

Beauties of the Truth

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Thought to be Harmonious with God's Plan of the Ages

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Correspondence

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A Clue to Ezekiel?

Henry Grew on the Trinity

The following is excerpted from 'An Examination of the Divine Testimony Concerning the Character of the Son of God,' by Henry Grew, published in 1824. The entire treatise is 70 pages in length, thoughtfully written and reverent. Bro. Grew preambled the publication with this quotation: "When we have humbly and attentively considered and ascertained the meaning of any proposition, we should implicitly believe it, how contrary soever it may be to our former opinion, or that of others in reputation for wisdom. "This summary of his reasonings may be of interest

In concluding, let us review a few of the passages discussed in the preceding pages, and contrast them with Trinitarian sentiments. I am sensible that *error* as well as *truth* may receive *apparent* support by this method; but this is only when the most obvious and literal import of a passage is not according to the general analogy of the scriptures. Whether that is the case or not with the following, the candid reader will judge.

Jesus Christ and His Apostles	Trinitarians
To us, there is but one God, <i>the Father</i> . 1 Cor. 8:6	To us, there is but one God, the Father, Word, and Holy Ghost.
My Father is greater than I. John 14:28	The Son is as great as the Father.
Who is the <i>image</i> of the invisible God, the first born of every <i>creature</i> . Col. 1:15	Who is the invisible God, the uncreated Jehovah.
The Son can do nothing of <u>himself</u> . John 5:19	The Son is omnipotent.
But of that day & c. knoweth no man, no not the angels, & c. <i>neither the Son</i> , but the Father. Mark 13:32	The Son is omniscient, and knew of that day as well as the Father.
All power is <i>given</i> unto me in heaven and in earth. Matt. 28:18 As thou hast <i>given</i> him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. John 17:2	<i>No given</i> power can qualify the Son of God to give eternal life to his people.
God, who created all things by Jesus Christ. Eph. 3:9 <i>By</i> whom also he made the worlds. Heb. 1:2	Jesus Christ created all things by his own independent power
The Revelation of Jesus Christ <i>which god gave unto him</i> . Rev. 1:1	The Revelation of Jesus Christ from his own omniscience.
For there is one God, and one Mediator <i>between</i> God and men, the man Christ Jesus. 1 Tim. 2:5	There is one Mediator between God and man; who is also supreme God and man in one person.
Denying the <i>only</i> Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Jude 4	Denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who is also the only Lord God, and a distinct <u>person</u> .
Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and signs, and wonders, <i>which God did by him</i> . Acts 2:22	Jesus performed his miracles by his own omnipotence.
For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he <i>given</i> to the Son to have life in himself. John 5:26	The Son is self-existent.
I live by the Father. John 6:57	The Son lives by himself.

Jesus Christ and His Apostles (Cont...)	Trinitarians (Continued...)
This is my beloved Son. Matt. 3:17	This is the only true God, the same numerical essence as the Father.
That they might know thee <i>the only true God</i> , and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. John 17:3	That they might know thee, who art <i>not</i> the only true God, in distinction from the Word whom thou hast sent.
That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow -and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord <i>to the glory of God the Father</i> . Phil. 2:11	That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow- and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord <i>to his own glory</i> .

The fact that our divine Redeemer is *called by some of the names of the Father*, is considered by many as evidence that he is that *very Being whose Son* he is declared to be. They appear to have forgotten, that it was a common Hebrew custom to give significant names both to persons and places. Jesus Christ was called by the name of *David*. Was he therefore the identical son of Jesse? John the Baptist was called *Elijah*. Mal. 4:5. Was he therefore *the very same being*? If it was proper that the forerunner of our Lord should be called by this name (which signifies God the Lord), because he came "in the spirit and power of Elias," surely, it was proper that our blessed Lord himself should be *called* by some of the names of the invisible Father, in whose spirit and power he came down from heaven, and of whom he is *by nature* "the express image." . . .

I object then, to the doctrine of three persons in the Godhead: First, Because *it is not revealed in the scriptures of truth*. There is not a single passage in the whole volume of divine revelation that declares either expressly or implicitly, that there are three persons in one God. There is not a single passage which reveals that the one God consists of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit....

Secondly, Because it is not only not revealed, but *the contra is most plainly declared in the divine testimony*. We are therein assured, not only that there is but one God, but that this one God is *the Father*. *The Father*, as "*the only true God*," is as plainly distinguished from the Son as from all other beings....

