

'THE REVELATION'

The "book sealed with seven seals" now open.

In Rev. v. 1-4, "a book sealed with seven seals" is described as being in the right hand of the Almighty; "and no man in heaven, nor in the earth . . . was able to open the book, neither to look thereon."

This book is evidently symbolical of the "things which must be hereafter," as revealed when Jesus Christ "prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof"; therefore it is said that no man was able "to look thereon," because no man, but Jesus Christ alone, was able to clearly foresee all these future events.

When Jesus Christ "had opened one of the seals," we are told that there appeared "a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering and to conquer."

The "white horse" is evidently symbolical of eternal truth in its purity; the "crown" indicating its future reign upon earth, and the "bow" being symbolical of the power to shoot the arrows of truth with the requisite force and effect.

"And when he had opened the second seal, . . . there went out another horse that was red; and power was given unto him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword."

The "red" horse and the "great sword," following the "white horse," and the "bow," indicate clearly enough that the immediate result of declaring the eternal truth would not be "peace on earth, . . . but rather a sword," as was before plainly predicted by Jesus Christ.

"And when he had opened the third seal, . . . I beheld, and lo, a black horse, and he that sat on him had a yoke (*sagow*) in his hand, and I heard a voice . . . say, a measure of wheat for a penny," etc.

The "black horse" and the "yoke," following the "red" horse and the "great sword"; plainly foretell "the dark ages," and the bondage, (both civil and religious) which followed the previous persecution and bloodshed.

The "measure" was but about a pint and a-half, while the "penny" was a day's wages in harvest time; therefore the "measure of wheat for a penny," very clearly indicates "a famine, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing of the words of the Lord"—and such a "famine" was remarkably characteristic of "the dark ages."

"And when he had opened the fourth seal, I looked, and beheld a green (*chloros*) horse; and his name that sat on him was Death; and Hades followed with him," etc. *

As *Chloros* is correctly translated "green" in Rev. viii, 7, it should be correctly translated "green" here also, in Rev. vi, 8.

The "green horse" following the "black horse" is manifestly symbolical of the remarkably flourishing condition of Christendom subsequent to "the dark ages," and more especially at the present time.

"Death" is described upon the "green horse," to indicate that the present prosperous and flourishing condition of Christendom would tend to spiritual "death," or the utter annihilation of that "faith" which is the evidence of spiritual life.

The sense in which "death and hades" should here be understood will perhaps be more easily perceived when one has carefully noted the sense in which these words are used in Isaiah xxviii, 15-18.

It is remarkable that no "horse" is said to appear upon opening either the fifth or the sixth seal; as was the case upon opening each of the first four seals—this is evidently because the four horses, by their respective colours, white, red, black and green, have already revealed the grand characteristic features of the whole Christian era, from its very beginning down to the "great day" of judgment described at the opening of the sixth seal.

The eternal truth "went forth conquering" at the beginning, nevertheless persecution and bloodshed followed for centuries; then the reverse of the eternal truth, or utter spiritual darkness, prevailed for centuries more; giving way at last to the unprecedented flourishing condition of Christendom, which has since prevailed; and which, by means of modern progress, actually prepares the way for the universal righteous government now about to come upon earth; by making such an universal government physically possible; for the most distant nations are already brought sufficiently near together for that purpose, by means of railroads, steamships and telegraphs, etc., therefore at the opening of the fifth seal, "the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held," are represented as crying "with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood upon them that dwell upon the earth?" Consequently, "when he had opened the sixth seal," the coming at last of the long-predicted judgment is described by signs as follows, "There was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell upon the earth, . . . and every mountain and island were moved out of their places—and the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath has come; and who shall be able to stand?"

The "great earthquake," inasmuch that "every mountain and island were moved out of their places," is symbolical of the great commotion among the nations, which must come before "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ;" therefore concerning the nations at this time, it is clearly predicted that "as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers."—Rev. ii, 27, Psalms ii, 9.

It will be easily understood why "the sun" is said to become "black" at this time, when this prediction is compared with the prophecy of Isaiah that "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold; as the light of seven days;" (Isaiah xxx, 26) for the perfect eternal light (of which the "sevenfold" sunlight is here symbolical) coming suddenly upon thousands of men at this time will of course naturally have the effect of causing that which is now regarded as light, to become as "darkness" in comparison, or as "black as sackcloth of hair."

"The stars" are symbolical of the clergy, (who are supposed to enlighten and guide others, as "the stars" in the darkness;) therefore when "the stars" are said to "fall from heaven" at this time; it is indicated that when the predicted "sevenfold" light now suddenly enlightens thousands of men; then, of course, the clergy also will generally be among the first affected by it; as they may reasonably be supposed to fairly represent the intellectual and moral progress of their respective congregations; consequently the clergy will doubtless now

generally soon adapt themselves to the requirements of the coming age of perfect light and truth; much as did the clergy in England, when they were rather suddenly called upon to adapt themselves to the requirements of the great reformation, about three centuries ago, when, of fifteen thousand clergy, it is said, that less than five hundred (or less than one in thirty) refused.

