

Beauties of the Truth

A Forum for the Publication of Scriptural Viewpoints
Thought to be Harmonious with God's Plan of the Ages
Volume 3, Number 1, February 1992

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BEAUTIES OF THE TRUTH is published as a service to the brethren to stimulate their consideration and appreciation of the boundless riches of God's Word. It is published free of charge. Subscriptions will be entered for all who request it. Address all correspondence to: Beauties of the Truth, 10034 S.W. 52nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97219. Editorial board: Brs. Jerry Leslie (Editor-in-Chief), David Doran, Carl Hagensick, Michael Nekora, David Rice, David Stein.

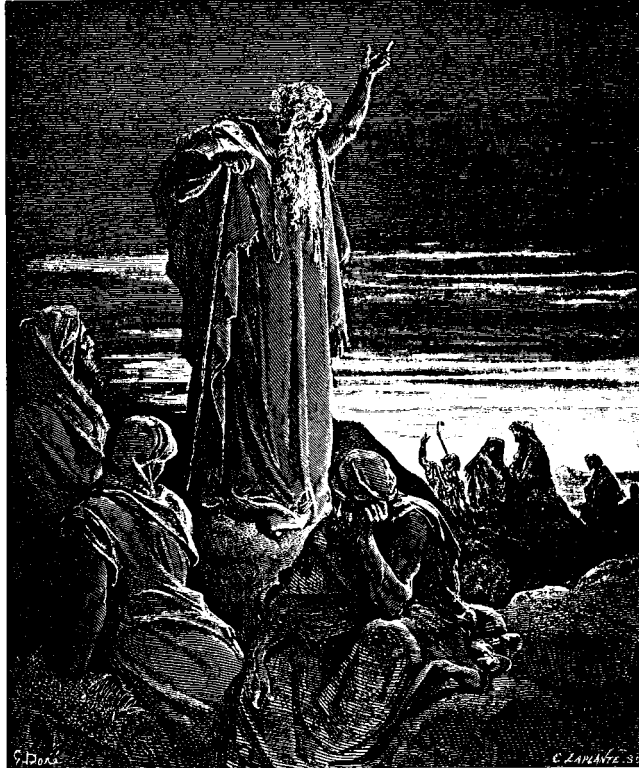
Bones and Bodies

Ezekiel 39:11-16 is an account (apparently symbolic) of the burying of the bodies of the remnants of Gog's invasion of Israel. This article's purpose is to suggest a possible interpretation of the symbolisms of bodies, graves, passengers, Hamon-gog, Gog, and the seven months.

Concerning the symbolic use of bodies and their parts, we suggest that Ezekiel 37:1-14 will aid in understanding Ezekiel 39. In Ezekiel 37, body parts coming together represent the restructuring of the polity of the Jewish nation. Using this as a clue, it seems likely that the decomposition of bodies in Ezekiel 39, and the disintegration of bodies in Zechariah 14, would each represent the destruction of polity- one gradual (decomposition), the other sudden (disintegration). If this is true, Zechariah 14:12 represents a sudden governmental breakdown followed (verse 13) by anarchy. However, Ezekiel 39 seems to represent the tedious task of doing away with all remnants of former governmental concepts during the first 210 years (7 months) of the peaceable Kingdom.

The burying would represent the attempt of mankind to hide and forget all traces of the former ways of government. Those involved full time in this work are Israel (verses 12-14), and they are aided by "passengers" It seems logical that the Ancient Worthies and restored Israel as the leaders of the new order would, indeed, be engaged full time in eradicating the old order. The passengers, however, may be those who are coming to Jerusalem to learn in Zechariah 14:16-19 and 8:20-23.

Their learning ability will become so acute that they can readily point to remnants of the ways of the old order (Ezekiel 39:15), and they will be expected to do so. It is interesting that these “passengers” have a valley named for them. (Ezekiel 39:11) It seems probable that this valley represents the peaceable Kingdom of Zechariah 14:4-5.



Ezekiel Prophesying

If the above symbolisms are correct, the symbolism of Gog and Hamon-gog also become clearer. If the three chapters examined all describe incoming or outgoing polity, they are politically oriented prophecies (as distinguished from prophecies dealing with the religious aspects of Babylon). Therefore, the decomposition of Gog represents the gradual fading of earth's political influence in the lives of individuals. Bible students have generally agreed that the invasion by Gog was an invasion of an irreligious force. This is civil government's last stand. (almost!)

The words of Revelation 20 seem to confirm this conclusion. Here again Gog is mentioned (20:8). It is not reasonable to suppose that these are the same individuals who participated in Jacob's trouble. Rather, Gog here has the same symbolism as he did

in Ezekiel: civil power's advocates. Civil power has long been Satan's tool (compare Rev. 12), and it will apparently form the kernel of his final hour at the little season. Bro. Russell cautions several times that we recognize Revelation 20 as being primarily about Satan's governmental deceptions rather than primarily about his person. Revelation 19 records the beast and false prophet being cast into the lake of fire; but what about the third part of the trio--the dragon? (Compare Rev. 16:13.) The dragon is not destroyed until the *end* of the Millennium (Rev. 20:7-10) although he is bound *during* that period. He works through Gog at *both* ends of the age!

