared to take the sword; declare for the first military chieftain, whose anti-pagan ambition of supreme power should induce him to embrace their cause; and to turn Christianity into a State Religion.

This party found a semi-pagan suited to their purpose in Constantine, surnamed "the Great." When he avowed himself their champion, all the power of Old Serpent was brought to bear against him and his confederates. They fought; and victory perched upon the standard of the Cross, now become "the mark" of the Apostasy (Rev. 13:17).

Constantine was the Man-child of Sin who began that iron-rule which, in the name of Christianity, has soaked the dust of the earth with the best and noblest blood of its inhabitants.

He set himself up as the arbiter of faith, and the corrector of heretics; and though pretending to believe, yet refusing to be immersed till within three days of his death, that he might commit all the sins he would be likely to do before he was baptized for remission of sins—yet he is belauded by ecclesiastics as a great and pious Christian.

* * *

WHAT Constantine began, his successors on the Dragon throne, Julian excepted, perfected. For the Bishop of Old Rome, they conceived an especial veneration and regard; seeing that he was more of a hypocrite, and as much of a serpent, as themselves. They energized him with all power, and set him up as the Supreme Pontiff of the world. This "God upon earth," whom their pagan predecessors knew not, they—

"Honoured with gold, with silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things."

A humble bishop of an obscure society in Rome, they acknowledged as a god and increased with glory (v. 39), so that "by the energy of Satan with power" the dominion founded by the Man-child of the apostasy was matured; and at length possessed by the Roman bishop as the full-grown Man of Sin.

The presence of the Man of Sin in Rome for upwards of twelve centuries past may be determined by Paul's description of him. **If we find an order of men there (in Rome) answering the character recorded against them, we may KNOW that the Man of Sin has been revealed.** He describes him as one—

"Who opposes and exalts himself above every one called a god, or an object of veneration; so that he sits in the temple of the god as a god, exhibiting himself that he is a god"

(2 Thess. 2:4).

This in few words is highly descriptive of the Popes. "God" in the passage signifies a ruler of whatever kind; for "god" in the Scriptures is applied to angels, magistrates, and the whole nation of Israel; as—

"I said, ye are gods; but ye shall die as one of the princes" (Psa. 82:6-7).

And (Psa. 97:7)—

"Worship him, ye gods."

—the former being addressed to Israel; the latter, to the angels concerning Jesus. The "temple of the god" is St. Peter's at Rome.

Now, the history of the Papacy shows the applicability of the description to the Popes, and to them exclusively. They have systematically opposed and exalted themselves above every ruler, whether emperors or kings, and above all bishops and priests; so that they have sat in St. Peter's as gods, exhibiting themselves thus, because they claim to be gods upon earth.

The incarnate devilism of these blasphemers of God's Name, and of His people (Rev. 13:6, 7; 18:24), and murders of His saints, **cannot be surpassed by any power that could possibly arise.**

They are essentially sin corporealized in human shape; and therefore most emphatically the order of the Man of Sin; as "the Holy, Apostolic, and Roman Catholic Church" is the "Mother of Harlots, and of all the abominations of the earth".

Answers to Bible Questions

By BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

Worldly Societies and Our High Calling

QUESTION: *"Is it right for brethren to join the Good Templars? It is a good cause, and we think it might lead to our lending them books on the Truth."*

ANSWER: "It is sufficient for the disciple that he be as his master." When we can imagine the Lord presiding at a Good Templars' meeting, it will be time to discuss whether his brethren should be members.

The calling to which brethren are called leaves no room for such a thing.

They are called to "set their affections" on Christ and all his affairs (Col. 3:1-4); to give themselves **wholly** to them (1 Tim. 4:15) to **always** abound in the work of the Lord (1 Cor. 15: 58); to be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14); to have **no** friendship with the world, which is the enemy of God (Jas. 4:4; 1 John 2:15).

Now, to join with Good Templarism, or any other worldly-ism, is to unite with the world in bonds of a bootless and godless enterprise. It is bootless, because the world can never attain the "good" it seeks, but must ever find all its efforts end in "vanity and vexation of spirit."

It is godless, because God is not the basis of operations, or the source of hope in the case. It is a human invention, a fig-leaf contrivance; a "clubbing" together of mortals to work out "good" on their foundation by their own arrangements.

It is all very well for those who know not God and stand not in Christ; but for such as have accepted God's plan and laid hold of His work in Christ, it is a **degradation not to be thought of**. For such an one to become a member of any such worldly organization, is almost like a case of putting the hand to the plow and looking back.

God demands our supreme and exclusive allegiance. Alliance with the world is a dangerous thing. Under the specious deception of taking part in "a good cause," a saint is insensibly drawn into fellowship with the ungodly, and through their friendship and intercourse becomes inoculated in their principles, and cooled and deadened towards the things of the spirit, which are very unpopular in all worldly societies.

Let the dead attend to the dead; let the dead wash the dead; let the dead dress the dead and make them comfortable, and at last bury the dead; but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Do not go off your ground as a brother of Christ and a Son of God to do God's work. If books cannot be lent without joining an association of sinners, let the books stay home.

"Do not do evil that good may come."

This is a hard saying, perhaps. God's ways have always been difficult and "narrow" to such as are after the flesh; but "they are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge." (Prov. 8:9)—R.R., 1873.

* * *

Gog, Prince of Rosh

QUESTION: *'Where does Dr. Thomas find the word 'Rosh' in Ezek. 38. In the English version the words are 'Chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.' Dr. Thomas makes this: 'Rosh, prince of Meshech and Tubal.' Is this word Rosh in the original?'*

ANSWER: Yes. "Rosh" is in the original Hebrew. It may be asked how, then, have King James' translators omitted it? Answer: They have not omitted it, they have translated it. "Rosh" means "chief"; but it is a proper name as well; and the question is, should it be dealt with as a proper name or translated according to its meaning when used as a generic term?

We are aided in this matter by the Greek translation of the Old Testament, made over two centuries before Christ, by order of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, and known as the Septuagint. The seventy Jewish translators employed by Ptolemy to translate the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek were more likely (living 2000 years ago) to know how to treat the word than King James' English translators, only 300 years ago. Now, they have treated it as a proper name, transferred the name Rosh, untranslated into the Greek, along with Meshech and Tubal.

A parallel case could be imagined in the case of Greenland. In our day, this is the name of a country, but it also means any land that is green.

Now, suppose, two hundred years hence, seventy Englishmen were to translate into French an English book in which this name should occur, they would deal with it as a proper name, and transfer it untranslated; but suppose that, fourteen hundred years after this, seventy Hottentots were to make a translation of the same English book into their language, they would simply see the words "green" and "land" and translate them into the equivalent Hottentot terms.

The consequence would be, that Hottentot readers would be led to suppose that it meant any land that was green, instead of a particular country known by that name. The French translation, fourteen centuries older than their own, would show it was a proper name, and this is what Ptolemy's Greek translation does for Rosh.—R.R., 1873

* * *

"Ascending Up Where He Was Before"

QUESTION: *"Does John 6:62 refer to the resurrection or ascension of Christ? If to the ascension, what does the 'where he was before' mean?"*

ANSWER: The context shows conclusively that the reference is to the ascension. Jesus said:

"I came down from heaven" (vs. 38, 41).

Upon which the Jews remarked:

"Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven . . . and that a man, to live for ever must eat of him?"

(vs. 42, 52, etc.).

Upon this we are told (v. 60) that many of his disciples murmured, saying—

"This is an hard saying, who can hear it?"

On this Jesus makes use of the words referred to in the question above, which amount to this—

"You may doubt what I say, but you will see evidence of it in my re-ascension to heaven from which I have come."

The sense in which he had "come from heaven" is indicated in the explanation which he immediately condescends to make to his offended disciples—

"It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing";
As much as to say—

"My reference is to the Spirit whose incarnation I am by the descent thereof upon Mary (Luke 1:32; John 1:14), and not to myself as a man born of the seed of David according to the flesh."

After his resurrection, Jesus was changed to a spirit, or "justified in spirit," to use Paul's expression (1 Tim. 3:16), becoming "the Lord the spirit," (2 Cor. 3:17), a quickening spirit (1 Cor. 15:45).

Hence, in his ascension, the Spirit ascended where he was before the descent at the two stages of conception and baptism, but taking with it, in the ascent, the character and experience of "the Man Christ Jesus" as an high priest touched with the feeling of our infirmities, who "learned obedience by the things which he suffered" — (Heb. 4:15; 5:8). — R.R., 1873.