When "the kings of the earth, etc.," are described as calling to "the mountains and rocks," saying "fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne," etc., it is indicated that men in every condition of life (being suddenly surprised by the great "sevenfold" light,) will then be found generally to "love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil; for everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reprove." Those who "come to the light, that their deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God;" being the exception to the general rule; as is well-known.

Clearly revealed are the grand characteristics of each of the successive periods of the Christian era, upon the opening of the first six seals: many may yet nevertheless be disposed to doubt, or deny, that the exceedingly prosperous Christendom of the present day is now so absolutely devoid of vital "faith," as is indicated by "Death" upon the "green horse." Let all such doubters, or deniers, of so evident a fact, bear in mind that, "as the body without the spirit is dead; so faith without works is dead also." Should any assert that the "works" of Christendom of the present day, prove that her "faith" is not yet "dead." Any such statement would be but mere assertion, altogether unsustained by facts. The evidence to the contrary being abundant and absolutely indisputable; for instance, How much is Christendom now striving earnestly to abolish warfare? or, What great efforts, or wonderful sacrifices, is Christendom now making to establish an International Tribunal worthy of this progressive age? that from henceforth nations shall neither have excuse, nor occasion for resorting to warfare, for the settlement of any question whatever.

Christendom is evidently making no earnest efforts whatever for so worthy a purpose. Neither is Christendom making any great or serious sacrifices whatever, to secure so exceedingly great a blessing for all nations, throughout all generations, as the abolition of warfare, permanently secured by the establishment of an International Tribunal fairly representing the wisdom, understanding, and strength of the whole world.

Yet "peace on earth, good will to man;" as well as "glory to God," actually sums up (in perhaps the fewest possible words) the whole ultimate purpose of Jesus Christ's mission upon earth; as was plainly enough declared by the "multitude of the Heavenly Host," more than eighteen centuries ago. Luke ii, 13-14. Moreover, it is repeatedly predicted that a time will certainly come when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Isaiah ii, 2-4, Micah, iv, 1-3. Again, it is foretold as plainly as possible that "the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High," Daniel vii, 27. Which, of course, necessarily implies an universal righteous government over the whole earth; and that also at a time when "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased;" evidently enough referring to our own days; when, for the first time in all the history of the world, such an universal government has at last become physically possible; modern progress having now at last brought "all nations" close enough together for that purpose.

Of course, any such general government would be quite consistent with perfect local government everywhere or anywhere.

Experience abundantly proves that "God helps those who help themselves;" consequently if we would have the long-predicted "peace on earth," we must help ourselves to it, by fairly earning it, in making every requisite effort or sacrifice; thus proving, by our "works," that our "faith" is not "dead," but vital and active.

Probably there is nothing within human reach, better calculated to supply the much needed vitality, to the present "dead" faith of Christendom, than a clear understanding of "the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."

The express purpose of "the Revelation of Jesus Christ" is here declared to be, "to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."

Has Jesus Christ no servants at all upon earth now? If otherwise, Why does not "the Revelation" fulfil its declared purpose, and "shew them things which must shortly come to pass?"

"The Revelation" is not "a sealed book" (as appears to be generally supposed): on the contrary, the apostle is expressly told to "seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book"—Rev. xxii, 10—and when commanded to "seal up" certain prophecies, he is told also, at the same time, to "write them not"—Rev. x, 4—consequently we may be quite certain that all "the Revelation" which is written, may now be understood by the servants of Jesus Christ; that thus they may become qualified to work intelligently, and wisely, in establishing "the Kingdom of God" upon earth, and so hasten the coming of the day, concerning which it is said, "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

At the opening of "the seventh seal," many very important particulars are revealed (by signs) in their regular order; which I shall endeavor to explain clearly, as opportunity may occur. Meanwhile, if we would render acceptable service to God, or be of any permanent benefit to our fellowman, we must devote ourselves in earnest to the work of securing the long-predicted "peace on earth" with the least possible delay. This we cannot do without a vital "faith" in God, and in his beneficent purposes regarding the whole human family. The understanding of "the revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass," is perhaps, in the Providence of God, the only means whereby we may now obtain the requisite vital "faith" to qualify ourselves for the grand work before us; therefore, Let every one who desires to be reckoned among "the people of the saints of the Most High," lose no time now in obtaining this all important understanding of "the Revelation," concerning which it is written, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein; for the time is at hand." Indeed the fulfilment of this prophecy has been going on, regularly and continually, from the day that these words were first written by the apostle; though men upon earth may not have perceived it.

It may also be considerable encouragement to us to know that we are "the last," who are now called upon to complete the grand work of establishing "the kingdom of God" upon earth; and, in accomplishing this, of course, we must necessarily be "the first" to receive the "hundred fold" recompense in this world (foretold by Jesus Christ) as well as the promised "eternal life." Matt., xix, 27-30, xx, 1-16.

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