Thirdly, Because I find the divine testimony of the Father, the Son, the Prophets and the Apostles, *unitedly declaring the inferiority of the Son in his highest nature and character*. . . .

Fourthly, Because *it is not simply above reason, but contrary to every rational faculty I possess*. It is impossible for me to conceive of three persons *in any sense*, without conceiving of three beings....

Fifthly, Because it adequate mediator between God and man. . . .

I object to this doctrine, Finally, Because *it excludes from the universe the most glorious of all beings, God only excepted.* If we should admit that the *immutable* Jehovah, at a certain period added to his being human nature, which is to be united with him "in one person for ever"; after all that can be said, we can have no idea of the *Son of God* in distinction from the Father; certainly none, except that of a *mere perfect man.* Thus the most mighty and glorious works of Jehovah, "the image of the invisible God; the first-born of every creature; the well beloved and only begotten of the Father, the joy of earth, and the glory of heaven is blotted out of existence. And for this mighty loss, what is substituted? *Nothing.* For, beyond all controversy, there can be but one supreme God. "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." I cast my anxious eye around the universe, and most solicitously enquire, where is he who is "the beginning of the creation of God"; "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person?" Where is "the Word of God," who "was with God," and enjoyed glory with him "before the world was?" And where is he to whom every knee is commanded to bow, and whom the thousands of thousands of the heavenly hosts do actually worship *in distinction from* him that sitteth on the Throne? Rev. 5:13. To this interesting enquiry, the system I am opposing gives me no satisfactory answer.

-Contributed

Correspondence

I thought some may be interested in additional information on the crucifixion question.

In 1968 Israeli archaeologists uncovered the remains of a crucifixion victim named Jehohanan. They were able to determine that he was crucified on a cross with a cross-arm. A single nail was driven through a wooden plaque and then the feet into the cross, the knees were bent and a small platform on which the victim could barely sit was provided. The hand nails were actually placed through the wrists, a fact which was guessed at earlier due to the fragile nature of the hand-the hand would tear and not support the weight of the body. Also, a nail in the hand would most likely have shattered one of the fragile bones in violation of John 19:36. (The Greek word for hand can include arm parts-see *Young's.*) This person also had his legs broken to hasten death. John 19:32.

Granted, this is only one crucifixion and no proof that all crucifixions were done this way, but it is strong evidence that this was the "normal" way it was done. Source: *Bible and Spade, Vol. 1, No. 1, pg. 13.*

"And they lived. . . "

This familiar expression is from Revelation 20:4. "And I saw ... the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

We want to specially ask the meaning of the words "they lived." The first impression which comes to mind is that the saints *lived with* and reigned with Christ. But some investigation convinces us that the thought intended was "they *came to life* and reigned with Christ." There is a significant distinction in the two thoughts.

Weymouth renders the passage: and they *came to life* and shared Christ's Kingdom for a thousand years." Rotherham supplies a footnote on the word "lived": "or: '*came to life*,' cp. Luke 15:32; John 11:25; Rom. 14:9; Rev. 1:18, 2:8."

The context supports this rendering. In verse 4 John sees "*the souls*" of the saints. Why does he say "souls"? Why doesn't he say he saw the saints in glory, with white raiment, and girdles of gold, as in Rev. 15:6, and 19:8? Because he is describing dead saints. This description appears once earlier, in Revelation 6:9, and there also refers to dead saints. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar *the souls of them* that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held . . ." Notice where these "souls" were located -under the altar. Why? It is a picture of saints who have completed their sacrifice, and as the ashes of a sacrifice would fall through the grating to the floor beneath the altar, so that is where we find these sleeping saints.

The reference to sleeping saints as "souls" reminds us of Paul's reference to the Ancient worthies as "the spirits of just men . . ." (Heb. 12:23) So John tells us, paraphrasing, "I saw the souls [dead saints], and then I saw them come to life! They lived!" He is describing the resurrection of the sleeping saints.

He follows this up directly by telling us what he was just watching . . . "This is the first resurrection." (Acknowledging that the first sentence of verse 5 is spurious.)

To some this may seem an incidental clarification, but it bears on at least three matters of significance in understanding the first 6 verses of Revelation 20.