* * *

"From Such Withdraw Thyself"

QUESTION: "*You say we should withdraw ourselves from disobedient believers. Does not this involve judging them? How do you reconcile this with Paul's words: 'Who art thou that judgest another's servant'?*"

ANSWER: It is a rule in the interpretation of all consistent documents, that no construction is to be put on one part that destroys the sense of another, if this rule is ever to be applied, surely it is in the understanding of Paul. Now, though Paul has said—

"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand" (Rom. 14:4).

—we are not to understand his words in a sense that would forbid us to obey his commandment two chapters further on in the same letter, where, describing a certain class, he says, "Avoid them" (Rom. 16:17).

And again (1 Cor. 5:68)—

"Put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

(See also 2 Thess. 3:16; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; Tit. 3:10; 2 John 9-10).

Paul, in Rom. 14:4, is not inconsistent with Paul in these other places. In Rom. 14:4, as the context shows, he has before his mind an obedient servant of Christ, who has a weakness on the subject of herbs versus animal food, on which we have no guidance by Christ's law.

In such a matter, "judgment" by fellow-believers would obviously be presumptuous. It is an "untaught" matter: and we have no authority to be wise above what is written. Let those who have a weakness for a particular sort of food be indulged in brotherly love.

But the case is very different when a brother walks in open disobedience of what is commanded.—R.R., 1873.

This World Wiser Than Children of Light

"The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light"—Jesus

THE CHILDREN of this world being deeply concerned with the things of this life, the "things that are seen" constitute their chief, if not their only, interest and ambition. This being so, the wise of this world devote the most of their time and energies toward procuring the things which they desire.

They know that no business venture, no enterprise or occupation can succeed to any great extent unless they put all they have into its accomplishment.

But how inconsistent it is that so many expect to receive a reward greater than any ever dreamed of by "the children of this age," **though they give but the merest fraction of their time, energies and talents toward making "their calling and election sure"!**

The Lord Jesus had much to say about putting our light under a bushel, burying our talents in the ground, and looking back after putting our hands to the plow. Likewise, the Apostle Paul shows the inconsistency of children of light walking as if they were in darkness—

"For ye were sometime's darkness, but now ye are light in the Lord; walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8).

Let us examine ourselves. **Are we showing less interest and effort in obtaining the true riches than the world exhibits in their quest for the things that perish?** True, we may not be as wise in the things of this life as the wise of this world, but if we are in the light, then we ought to act that way—not as if we were still in darkness. —O.B.

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Revelation: Divine Key to History

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things written therein: for the time is at hand"—Rev. 1:3

THE "Revelation" (the last book in our Bible) is a sealed mystery to most people. It is a book that requires study, but so does the whole of Scripture. The whole Scripture must be understood to understand this book, for they are a unit.

As the Revelation is the "Divine Key to the World's History and Future," so the records, teachings and prophecies that go before in our Bible are the key to what would otherwise be the unexplained terms of this last portion. Were it alone, we doubt whether any man would be able to cross its threshold with any certainty.

The rudiments of any subject must first be grasped with some amount of understanding before the deeper things can be explored.

* * *

THE reason we open the subject this way is two-fold: to offer an explanation why the Revelation is such a dark book to so many professing "christians"—and to add our most earnest plea for a study of ALL the Scriptures, for this course is the ONLY hope of salvation.

The Scriptures are not understood generally in Christendom, which is astray from their contained Truth, lacking in comprehension of God's purpose and promises, through a misconception of what is the simple "**Gospel of the Kingdom of God**"—the **KEY** to the whole divine message.

This is because of a greater attention to tradition than Truth—the following of men who are themselves in darkness. For instance, my Bible, (and I suppose most others) has as heading for this part "The Revelation of St. John the Divine." Now, do not be deceived by the "saint" and the "divine." They have been added by a misguided hand and are not part of the original.

* * *

Chapter 1

THE first words are (Rev. 1:1):

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John."

A most important introduction, containing basic facts we must well grasp and retain in mind—

1. It was God-given.
2. It was for his servants who know the first principles of his truth.
3. It speaks of the future—things that were to happen, beginning soon after the time of writing.

It is clearly, therefore, a divinely-revealed prophecy to instruct and guide God's people. If our interpretation be contrary to this, we are in the wrong and in danger.

As there is here in the first chapter (v.3) a blessing pronounced on those who read and hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein—so later in the last chapter (vs. 18-19) a curse is levelled at those who "add to" or "take away" from the words of the book of this prophecy. These combined facts should lead us to view this wonderful message with intense interest, and to study it with diligence, reverence and prayer.

The New Testament was written in Greek and the original of this word "Revelation" is "Apocalypse." You will find it used in some translations (for example, the Diaglott).

It means "revealing" in the sense of "a disclosure, an opening up, an uncovering"; also "an enlightening and manifestation."

This word "Apocalypse" is used in the New Testament 18 times, 13 by the Apostle Paul. It is principally connected with the winding up of earth's affairs, in the judgments which will both bring the world into subjection to God's Son, Jesus Christ, and reveal who are his (the Sons of the Deity) at a time when he himself shall be revealed in power and great glory (2 Thess. 1:7-8).

This time is the burden of many an Old Testament prophecy: "The time of the end" —"The end of the days"—"The latter days"—"The last days."

* * *

THE message in Apocalypse we note, was of "things shortly to come to pass" (v.1). And as its consummation was the return of the Lord, it is therefore, in substance, foretold history of the whole time between those two points.

It is towards the end of the first century, then (the time when it was given), that we must look for the **commencement** of the unfolding, and the **end**, a time yet future, when—

"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15).

It follows a specific course, in harmony with its object of instructing and guiding the people of God. It is from God's point of view. It ignores much that men consider important in history because it has no bearing on God's purpose. The main or distinguishing features of history are given, with interspersed details as they affect God's people, who are variously called—

"The Saints," "They that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus," "the witnesses for Jesus," the "persecuted Woman," "his servants"—and later, "The Holy City," "The Bride," "the Lamb's Wife," etc.

By this means could those servants approximate their position in apocalyptic time, identify the great system of error which was to arise, remain confirmed in their faith in the immutable counsel of God and take comfort in the irrefragable certainty of the end prophesied—their salvation.

We repeat, from v. 1, that it was verily given to "show unto his SERVANTS these things, and he sent and SIGNIFIED it by the angel unto John"—that is, he revealed it by means of sign and symbol, as we see.

Chapters 2 & 3

IT also seems reasonable to find (as a sort of preface) letters to certain representative churches, or ecclesias, in words of warning, exhortation and promise. These are in chapters 2 and 3.

* * *

Chapter 4

COMMENCING chapter 4 is the assurance (v. 1) repeated—

"I will show thee things which must be hereafter."

—indicating that at this point the specifically prophetic portion begins, though there is clearly a symbolic foreshadowing of the history of the professed believers in the successive messages to the seven ecclesias in chaps. 2 & 3.

Chapter 4 reminds us that the prophecy is broken up by what seem to be interpolations—**previews**, in a way—that is, foreshadowed final results of the things afterwards unfolded—previews of the glorified state in the Kingdom of God and certain features related to the end and the reward of those servants.

Chapter 5

THE introduction to the history is in chapter 5, where it is represented as contained in a 7-sealed scroll, which Jesus alone was able to open, no other being found worthy. There he is also called (vs. 5-6)—

"The Lion of the Tribe of Judah"—"The Root of David" —"The Lamb that had been slain."

He himself said, after his death and resurrection (Matt. 28:18)—

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

* * *

THIS scroll he was given is the scroll of the future, sealed up for man until Jesus prevailed to open the Way, and fulfil the glorious divine Purpose. Each seal being broken (in consecutive order), a particular section of history signified thereon, was revealed.

At the breaking of the 7th Seal, 7 TRUMPETS commence to sound, each denoting a phase of itself. And during the sounding of the 7th Trumpet, 7 VIALS of the wrath of God are poured out. And in the final phase (the 7th Vial), 7 THUNDERS "uttered their voices."

The whole series—Seals, Trumpets, Vials, Thunders—conclude together. At the sounding of the 7th Trumpet it was said (Rev. 11:15)—

"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ."

And as the 7th **Vial** was poured out, it was said— "IT IS DONE!"

* * *

Regarding the opening of the scroll, as stated, we look to John's day, for he was told (Rev. 1:19)—

"Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which ARE, and the things which shall be hereafter."

The time was approximately 1850 years ago, A.D. 96. John tells us he was in the Isle called Patmos (1:9) which is a little island of the Grecian Archipelago in the Aegean Sea. It is just off the coast of Asia Minor, the nearest large city on the mainland being Ephesus.

He was there in probable banishment by one of the Roman Emperors on account of his faith, for he says it was (v. 9)—

"For the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus."

Rome was in power, with dominion over the known habitable, and she it is, in both ecclesiastical and political manifestation, who stands opposed to God's people. The whole struggle, from beginning to end, is Rome vs. Zion. When one is up the other is down. They are mutually and eternally antagonistic, Zion finally triumphs whilst Rome is destroyed.

* * *

WE will briefly examine the symbols, one by one, as the seals are broken, noting that the first 4 seals reveal riders on 4 horses of different colours—the riders also having different characteristics.

As all nations have national symbols (many of them animals), it has been established that the horse was one of those chosen by Rome.

Pliny, the Roman historian is quoted on this. The horse is an age-old symbol of war and conquest, and this was pre-eminently the Roman characteristic.

The colours of these horses agree with, and represent in successive order, the four states or conditions enjoyed or suffered by the body politic of Rome, immediately following the prophecy (from A.D. 96, to A.D. 324) and the riders each represent a class of agents who controlled, (or affected the direction of things) to such an extent that these conditions were brought about.

Chap. 6:2—the 1st Seal

THE white horse of the first rider clearly indicates the peaceful time that obtained to approximately A.D. 180. It is described by Gibbon ("Decline & Fall of Roman Empire") as—

"An epoch in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was the most happy and prosperous."

During this time, the Gospel message spread throughout the Empire, symbolized by the peaceful and victorious mission of the rider with the bow (only—no arrows), who—

"Went forth conquering and to conquer."

While this arrowless bowman symbol applies particularly to this period, in a larger sense his mission continued throughout those 4 seals, and in its fullest application to the entire 7-sealed Scroll period. He represents that class for whom all things exist and whose work is the only meaningful work on earth.

Chap. 6:4—the 2nd Seal

THAT this "peace" was the prevailing mark of the period, is endorsed by the mission of the 2nd rider who had power—

"To **take** peace FROM the earth."

No wonder his horse was **red**, for it was also given—

"That they should kill one another."

The "great sword" he held was rather, in the original, an assassin's weapon (**machaira**—a large dagger). This is a strikingly fitting symbol.

Bloodshed, (civil war), was the order of the day. The throne went to the highest bidder, the strongest, or the favourite of the moment. In 31 years, 5 emperors out of 6 were assassinated.

Chap. 6:5—the 3rd Seal

THERE could only be one result from this lack of responsibility in the government and care for the commonwealth, but it was further aggravated by fearful taxation, the chief first offender being Caracalla, A.D. 212-217, whose exactions were in the nature of plunder, and the blackness of mourning and woe mantled the empire, fittingly portrayed by a **black** horse.

The rider on this horse had a pair of balances in his hand, and this, coupled with the figures of v. 6, indicated a rigid and enormous impost on staple foods, leading to famine, and subsequent pestilence.

Chap. 6:7—the 4th Seal

CONDITIONS took on the "chlorus," **pale-green**, deathly colour of the 4th horse, whose rider was fitly termed "Death." In addition, assassinations continued. Now, in a matter of 50 years, 39 claimants to the throne met violent deaths.

Pestilence reigned from A.D. 250-265, and in the worst period 5000 per day died in Rome. Half the human race is said to have been thus destroyed in the days of the Death-coloured, Death-ridden horse.

The "beasts of the earth" of v. 8 is an apparent reference to the barbarians, who made raids across the boundaries of empire and spread terror in Central and Western Europe. All nations of natural mankind are portrayed in the Scriptures as beasts, and warlike plundering nations as wild beasts of prey. Death and Hades verily took the reins in this terrible era of human history.

Chap. 6:9—the 5th Seal

THEN occurred one of those historic interludes which introduced the other aspect, the involvement of God's people, the true saints, the pure and faithful Woman. The 5th Seal portrays the persecution and suffering of God's people—the souls under the Altar whose blood cried for vengeance.

Paganism was the national religion. The voice of the Apostles (the Bowman of the 1st Seal) had now in effect—

"Gone out through all the earth."

—and the whole pagan world was shaken to its foundations. Persecution by the "Powers-that-be" was a natural consequence. State paganism was fighting for its life. The persecution by Diocletian at this time, A.D. 284-305, was severe and the slain are reported as crying to God "How long?" under this seal. But paganism need not have feared. It was to triumph and transform "Christianity," as we see in the world's church customs today—Christmas, Easter, Halloween, worship of idols, worship of demons (dead "saints"), immortality of the soul, hell-torments, etc.

Another natural sequel was the actual suppression of the true Christianity and the gain of the false. As the popular view changed, many would vacillate, with especial deference to the power and view of the throne.

Apostasy set in, and in the 4th century, the nominal and popular Christianity was far away from the teachings of the 1st century. Its cause was championed by Constantine the Great, which hastened its political ascendancy in the very period of its spiritual dissolution. Paganism was worsted, but true Christianity became a fugitive woman. The nominal ascended to power. "Christianity" became national but perverted.

Chap. 6:12—the 6th Seal

THE overthrow of Paganism by Constantine, A.D. 312, is now graphically pictured—

"And lo, there was a great earthquake."

Each of the four earthquakes of the Apocalypse (6:12; 8:5; 11:13; 16:18) denote a political cataclysm of a revolutionary nature. This one had strong ecclesiastic features to which a separate set of symbols are given in ch. 12.

Chapter 7

THE 6th Seal completed the Seal Judgments on Pagan Rome. Before the Trumpet-judgments on the Catholic Roman Empire, West and East, there is an interlude of preaching and sealing of the faithful as under the "Bowman" symbol that preceded the judgments of Rome Pagan.

This is symbolized in ch. 7 as the taking "out" (ex) from (now apostate) spiritual Israel of 144,000 faithful.

Like the Bowman symbol, this work carries on right down through to the last days and in the latter half of the chapter we see the "innumerable multitude" of the Redeemed in the white robes of immortal righteousness, holding palms of peace & victory.

Chapter 8

THIS chapter describes the opening of the 7th and last seal, but this contains within itself the 7 trumpets, the 7 vials and the 7 thunders of the end, covering the whole period from the time of Constantine to the Millennial epoch.

At first there was silence for a short period, "about half an hour."

The historian Gibbon again helps with the information that there was a general peace during the last 14 ("about" half of 30) years of Constantine's reign.

It was the calm before the storm that was soon to burst upon the Empire. The barbaric hordes pressing on the borders—the scourge of God against apostate Christendom—could not be much longer restrained by this decadent Western Third of the Empire, and their four main inroads are dreadfully depicted as happening at the signal of the first four trumpets. They were held back by God for the sealing period (see 7:1), but during the time of internal trouble in the latter part of the century, they "prepared themselves to sound" their war-trumpets of disaster (8:6).

The first four Trumpets are called the "Wind Trumpets" because they are the "four winds" of 7:1, temporarily restrained.

These four incursions spelt disaster to Rome and its "Third."

Ch. 8:7 —The 1st Trumpet

AS the third century drew to its close, Alaric and his Gothic hosts burst through like a storm of hail and fire, principally against the forest and grass lands of Western Europe, but he was not satisfied until he had sacked Rome itself (1st capture). He died about A.D. 410.

Ch. 8:8 — The 2nd Trumpet

GENSERIC and the Vandals followed and his exploits were in "the sea"—the Mediterranean. Proceeding through Spain and Gibraltar, he established himself in North Africa, operating from Carthage. He ravaged the coasts of the Mediterranean, destroyed the Roman fleet and took Rome in A.D. 455, (2nd capture). The wanton, senseless destruction his hordes wreaked on Rome have given our language the word "vandalism."

Ch. 8:10 —The 3rd Trumpet

ATTILA with his Huns was the next scourge, falling upon the Alpine lake and river country. Rising like a star, after the Vandal invasion, his course was meteoric as the words imply, and he declined with the suddenness of the picture he fulfilled, dying before Genseric.

Ch. 8:12 —The 4th Trumpet

THE fourth trumpet called for the darkening of the "third" part of the sun, moon and stars—the blotting out of all the ruling powers of this Western Third. So it was. The Herulian Goths took Rome, (3rd capture), and this time the barbarians stayed. Odoacer their king became sole monarch for 14 years. Being assassinated, he was succeeded by Theodoric, king of the Ostragoths, and the Gothic kingdom continued in Rome for about 60 years (The 7th head that was to continue a "short space" between the wounding of the 6th head and its healing — Rev. 13:3; 17:10).