- (1) It shows there is a time break between verses 3 and 4 (assuming the sealing of Satan in the pit is future, and the raising of the sleeping saints past).
- (2) It may bear on the question of whose "thrones" are described in verse 4.
- (3) It implies that the saints raised from death have entered into the promised reign.

Chronology of Highlights of the Millerite Movement

"Man purified ... the wise to understand" (after 1290 days)

1816 William T. Miller (1782-1849) was converted to Christianity in a Baptist church in Hampton, New York. A studious and self-educated man, he was not satisfied with certain aspects of Christian teaching and the many seeming contradictions of the Bible. This motivated him to undertake a two year comprehensive study of the Bible which convinced him that the Scriptures were consistent and harmonious when rightly understood.

1818 Finding the Bible to be "a system of revealed truth," Miller set forth tentative conclusions of his two year study. He differed rather strongly from the popular views of his day in a dozen points, among them his conviction that the world had entered the last phase of prophetic time and that in 25 years "all the affairs of our present state would be wound up." To verify his findings, Miller entered into four additional years of intensive Bible study, from 1818 to 1822.

1822 Mr. Miller, now in his prime at age 40, composed his "Twenty Articles of Faith," which summarized most of his beliefs. Most of these points were considered fundamental gospel premises with which many devout Christians of diverse affiliations could agree: the inspiration of the Bible, belief in the Trinity, the creation and fall of man, Christ's substitutionary atoning death, the saving power of faith in Christ, election founded on God's purpose and foreknowledge, baptism by immersion, resurrection of the just and unjust, destruction of the wicked, and purification of the earth by fire. But the startling article concerned his unwavering belief in the imminent "second coming of Jesus Christ," which he wrote, "is near, even at the door, even within twenty-one years, on or before 1843."

1829 Mr. Miller attended a series of special meetings in his local Baptist church in Hampton, N.Y., consisting of special sermons by guest preachers. A reasonable presumption is that he shared his views on the advent with these visiting Baptist ministers.

1831 Mr. Miller began his public ministry by setting forth his advent expectations to a small congregation in Dresden, N.Y., as a substitute preacher.

1834 Mr. Miller became a full-time preacher gaining many adherents, chiefly among the Baptists at first, but later reaching a cross-section of the Christian community. With a strong will and constitution, he enthusiastically threw himself in to the ministry to carry on what he conceived as his special mission to warn men of their impending doom unless converted before the second advent of Christ.

1836 Mr. Miller's writings began to attract some public attention and by 1838 were being republished by the Boston "Daily Times."

1839 Mr. Miller made the acquaintance of Joshua V. Himes, leading to a new era of expansion for the infant Advent Movement. The following year, Himes began publishing the "Signs of the Times" in Boston, spurring the appearance of more than two dozen other journals, edited by ministers attracted from the ranks of Congregationalists, Methodists, Wesleyans, Christians, Baptists, and Presbyterian affiliations. The circulation of these second advent papers and journals was phenomenal, some reaching 100,000. By the middle of 1844, a total of 5 million copies had been distributed, and a very widespread witness given to northeastern and middle western America.

1840 The years 1840-1843 saw the establishing of sixteen large conferences in different major cities in six states (Mass., Maine, New York, N.H., Vermont and Penna.), varying in attendance from many hundreds to 5,000. These attracted the support of numerous ministers from a wide spectrum of denominations, and helped greatly in solidifying and spreading the message.

1842 Beginning of a series of 130 camp meetings, lasting until 1844, which brought Millerism directly to the masses. The earnest preaching and stirring hymn singing and testimonies of these open air meetings held a contagious attraction and novelty that drew from 4,000-10,000 to each site. Half a million people were reached in this way.

The year 1842 also saw the introduction of "The Big Tent," 120 feet in diameter, accommodating

4,000-6,000 people. This innovation was prompted by increasing opposition from orthodox churches and the consequent difficulty of securing the large size halls needed for the work. "The Big Tent" was used successfully in New York, New Jersey, Mass., N.H., Vermont, Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky, until 1844. Suspended from two main supporting poles was a streamer reading "Thy Kingdom Come."

1843 The actual date set for the return of Christ. It was based on the belief that the 2300 day prophecy of Dan. 8:14 would end in the advent of Christ, covering the period from 457 BC to 1843 AD. However, due to a later refinement in the calculation, the date of expectation was postponed to the Spring of 1844.