It is recorded that Rome had cast its glamour over the more intelligent barbarians, who recognized the benefit of Roman methods. The government of Theodoric the Goth was essentially Roman in character, but still, the light of Rome was eclipsed for a time. So ended the Western Roman Empire, A.D. 476.

THE three trumpets of woe were to follow (two of them recorded in ch. 9)—events directed one each against the Eastern thirds.

These, (the 5th and 6th trumpets), contain much detail which we cannot go into now. We recommend them to the private study of those who are open to conviction on the application of the symbols. They are very remarkable—perhaps the most strikingly detailed of the whole Revelation.

The historical fulfilment was by the Arabs and the Turks. To note the high points —

Ch. 9:1 — The 5th Trumpet

THE fifth angel sounded and out of the Arabian "abyss" came Mahomet and his followers (the Arab tribes), like a cloud of locusts. But strangely enough, they were **not** to —

"Hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree" (v. 4).

They were directed against a certain class—those who "have not the Seal of God in their foreheads."

It is very remarkable that Abubeker (Commander-in-Chief and successor to Mahomet) did issue exactly such an instruction—to spare palm trees, corn and cattle, directing vengeance only against the "shaven crowns" of the Catholic priesthood who taught a triune God, an abomination to the Saracens. Gibbon records this.

The Saracenic tide, swept over the whole Mid East and North Africa, all of Spain and up into France. Its advance was finally stopped in France in 732 A.D. at the Battle of Tours, one of the turning points of history.

For 300 years the Arab power prevailed—632-932 A.D.—two periods of five months each (vs. 5&10) on the principle of a day for a year. Before and after this prophetic period, the Arabs have always been powerless and divided, as today—but to accomplish His will at this time God gave them unity and strength.

Ch. 9:14—the 6th Trumpet

THE sixth trumpet is an important one to bear in mind, for it loosed the "four angels bound in the great River Euphrates"—an overflowing flood, which was to "dry up" under a later symbolic decree (16:12).

Four waves of Turks (from Eastern Asia) cross the Euphrates from the 11th to 14th Century. Gibbon devoted separate chapters to them: Seljuks, Tartars, Moguls & Ottomans). They were given power to slay in that third which was left—

"For an hour, a day, a month and a year" (v. 15).

On the same day-for-a-year reckoning, this was 391 years—the exact period from the first crossing of the Euphrates in 1062 to the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, another decisive turning-point in history. This was the first major battle decided by the use of gunfire, thus inaugurating the modern era of warfare. Note the remarkable symbols of v. 8—fire, smoke and sulphur.

The Turks held sway over a great part of East Europe (including South Russia) and continued as a great power until the beginning of the 19th Century. When we return to the consideration of the East we will look again at the Euphratean symbol. For now we leave the East to 400 years of increasing Turkish destruction and desolation.

Chapters 10 and 11

This separation of East and West and the added ecclesiastical reference (in which frequently, are featured the fortunes of the faithful) renders the book more difficult to begin with, but when

understood, emphasizes the wonder of the prophecy, the power and knowledge of God, Who (Dan. 4:17)—

"Rules in the Kingdom of men."

—setting up and putting down as He wishes, and—

"Doing all things after the counsel of His Own Will."

Therefore He is able to declare His intentions beforehand, and fulfil them, and show what the movements and reactions of man will be.

The Western history, from the time we left it at the fall of the Western Roman Empire, 476 A.D. (now more ecclesiastic in character) is brought up to date under new symbols.

In the 10th and 11th chapters, we have not only another of those interludes previously mentioned (covering the state of the witnesses for Jesus), but we have it like the others extended through the ages. We find these visions of the end introducing each major phase of the apocalyptic picture.

As could be expected, when (in the time of Constantine) nominal Christianity joined hands with the State, the true would have to separate, and by its witness against the consequent corruption, bring trouble and persecution upon itself. And so it was.

The power of the Bishops of Rome, both by the political concession and by a proud assumption, rose to new heights, and Roman Catholicism was well established, breathing torture and death to all so-called heretics.

The searing tale of the rack and the stake seems familiar to all except the Catholics themselves, a black mark against their priesthood and a disgrace to humanity.

From the time of the Donatist trials in A.D. 312 to the massacre of Bartholomew's Eve in 1572, is a long charge against Papal Rome. This is taken note of in Ch. 11:3, the 1260 days (or years) of witnessing in sackcloth.

In that 11th chapter there is again much wonderful detail. We would only now add what was another culmination—the "great earthquake" of v. 13. The French Revolution was without doubt the greatest world disturbance of its particular kind—its reverberations opening the mind of the masses everywhere to the thought of liberty and equality, freedom from the shackles of despotism and priestcraft. The "dark ages" were passing.

Chapters 12 and 13

THE French Revolution marks the beginning of modern history. The proudest "tenth" of the great Roman city fell, and with its fall the "Holy Roman Empire, the bastion of Papal power, went into rapid decline.

Dating from the seizure of imperial power by Catholicism under Constantine, the politics of Europe have been strongly flavoured with the odor of the Vatican, and eventually produced what was known as "The Holy Roman Empire," in which the Pope and Emperors were both allies and rivals for supreme power. This is noted in the Apocalypse in chapters 12 and 13, and the dual control of Emperor and Pope is symbolized by a beast with (13:11)—

"Two horns like a lamb, but speaking as a dragon,"

—each horn professing lamblike Christianity, but each endeavouring to exercise the dragonic or worldly power of the Old Roman Imperialism.

Vs. 14 to the end are especially descriptive of this false religious system and its rulers. Their pretentious pomposity in the guise of humility—their claims on the bodies and minds of men by an assumed higher knowledge from above—the sign of the cross (the "mark of the Beast")—their death-

dealing proscriptions in the time of their power—the "number of the name"—all fit the image of Latin Catholicism.

Chapter 14

THIS chapter is another vision of the end, portraying by contrast the faithful symbolic 144,000 of the Redeemed who follow the Lamb and are not defiled by the false ecclesiastical women. They have the Father's Name, and not the Name and Mark of the Beast. This chapter foreshadows also the final destruction of the false system.

Chapter 15

THIS speaks of the preparation of the "seven last plagues," which are the "Vials of the wrath of God" leading to the final consummation. We live in the time of the 6th Vial.

Chapter 16

THE vials are poured out. They pick up the thread after the earthquake last mentioned (the French Revolution), and introduce us to the ensuing scourge upon Europe of Napoleon the Great.

Ch. 16:2—The 1st Vial

"And the first went and poured out his vial upon the earth."

The European earth overrun by Napoleon in his many campaigns, towards the end of the 18th Century.

We note throughout the Vials a striking parallelism with the Trumpets, and the scourges of Napoleon in destroying the Holy Roman Empire in the first 4 Vials follow a remarkable parallel with the first 4 Trumpets in destroying the Western Roman Empire.

Ch. 16:3—The 2nd Vial

"And the 2nd angel poured out his vial upon the sea."

The succeeding battles on the sea which headed up in British naval supremacy, early in the 19th Century, throttling European commerce and hastening the collapse of the old order.

Ch. 16:4—The 3rd Vial

"And the third poured out his vial on the rivers and fountains of waters."

The Rhine, Danube, but mainly the Italian lake country that were the next arena of God's judgments, in Napoleon's Italian campaigns—in which he took the Pope a prisoner. Attila's campaigns under the 3rd Trumpet were in the same area, against the same objective.

Ch. 16:8—The 4th Vial

"And the fourth poured out his vial upon the sun."

Napoleon subdued the main ruling powers (particularly that of Austria), thus eclipsing the sun of the Holy Roman Empire and the Papal system, in repeated battles which enhanced the scorching miseries of the time.

Ch. 16:10—The 5th Vial

"And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the Beast."

Rome itself. In 1809, Napoleon arrested the Pope and carried him prisoner to France.

Thereafter, the papal fortunes decayed. The Pope was finally stripped of all temporal power by the liberation of Italy at the time of Garibaldi—1867-1870.

Ch. 16:12—The 6th Vial

"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared."

Returning to this symbol of the Turkish power, we recognize here a prophecy of the decline of this empire, which began about 1820, very gradually losing its outer possessions in the drying up process, from Greece in 1829 to Palestine in 1917. Turkey is now but a tenth of its former size.

Vs. 13-14 indicate that "three spirits like frogs" influence the whole world to war-like preparation. The frog is an ancient symbol of the Franks. From the time of Napoleon French intrigue has caused Europe to maintain the aspect of an armed camp. Others have rather more than followed that lead, and today we have the world in arms.

Is it already prepared for the battle (or war) of "the great day of God Almighty" of which v. 14 speaks—the climax of human history and the end of human rule on earth?