1844 When the Spring of 1844 passed uneventfully, intensive restudy led to the acceptance of Oct. 22, 1844 (thought to be the Jewish Day of Atonement) as the final and irrevocable date for the visible return of Christ. But again, "their Lord came not, and the day of sweet expectation had become the day of bitter disappointment."

Summary At the height of the Millerite movement, upwards of 50,000 believers had declared themselves to be Adventists. There were about 500 preachers from the leading denominations, 1500 public lecturers, and about 30 editors that comprised the loyal core of the group. They created a mighty stir across the land and aroused widespread interest in Bible study and the fulfillment of prophecy.

In the aftermath of the disappointment, there was great confusion and bewilderment, and the Adventist faithful had to face public ridicule at every hand. The Millerite Movement came to an abrupt end, many of its adherents drifted away, and the remnant divided into several factions. Nevertheless, a sanctifying mark had been left upon a nucleus of believers who had been brought to a closer walk with the Lord and had been given an awareness that the prophetic "end of the age" was upon them. These were now prepared for fresh outpourings of truth to accompany the advancing light.

(The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, LeRoy E. Froom, Vol. 4, pp. 455-826.) - Contributed

A Clue to Ezekiel?

It is possible that the book of Ezekiel is a prophecy of the harvest church. Chapter 1, verse 3, suggests in the meaning of the proper names employed that this might well be the case: Ezekiel means "Whom God will strengthen" (meaning uncertain)-perhaps suggesting Rev. 3:20. Buzi means "contempt" - certainly the attitude with which the Babylonish world views the harvest church. Chebar means "extent of time," the appropriateness of which needs no comment.

The purpose of this article is to suggest a prophetic meaning for the first two verses of Ezekiel. If the suggestion seems reasonable, the article will, we trust, act as a catalyst for an energetic student who likes to work with dates and harvest history. If the following suggestion be a valid one, Ezekiel may open up beautifully as a detailed chronology of our experiences. (The verses which would need chronological-prophetic identification are: 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 26:1; 29:1; 31:1; 32:1; 40:1.)

As Ezekiel opens his book, he makes mention of a "thirtieth year." Yet he does not explain his dating - a fact which immediately invites our curiosity. One thing is certain, the date being pinpointed is an auspicious date: "the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God." Fortunately, in verse two, Ezekiel supplies sufficient information so that we can compute the origin of the elusive thirty years of verse one.

The fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity is also the fifth year of Zedekiah's reign (11 Kings 24:12, 15, 17). Zedekiah reigned eleven years and his reign terminated in 607 B.C. Therefore, the fifth year is six years previous, or 613 B.C. If 613 is the 30th year since an important date, we need merely go back 30 years to 643 B.C. which must be the important date. It is; 643 is the 18th year of King Josiah-a year which witnessed:

- (1) the cleaning and repairing of the Temple;
- (2) great religious reform in Israel;
- (3) Josiah's Great Passover.

Now the guessing begins. If 643 is typical, of what like event or date is it typical? Perhaps the Great Passover is one key. Jesus said he would partake anew with his disciples in the kingdom. In 1878 he would have had that opportunity. (*A very great passover!*) 1878 seems like a likely date also for an antitypical temple repair and religious reform.

If this assumption be correct, 613 (the year of Ezekiel's vision) would have 1908 as its antitype, in which year September 25th was the Jewish New Year. The fourth month, fifth day of the month, would then be January 1, 1909. Question: Did any vision happen then due to the heavens being opened? Answer: Seemingly yes! In the January 1, 1909 Tower appears the first of about a two-year series of articles clarifying the covenants. This is not insignificant. The effect on the church was profound. It also seems significant that at least one of the many explanations of Ezekiel 1 deals with the wheels as representative of the series of covenants and ages about which the Divine Plan revolves. Therefore, 613 and 1908 would both have shown visions of the glory of God as never before revealed. The date parallelism grows more convincing yet as we realize that 607 (the end of Zedekiah's reign) parallels 1914 in this reckoning -making all of these parallel dates 2520 years apart. If there be validity in this attempt we pray the Lord will bless the ability of others to build on it.

- *Contributed*

We urge that the presentations of this journal be tried thoughtfully by all readers. "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good." We do not necessarily endorse every expression of contributed articles appearing herein. Information on the authorship of any article is freely supplied on request. Address all correspondence to: Beauties of the Truth, 9159 Via de Amur, Santee, CA 92071. Published through Millennial Morning.