Or will we have an appearance of the peace that is so earnestly sought but never attained? Perhaps a semblance of it, for it is when they shall say "Peace and Safety" that "sudden destruction cometh." The Apostle Paul told the Thessalonian believers (1 Th. 5:2-3)—

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night,
"For when they shall say 'Peace and safety,' then sudden destruction cometh upon them."

But he adds—

"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."

This is the position we wish to be in: Understanding, expecting, watching, ready.

* * *

WE have seen the prophecies fulfilled so far. We are witness that Rome fell into the divided state called for, not only in the Apocalypse but elsewhere in the prophets (Daniel, to wit).

The next Universal Empire is the Kingdom of God.

Such an empire was impossible to Napoleon. It was also impossible to Hitler, and is impossible to Russia. At the right time, God will step in. He has a "controversy with the nations," and it can only be settled in fire and blood.

Chapter 17

THE remainder of the Apocalypse is of future fulfilment, but the end is certain. Chapter 17 assures—

"The judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters" (v.1).

"The 7 heads are 7 mountains on which the woman sitteth" (v.9).

"That great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (v.18).

—modern Babylon—ROME.

Chapter 18

THIS contains the proclamation of her fall—

"And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying,

"Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all" (v.21).

"And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth" (v.24).

Chapter 19

IN vs. 11-16 is shown the coming of God's Son in world judgment—

"In righteousness doth he judge and make war" (v.11).

"He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. He shall rule them with an iron rod" (v.15).

"His name . . . King of Kings and Lord of Lords" (v.16).

Chapter 20

HEREIN is shown the suppression of the power of sin in the earth for 1000 years, constituting the millennial reign of righteousness and peace. This, we all should know, is only possible under immortal, all-wise all-powerful rulers.

In one of the promises contained in those epistles to the churches in the early chapters, Jesus says (Rev. 2:26-27)—

"He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron."

That is what the believer is called to—**rulership with Christ** over a glorified earth. It will be iron rule over the motions of the flesh, but it will be in perfect righteousness and goodness, and blessing toward the thankful and obedient—the absolute equity of perfect knowledge and almighty power—

"There shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

"The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the Spirit of wisdom and understanding.

"He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears, but in righteousness shall he judge.

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:1-9).

Chapters 21 & 22

THE last chapters cover certain events at the end of the millennium: a second judgment and the glorious aftermath—no more death, pain nor sorrow.

We would in conclusion draw special attention to a few of the last verses in ch. 22—

"These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done" (v.6).

"Behold I come quickly: **blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book**" (v.7).

"Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (v.12).

Surely we can all fervently echo the closing words of this book—

"Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus!

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all Amen."

—G. G. Sr., 1945

ARTICLES FOR THE BEREAN

WE would like to have a much greater range of representation in the articles in the Berean. We therefore request all Berean speaking brethren to send in articles. They can be of any nature—exhortations, lectures or addresses on particular subjects. Those who are not speaking brethren could help by forwarding copies of addresses by others in their ecclesia which particularly strike them as desirable for publication. Double-spaced typing is preferred, but not essential.

The Meek Shall Inherit the Earth

"To this man will I look, even to him that is of a poor and contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word"—Isa. 66:2

LET these words, brethren and sisters, penetrate, and sink down deep into our hearts, and enter into our minds and our thoughts. Consider them very seriously, ponder over them, dwell upon them, meditate upon them, "give ourselves wholly unto these things," as they are indeed words of good sound advice.

If we endeavour to follow this pattern, to live our lives accordingly, that is, in meekness, humbleness and of a contrite spirit, we shall enjoy great comfort and satisfaction, and the greatest blessing of all—reap the reward that is set before us, even life-eternal.

Jesus, that beloved Shepherd of the sheep, tells us (Matt. 5:3):

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

How beautiful are the words of our Lord and Saviour! "The poor in spirit" blend in the words of the prophet Isaiah, "To him that is of a poor and contrite spirit."

And further in v. 4—

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."

Thus we see the Master in quoting these words, "they that mourn" conveying and expressing unto us the meaning of the words of the prophet Isaiah again in "of a contrite spirit."

The definition of this word "contrite" is: "broken-hearted for sin; deeply affected with grief and sorrow for sin; humble or penitent."

This immediately brings to our mind such faithful servants of God as the prophets, who were all "of a contrite spirit." We might mention, Moses, David, Job, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and above all our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who was a man of sorrows, (contrite), acquainted with grief—not for his own sins, for he was personally sinless, but in union and fellow-feeling with all his erring and repentant brethren.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" (Isa. 53:4).

In Mark 6:6 we read—

"And he, (that is, Jesus) marvelled"—or was astonished and very sorrowful—"because of their unbelief."

Particular mention could be made at this time of the prophet Jeremiah, who was very much of a "contrite spirit," notably as a lamenting, sorrowful, weeping prophet—sorrowful and weeping due to the great waywardness and sin of the children of Israel, in turning from their God, the only true God, unto wickedness and idol worship.

He continually pleaded with them to repent and turn from their evil ways, and predicted that God would bring about the downfall of Jerusalem, but his words only fell upon deaf ears.

* * *

RETURNING to Matt. 5, we find Jesus declares (v. 5)—

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

How many meek persons can we find in this large universe today? How many even consider meekness a virtue worth striving after? The world glories in the very opposite characteristics.

But the question arises, brethren and sisters, what of conditions in the Household of Faith? How do we stand in relation to these things? Are we meek, humble, mourning, poor, and of a contrite spirit?

Only those who are found thus, who are without spot or blemish, shall inherit the earth or be granted a position in his glorious Kingdom, when our Great Redeemer shall appear to judge each one according as his work shall be.

The Psalmist speaks similar words in Psalm 37:11—

"But the meek shall inherit the earth: and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

Could it in any sense be said there is "abundance of peace" in this untoward generation in which we dwell? The Scriptures reveal, and we see all around us, that, "The whole world lieth in wickedness." Corruption, ungodliness and evil surround us on every side, and there is no peace for him that cometh in or goeth out.

The apostle Paul outlines our position quite clearly in Gal. 5:22-24—

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

"And they that are Christ's have crucified"—put away or destroyed — "the flesh with the affections and lusts."

These three words "meek," "humble" and "contrite" go very much hand in hand together. That is to say, they all contain or convey a similar meaning. "A meek man" is one of a mild temper, gentle, humble, submissive, not easily provoked or irritated.

And if we look upon a "humble man," he would have many of the same characteristics, and he would also be lowly, not proud, arrogant, nor seeking a high and lofty position and great honor and glory. James declares (4:6)—

"God resisteth the proud but giveth grace (or favor) unto the humble."

And in v. 10 he exhorts—

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He shall lift you up."

And the Spirit's counsel through Peter is the same—

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time" (1 Pet. 5:6).

The word "contrite," too, blends in and harmonizes with the word "humble," as in Isa. 57:15—

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, Whose Name is Holy:

"I dwell in the high and holy place with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

This is a vital divine principle, worthy of very serious thought and self-examination. Natural man does not possess these characteristics. Yet those who are to be accepted by God must overcome the flesh and develop these spiritual attributes. This is infinitely more important, and worthy of infinitely more study and effort and practice, than acquiring any of the world's science, learning or skills. **Those** are only for a few short years. **This** is a matter that will determine our eternal destiny.

God's children are those of a broken heart and do mourn at the present time, but such will not always be the case, as the Great Deity will "revive the heart of the contrite ones" through His Beloved Son. Psalm 30:5 promises—

"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

There is much weeping and lamentation during this long night of sorrow, through which we are passing—great distress, great mourning. But we look toward Zion's glad morning, when sorrow and sighing shall flee away, when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, with healing in his beams to comfort the broken-hearted and those that mourn, to those who look for him and love and rejoice in his appearing.

Brethren and sisters, are we truly among those contrite ones of this frame of mind? Are we prepared? That is the vital and all important question.

The world does not live in godly sorrow, neither do they mourn, but very much to the contrary. Though the world is full of misery and fear, men are running to and fro, lovers of pleasure, not lovers of God, eating, drinking, and making merry. But it is only for a little season, and they pass away. The memory of them is forgotten. They are as the beasts that perish.

No doubt they think it strange that we take no part in their activities, and therefore turn upon us, speaking evil of us. Nevertheless our instructions are quite clear. As true brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus, we must, by all means—

"Come out from among them and be ye SEPARATE and TOUCH NOT the unclean thing"
(2 Cor. 6:17).

And all that is of the world, not just part of it, but ALL, is the unclean thing. Let us read what the apostle Peter has to say in this regard (1 Pet. 4:4)—

"Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you."

But we take great comfort in Jesus' words (John 15:18)—

"If the world hate you, you know it hated me also."

So it is we see, that only the meek and humble shall inherit the earth and as a result these shall consist of only a very small few (Luke 12:32)—

"Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

Man to-day seeks all the honor, glory and pride, that he can possibly attain unto, with the highest position and all the money and wealth that go with it. Such is not a meek man, neither is he humble. Only that man who is of a poor and contrite spirit will God accept—

"To this man I will look ..."
—or extend favor to, or grant the reward of immortality, of life that knows no ending—

". . . he that trembleth at My Word."

The meaning conveyed here is to pay strict attention, to fear with all diligence and desire—a great zeal—an unfading and undying love for His Word. And here it is we see, just as the Scripture hath revealed —

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called" (1 Cor. 1:26).

"Wise men after the flesh"—those who attain unto a great knowledge, wisdom and education in worldly affairs, scientists, professors, the mighty and noble—are not the type God can use. There is too much pride, self-satisfaction, glorying in worldly accomplishments and **servivence to worldly judgment and opinion and esteem.**

So the lesson contained herein for us is just this: Ye see your calling brethren, abstain from, forsake these things, seek not worldly honor, glory, pride, pleasure, wealth and position, but rather govern ourselves according to v. 31 of this same chapter—

"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Seek first that wisdom which is from above, for all else is but vanity and pride and vexation of spirit. The Psalmist says (Psa. 147:6)—

"The Lord lifteth up the meek: He casteth the wicked down to the ground."

When we speak of a meek, humble man, our minds at once turn to our beloved Saviour, Jesus Christ, the meekest man that ever trod this earth. There was no guile found in his mouth, neither was there any fault found in him. He calls to us (Matt. 11:28-29)—

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

"Take my yoke upon you and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart"—(of a sad and poor and contrite spirit)—"and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Place much confidence, take great comfort, in these words, brethren and sisters, for **it is the meek that shall inherit the earth**, and receive the crown of life that fadeth not away, the "coronal wreath" of victory.

* * *

WHILE considering this word "meek" we must return for a few moments to the man Moses. According to the infallible Word of the Deity—and His Word is very much infallible, by which is meant to be not capable of error, perfect, reliable and certain, that which is sound, solid and secure, a solid anchor; furthermore, His Word is all-powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword.

According, then, to this most precious Word—

"Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3).

There must have been a good reason for Yahweh making such a statement as this, and if we peruse the life of Moses, we find there was truly a very good reason. It is recorded—

"And the woman conceived, and bore a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months" (Exo. 2:2).

And a little later (v. 10)—

"And she (Pharaoh's daughter) called his name Moses, because 'I drew him out of the water'."

Truly a type of the greater than Moses, the Son of God, in that he was drawn out, delivered out of the deep. Consigned to death by the Gentiles as a man-child of Israel, he was preserved and came forth to newness of life.

It was not the will of the Father, that either he, that is Moses, or Christ, should perish or see corruption. Moses, drawn out, separated, appointed of God, to be a deliverer of His people Israel from Egyptian darkness and bondage.

Again we see the great type in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, in Exo. 3:1. Moses is a keeper of the flock, Christ is also that "Great Shepherd of the sheep."

We have said that Moses was a meek, humble man, having no desire for honor, glory, pride and great position, all of which he could have had under Pharaoh king of Egypt. The apostle Paul says of him in this connection (Heb. 11:24-27)—

"By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter: choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

"Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

"By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him Who is invisible."

Surely this is none but the attitude of a lowly, humble, meek man. Moses looked for a much greater reward than mighty Egypt's riches and honor. Do we look in the same manner?

Also when God appeared unto Moses in the bush, to appoint him to deliver His people "Israel" from the land of Egypt, Moses replies in Exo. 4:10—

"O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since Thou has spoken unto Thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue."

Whether, he had an impediment in his speech or was now of a shy, retiring nature we do not know. It would seem rather to be more likely the latter. Of his younger days in Egypt it is recorded that he was "mighty in word and deed." Forty years in the wilderness had humbled him. Yet far mightier words and deeds lay before him, though he knew it not.

But in any event, whatever his handicap, we know that with God all things are possible and nothing is impossible, so He said unto Moses—

"I will put the words in thy mouth."

And He appointed Aaron as his mouthpiece. Not all brethren in Christ Jesus are fitted for exhortation, for lecturing, but everyone has his own duties to perform in the work of the Lord. It was the one-talent servant who hid away what his lord had entrusted to him to put to use, and who was so severely punished and rejected.

It is the will of God, that we work together in all things, in the bonds of love and peace, each esteeming his brother better than himself to be, but each laboring to do his best.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccl. 9:10).

This is the great lesson contained herein for us, brethren and sisters, let us strive to abide by it. For as it is so beautifully expressed by Paul—

"But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him"
(1 Cor. 12:18).

This applies to both the natural body and the spiritual body, for we are all members of that "One Body in Christ Jesus." Therefore all should be shown the same kindness, the same love and consideration—

"That there should be no schism"—division, upheaval, strife, contention, quarrelling—"in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another."

And here is the point that should be stressed and imprinted deeply upon our minds:

"And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it" (v. 26).

If one member of the body, a hand or foot, suffer a cut, bruise, fracture or break, the whole body suffers, it is felt with pain throughout the whole body. So, likewise in the One Body in Christ Jesus for (v. 27):

"Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular."

WE return in our thoughts to Moses. Although we are well aware of the fact that God was directing the steps of Moses, who other than a meek, quiet, humble man could contend with and

withstand and endure the stubbornness and rebelliousness of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, in refusing to allow the children of Israel to leave the land?

Moses had all the characteristics previously mentioned, slow to be irritated, not easily provoked or given to anger; that is the reason Deity chose him to play the part—again a type of the Greater than Moses.

Of course we do also recognize that Yahweh was behind the hand of Pharaoh. He said:

"I will harden the heart of Pharaoh, that he will not let My people go."

Some question the justice of God in this. They are on dangerous ground. In the first place, God did not **change** Pharaoh; He **hardened** him in the path Pharaoh himself chose.

And in the second place, this hardening was a perfectly righteous and judicial punishment for Pharaoh's previous wickedness in his past treatment of Israel.

If we choose a course of evil, God may harden us in it as our fitting punishment, so that we cannot leave it. Remember Esau. God is not mocked. He does not wait with patience upon man's foolishness for ever, though He is of infinite mercy to them who truly seek with all their hearts to please Him.

* * *

THERE is one more point we should like to bring out in regard to the meekness of Moses. This concerns his leading the Israelites forty years through the wilderness.

How often we have read of their continual murmuring and complaining against Moses, and not only Moses, but against the only true God, and turning their backs against Him! Moses said unto them—

"Ye murmur, and complain, not against me, but against God."

Again we say, it would require a man of Moses' stamp to put up with such a stiff-necked and rebellious people. In this it is evident why Yahweh declares Moses to be a very meek, humble, quiet and peace-loving man, and servant of the Most High.

It is only those of us who are this sort that shall enter into "that rest" when our Great Redeemer shall appear.

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart" (Psa. 24:3-4).

It is also only through and by this means—or great meekness, humbleness, lowliness, and of a poor and contrite spirit—that we shall have clean hands and a pure heart.

God will accept only those who are poor in relation to this world's goods, but rich in faith. This is the complete answer; there is no other way, for "This is the way, walk ye in it."

What a beautiful and wondrous story to read the life history of those faithful patriarchs of old. There is no man-made history book, be it ancient or modern, that can come in any way near, or compare, unto God's most holy written Word.

Will it not be a great joy, a joy that words cannot express, to meet these "true and faithful worthies," beloved servants of "Almighty Deity," face to face: and a much greater joy, to be blessed with that gift that they shall receive, even Life Eternal.

Thanks be unto our Heavenly Father, through His beloved Son, that we are called out, separated, from this darkness which covers the earth, and gross darkness the people, unto His most glorious Light!

So let it be, when we put our hand to the Gospel plow, to not turn back.

The course we pursue is not an easy one, the field or ground, (the world) in which we plow, labor and work, is not smooth and level, but is very rough and rugged. But when we stop and consider, was it not so with the prophets, the apostles, and even much more so with our Beloved Saviour?

Our burdens may be heavy, our load not light, but theirs was greater by far, and what is more, their living conditions were much harder than anything we have to endure. Brethren and sisters, let us consider and meditate prayerfully upon these things.

Let us turn our attention for a moment to the words that Jesus spoke unto his disciples:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice.
"And ye shall be sorrowful . . .

We note well these next words:

". . . but your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (John 16:20).

"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning"—what great joy, what great rejoicing, what great consolation!
—F.P.

The Burden of the Lord

"Ye offer the blind and sick. Offer it now to thy governor: will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person?—saith the Lord of Hosts"—Malachi 1:8

MALACHI CHAPTER ONE

THE word "burden," when associated with the Word of the Lord, suggests that the message was something to be borne, as a rebuke, judgment or reproof. The words before us are taken from Malachi, chapter one. Malachi means "My Messenger," and that the message was in reproof, is gathered as we read this chapter over.

The word "burden" does not seem so severe when approached in the light that the Lord Jesus presented it—

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are **heavy-laden** (with the burden of this life), and I will give you rest.

"Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for **MY** yoke is easy, and **MY** burden is light"

(Matt. 11:28-30).

Yet of the Scribes and Pharisees, in his rebuke of them, Jesus said (Matt. 23:4)—

"They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one finger."

And it is this spirit of the scribes and Pharisees that caused the burden of the Word of the Lord to be spoken to Israel, in which we see a true manifestation of rebuke, and judgment, in deep measure heavy and grievous.

In Mal. 1:2, we read—

"I have loved you, saith the Lord."

These words express a truth both of the past and the present, as God said through Jeremiah (31-3-4)—

"I have loved you with an everlasting love."

And although in their blindness, the question was asked (Mal. 1:2)—

"Wherein hast Thou loved us?"

—yet all their history was and is a record of God's love for His people Israel. And we may today apply the words of this prophet not only to natural Israel, but spiritual Israel can place themselves within the declaration toward themselves, as it is on account of natural Israel's false love, that God has directly manifested His love to us, the Gentiles.

V.6: "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master."

We may accept the fact that God, in requiring this of Israel, was manifesting His love. God was a Father to Israel. Through Moses, God spoke to Pharaoh of Israel being His "first born" (Exo. 4:22). Through Jeremiah (31:9) He declares He was a "Father to Israel." And then to spiritual Israel we read (Rom. 8:14)—

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

God by His Word has made us to become "sons of God" (John 1:12), and we may take to ourselves the words of the prophet regarding the honor which God as a Father, rightly deserves, and a thorough manifestation of reverential fear in joyful anticipation of God's further love and blessing in the Kingdom of His Dear Son.

Israel as a "Nation of Priests and a Holy Nation," were despising God's Name (v. 6), although they asked—

"Wherein have we despised Thy Name?"

The answer is given in v.7—

"Ye offer polluted bread upon Mine altar."

And this answer seems to engender surprise. With all their meticulous washing of pots and cups, they would not think of doing such a thing! They said—

"Wherein have we polluted Thee?"

It is ever thus, as man wants chapter and verse as it were, when actions really speak louder than words. The Truth was that they **acted** in a way that proclaimed their actual despising of God's Name and character. God's "Name" is His glory and greatness and holiness and majesty.

By reading Mal. 1:8, we get the true meaning of what was meant in polluted bread—

"If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil?"

"Offer it now unto thy governor: will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person?"

"The "governor" can mean anything that we may put in the place of the Truth, to take first place.

Neither we nor Israel after the flesh would think of offering anything but the best to a worldly dignitary whose favor and approval we desired to gain.

Thus the prophet, as God's messenger, speaks that Israel may recognize their mistake, and so turn from the error of their ways, as in offering "polluted bread"—careless service, half-hearted devotion, our "second-best."

God was being dishonoured, for to despise and dishonour the altar is to despise the One Whose altar it is. God requires the best, without blemish, spot or defect, and again we should deeply

ponder v.8 in answer to these thoughts. To what extent do we value God's love? Just how deep and **ACTIVE** is our gratitude for all His infinite goodness—present and promised? What fruits have we to show?

"And now," says the prophet:

"I pray you, beseech God in a half-hearted manner, in a listless endeavour, and expect that God will be gracious unto you! This has been your manner—your means" (v.9).

Can we expect that God, Who is Lord of all creation, will accept worthless work?—that He would show partiality and favouritism to us above other men, though we are careless in His service? Yet we often seem to take this for granted—as though we are something special.

"I am God," says our Heavenly Father. He takes second place to none. We must speak the same things; be of one mind with Him; and be without partiality of any kind.

And then we read (v.10)—

"Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for naught? Neither do ye kindle fire on Mine altar for naught."

Though loud in their pious professions, they merely pleased themselves and sought their own profit, and did nothing for God in evidence of a living and thankful faith.

Another version gives a little different rendering—

"O that there were one among you, that would shut the doors, that you might not kindle a fire on Mine altar in vain."

In this view, God would rather have the temple closed than offering done in a dishonourable fashion. Israel profaned God's Name, not by blasphemous words, or lightly-uttered oaths, but by deeds, as their blemished offerings declared the table of the Lord to be polluted, and His meat contemptible.

We can surely apply the lesson to ourselves. When there are empty chairs at our meetings, some are sadly manifested as taking their stand with the scoffer, and lending to him help in his contemptuous inquiry—

"Where is the promise of His coming?"

That is, our action in being absent and putting comfort or convenience or worldly interests first, actually declares our disbelief of God and disinterest in His love.

God is a jealous God, and requires from us the very best and utmost that we can give—always. There is so much to be gained for so little that we have to offer for it, surely God is not asking too much, when He asks—

"Give me thine heart."

He must be the center, the very pivot upon which our love and devotion—yea, our whole life—revolves.

When we conduct ourselves in a half-hearted way, listless and unenthused, and blindly satisfied to be that way in God's service, then it becomes a weariness, as Malachi records (1:13)—

"Ye said also, Behold what a weariness is it!"

The clock and watch becomes so often consulted, as when Israel's service became a weariness to them, and Amos reveals them as saying—

"When will the Sabbath be over?" (Amos 8:5).

Israel was told sharply that such offering was not acceptable. It was insulting to God's majesty, and a despising of His love.

We, brethren and sisters, are of the Israel of God, we are of His Holy Name. We do well to read together what is contained in Mal. 1:14, as we have now entered the New Year, a year that may well bring the great day of our standing to give account of our stewardship—

“But cursed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing.

"For I am a great King, saith the Lord of Hosts, and My Name is dreadful among the heathen."

These things, we are told, happened to them for examples and are written for our admonition, that we may have the wisdom to avoid the broad and common way of death and find the narrow, lonely, unfrequented way of life.

Are we offering to God our very best, in this our so short day of opportunity, or was this deep and solemn lesson through Malachi recorded in vain for us? —W.J.P.

The Bride, the Lamb's Wife

"And there came unto me one of the 7 angels which had the 7 vials full of the 7 last plagues, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb's Wife."

SINCE the Apocalypse is a book of symbols, we find as we study the matter that John was not shown a collective body of saints, the literal Body of Christ, but what he saw was a divinely-chosen symbol of the Christ-Body as it will be when it is perfected and united with its glorious Head and Lord. This we read in the next verse (Rev. 21:10)—

"And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem."

The Bride of Christ is here represented by a city, and the description of the city will help us to understand what kind of people will make up the Bride—

"And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

"And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones."

The city was made up of the finest gold and precious stones. These represented the characters of the constituents of the Lamb's Bride—characters made pure and godly by the polishing and shaping and refining process brought to bear upon them for their good, during their life in the Truth.

It is said (vs. 10-11) that the city "descends out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." This shows that God is the great Architect and Builder of the city. All the glorious and immortal ones thus assembled and symbolized by a city of gold, having the glory of God, will have come to this state of perfection and beauty through the work of God in their lives.

The Word of God—long and lovingly meditated upon—has purified their hearts and minds from the dross and impurities of the flesh, and He has brought them through such trials and afflictions as would bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. In their case the divine purpose has been fulfilled, and "Patience hath had her perfect work" (James 1:4).

They have also been led to the higher, purer plane of spiritual life by the Spirit of God from above. In this sense they are said to come down from heaven.

Paul says of the saints in their present state—

"Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. 12:22-23).

THESE are the "heavenly things" that we have come to, and to which we stand related under the New Covenant. This places us in the very center of the heavenly light that reveals God's purpose on the earth. We are thus brought directly within the circle of His operations as He gathers the material and shapes and prepares it for the time when all things will be made to reflect the glory and honor of His great Name.

Paul admonishes, on the basis of the great responsibilities of our position in such close proximity to the glorious divine purpose—

"See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh" (Heb. 12:25).

To "refuse" here clearly means to fail to give full and careful heed to all the words spoken. Paul is speaking to professed brethren: he is not referring to outright rejection, but **unacceptable service due to carelessness and negligence, self-satisfaction, assuming we are acceptable.**

Since we have been bathed in the light and glory of God's heavenly message, and since our eyes have been opened to the revelation of the mystery of His will, it is too late for us to turn away to the shadows again. Only tribulation and anguish await us in that direction. We are called upon to rise to the demands of our calling—

"Wherefore lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but rather let it be healed"
(Heb. 12:12-13).

Let us squarely face the facts in our own case while it is yet called Today. Do we feel that in our present state of development we belong in that city of God with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and Daniel? Would we feel at ease and at home in that high moral and spiritual group, so that we could sit down at Christ's table in his Kingdom and be of one mind and one spirit with the prophets and apostles seated around us?

Are our present interests and conversation and mental activities on this spiritual plane? Remember, Christ reads the hearts, and none will be able to stay in his presence who are out of place there.

Jesus prayed that we would become one with him, even as he is one with the Father. Has his prayer been answered in our case?

When the Lord comes, he will choose those who have loved him, those who have kept him constantly in their hearts and minds, those who have in the light of his glorious example striven to conform their characters to his own.

To Timothy Paul wrote—

"In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and earth"
(2 Tim. 2:20).

His point is that association with the things of God, or a temporary use of us by God, is no indication of eternal usefulness. Many vessels are used and cast aside.

Jesus will have no use in that day for the baser vessels that have served their brief and inglorious purpose in this present day of darkness, though they may even have been used to hold the water of life for others. At the great tribunal he will be looking for gold and precious stones to garnish the eternal Holy City, the New Jerusalem. The wood and earth will be of no use there, for it is said—

"There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life"

(Rev. 21:27).

Let us be among the wise! Let us be among the joyful in that day!

The Spirit and the Bride say, Come!

God will help us prepare for a place in this glorious City if we employ all of our interests and efforts to learn His holy will, and to do it.

—E.W.B.

Signs of the Times

FOLLOWING a thaw in the cold war between East and West, a state of confusion arises which threatens to exchange old tensions for new fears. As fear of Russia subsides, and friction between Russia and Red China grows more intense, anti-Communist alliances are less firm, even threatened with dissolution, so far as a practical, workable alliance is concerned.

It is evident that the overall situation presents a picture of Communist gains and Western losses.

PERPLEXING SITUATIONS

DeGAULLE recognizes Red China, which will pave the way for other nations to follow and bring China nearer to admittance into the United Nations. This recognition is in line with the DeGaulle purpose to "neutralize" South Vietnam and other S. E. Asian nations.

His purpose seems to be to restore French prestige to this area. He believes the world is entering a new era; that old alliances are breaking up; that new ones are forming, and he seeks to make France the leader in a new European alliance. In this he seems to disregard Russian designs, but it will doubtless help stir up the nations to Armageddon.

Nations receiving aid from the U. S. and Britain, such as Indonesia and certain new African nations, are turning against their benefactors and leaning toward Communism. The same is true of Latin-America.

Regardless of the billions in aid to these nations, anti-U. S. sentiment is strong, and sympathy for Castro is evident in most of these Latin nations.

While the U. S. seeks to crush Castro by imposing an embargo on trade with Cuba, Britain and other U. S. allies sell huge quantities of goods to Cuba and the U. S. sells wheat to Russia. It would seem that any economic squeeze against any Communist nation is thwarted by a desire for trade on the part of anti-Communist allies.

FUTILE AID GRANTS

THE "massive handouts" which the U. S. has given to stop Communism has proved futile. In Southeast Asia, Indonesia, Africa, the Mideast and Latin-America, it is the same.

The U. S. has assisted in giving freedom to new nations and given economic and military aid to backward peoples. The net result: Most of the new nations are in a shambles and leaning heavily toward Communism.

After all the money spent and the loss of American lives in S. VIETNAM, the U. S. has gained nothing, but suffered the loss of prestige in all S. E. Asia.

In CUBA, after 5 years of Castro rule, the island remains a bastion for Communist subversive operations in all Latin-America, and a base for training guerrilla forces for Communist purposes anywhere.

The PANAMANIAN affair, whether the U. S. holds on to the Canal or not, has aroused sympathy for Panama and distrust for Uncle Sam among other Latin-American nations, and has brought forth scorn from Britain and France and other nations who remember the Suez affair and how the U. S. helped Nasser grab the Canal.

Britain having been forced to give freedom to its colonies, the decadent empire now has trouble on its hands trying to bring order out of chaos in the new nations carved out of the colonial empire, and in many instances the peoples given their freedom have turned against their former masters.

British East Africa is virtually in a state of revolt. ZANZIBAR has definitely gone Communist. TANGANYIKA'S army mutinied and threw out its British officers.

Uprisings in UGANDA and KENYA have required British troops to preserve order. Open tribal warfare exists in RWANDA and BURUNDI.

A border war goes on between the Republic of SOMALI and Kenya and Ethiopia. Across a vast stretch of territory once ruled principally by Britain, Communists are coming into the picture as a common force in the disorders.

Meanwhile the island of CYPRUS, which Britain granted independence in 1960, is in a state of revolt between Greek and Turkish citizens.

ADEN, a key British base near Persian Gulf oil, is under attack by Arab extremists.

"SEA AND WAVES ROARING"

A NEW thing is happening in the world—the great powers are being kicked around by the little ones (Joel 3:10)—

"Let the weak say, I am strong."

This has been made possible by the rivalry existing between the great powers and the cold war between Communism and anti-Communism. Each group has tried to outdo the other in offers of aid to needy nations in an effort to win their political support.

And so it has come to pass that weak nations get help from both sides by playing one against the other.

Anti-colonialism and desire for self-government and most of all, the desire for the good things enjoyed by prosperous nations, has whetted the appetite for more and more aid. And what was asked for at the start is now being demanded.

"Increase of knowledge" has much to do with the restless spirit of the underprivileged. No longer are the masses of poverty-stricken peoples unaware of the awful gap existing between themselves and the privileged few.

The spread of education increases the dissatisfaction and the unrest. Students sent to foreign schools return home to rouse up the illiterate populace.

Some have thought free government was the answer, but freedom in most cases has multiplied their problems and brought economic chaos.

Foreign aid has, for the most part, fallen into the hands of a few privileged leaders, while the masses of the people are left unaided.

Thus the revolutionary spirit is always present, a fertile field for Communism or any other subversive movement. But Communism is not the answer, and so the sea and the waves of humanity continue to roar.

THE MIDEAST AND ISRAEL

THE Arab summit meeting in Cairo, presumably having as its purpose to plan joint action to head off an Israeli project to divert water from the Sea of Galilee, actually emphasizes the deep-seated animosity which all Arab countries hold against Israel. The chief purpose of the meeting was an effort to unite all Arab nations in a concerted drive to destroy Israel.

It was clear that Nasser was as interested in ending the feuds among Arab nations as he was in thwarting Israel's water project. There was apparent progress on that score at the meeting. It was reported that "necessary resolutions" were accepted in technical and military fields to oppose Israel's water diversion.

But just what they will do is problematical. That they will actually declare war on Israel is doubtful. Even though the Arab nations have been greatly strengthened militarily in recent years, they still fear Israel. They have not forgotten previous defeats.

Also, to pass resolutions is one thing; to organize an effective military force out of the disunited Arab armies and unite in a war against Israel is another thing. Arab animosity against Israel is born of envy that Israel progresses while the Arab nations stay in the same backward condition which has existed for ages. And, while they agree on hating Israel, they are at odds among themselves and their governments are always in a shaky state

There are many things just now which stand in the way of an all-out Arab war against Israel. One thing is the fact that the world has its eyes on the Mideast. Its strategic position, situated as it is at the juncture of 3 continents, the gateway to the Orient.

The Mideast is in direct touch with Soviet Russia which has its eyes on the rich oil fields and its political potentialities. Its immense oil reserves in which many nations are directly interested would be endangered by a Mideast war. The attachments of the West to the Holy Land makes the land of Israel of special interest to the West

These considerations, and in view of the fact that the Western allies are pledged to defend Israel against aggression, makes an Arab concerted war on Israel most unlikely.

As the time draws near for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and Armageddon, world attention will be more and more directed toward the Mideast and Israel until all nations are gathered "against Jerusalem to battle."

One thing the Arabs do not know, neither does Egypt's Nasser know, is that **THE "TIME TO FAVOR ZION" HAS COME**, and all their efforts to destroy Israel will end in failure. —O.B.

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