NOTE: The “kings of the earth” of Rev. 19 do not represent the dragon, as can be confirmed by a careful comparison with Revelation 16:13, 14. Even if they did, it will be noticed that they are *not* destroyed in the lake of fire in 19:20. Only two entities are: the beast and the false prophet. Ezekiel 39:11,15 mention Hamon-gog (margin: The Multitude of Gog). Perhaps this clarifies the distinction between the dragon and Gog of Revelation 20. Both represent facets of Satan's deception through civil power. The dragon, however, represents civil power as a unit, as a philosophy, as a tool of the devil. Gog, on the other hand, represents the cooperating individuals (the multitudes). Thus we have portrayed in Scriptures the multitudes (Gog) who serve Satan's governments, and the multitudes (hosts, as in “Lord of Hosts”) who serve God's government. The ideas of the former shall be buried; those of the latter shall prosper forever.

- David Doran

Signs of Christ's Presence

It happens that some brothers and sisters wonder whether the Lord has really returned. More than one hundred years have elapsed since the Lord came again and the Church is not yet completely glorified. Some children of God wonder even whether the six thousand years, symbolizing the night of sin, have passed and whether we are at the dawn of the seventh day of a thousand years. And yet, can we say like the predicted mockers: "Where is the promise of his presence? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation" (2 Peter 3:4) No! Certainly not! For even men who are children of the night acknowledge that an enormous change took place. In a French contemporary history book we read, "Inventions and technical progress are hastening their rhythm, revolutionizing the state of existence, creating a new style of life progressively, common to all men, standardizing the various civilizations sprung from history, building a new world ... Finally, there is more difference between our generation and that of our grandparents than between the generation of our grandparents and the contemporaries of the Roman empire" (Delagrave, page 588) We are children of the day, and we have been enlightened by the Word of God. The world has really changed considerably since our Lord came again. The Lord is accomplishing in our days a work which the worldly do not believe when we tell it to them. It is written in Acts 13:41: "For I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no way believe, though a man declare it unto you" ' But, as far as we are concerned, we see this work eye to eye, as Isaiah says: "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion" (Isaiah 52:8).

On one occasion, the disciples put this question to Jesus: "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy presence, and of the end of the age?" (Matthew 24:3) The disciples desired to know by what sign they would be able to recognize his presence, after his return, and the end of the age. They desired to know a single sign, but our Lord quoted several signs in his answer. I am going to examine some of them briefly in stating my position on this subject.

THE "FAITHFUL AND WISE SERVANT"

Our Lord refers in his prophecy to a servant that he would set over his household and all his possessions on his return. (Matthew 24:45-47) This servant was to be made ruler over the household of faith to give the meat in due season to them, and over all the Lord's possessions as a steward. I believe that Pastor Russell was this servant. The work that he performed was so great and the teachings he transmitted to us are so consistent with the Holy Scriptures that there is no doubt he was that "servant" "No one surpassed him in searching Biblical truths and in evidencing the harmony of the Scriptures.

THE WORK OF THE HARVEST

In his prophecy, our Lord mentioned the harvest in verse 31. He said: "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" This trumpet symbolizes the seventh trumpet, the last trumpet; and the heaven represents the nominal church. According to Revelation 14:14-16, I believe that the harvest takes place in the presence of the Lord.

The harvest is the end of the age, said our Lord; it is a time of separation of the wheat from the tares, of the real Christians from the nominal Christians. It is a time when the tares are bound and then burned. It is also a time of judgment, when the Lord, who has come again, condemns and spews Christendom out of his mouth. After the Lord rejected Christendom, he commanded his disciples to come out of this system called Babylon. (Rev. 18:4)

I believe that the separation of the wheat from the tares has come to an end, and that the tares are bound. In my opinion, we are in a time of sifting, when the wheat is being sifted. The wheat is not yet gathered completely in the heavenly barn and already the tares have begun to be burned. Many nominal Christians, indeed, are leaving the churches and are becoming worldly. They are losing the faith and they are ceasing from claiming that they are real Christians. Their claims to be Christians are burning, disappearing. (Matt. 13:40-42) Paul teaches us that the Lord is making not only the earth tremble, but also the heaven, the ecclesiastical powers, Christendom, that is to say the tares. (Hebrews 12:26, 27)

THE PRESENT TRIBULATION

While the harvest of this age is not yet finished, we already enter into the tribulation predicted by the Lord: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now." This tribulation is coming on the world, as travail upon a woman with child. (1 Thess. 5:3) This time of trouble, also predicted by Daniel, follows the return of the Lord and does not precede it. "At that time shall Michael stand up ... and there shall be a time of trouble."

Someone could say that we are not in a time of trouble, but rather in a time of progress and prosperity. Yes, I concede that we are in a prosperous time, but Daniel explains that the tribulation will come when knowledge increases. In fact, knowledge gives rise to the tribulation, because knowledge enlightens the masses of people about their rights and privileges, and discloses the depths of the sin, causing anger among the nations.

For many years, after the second coming of the Lord, dissatisfaction was not so visible in the world, although the light of knowledge was enlightening the masses more and more. But the elements which were to cause the tribulation were getting ready. Finally a great conflict burst in 1914. It was a worldwide conflict, such as has not been from the beginning of the world. It was the beginning of the tribulation.

In Daniel 2:44, the trouble follows the coming of the Lord. The kingdom is raised up and after that the kingdoms of this world are destroyed. This kingdom represents Christ, head and body. It is not necessary for the members of the Body to be all in heaven, in order for the destruction of the kingdoms of this world to begin. The members on this side of the veil and those beyond the veil constitute the kingdom raised up. If this kingdom is raised up, the King is present, for I believe there can be no kingdom without a king.

THE PRESENT INCREASE OF KNOWLEDGE

The increasing of knowledge is a sign to me of the Lord's presence. Daniel said, "At that time shall Michael stand up, ... many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Knowledge has not increased gradually throughout the centuries, but it appeared almost suddenly. In 1799, people used chariot and horse like Egyptians did several thousand years ago. Now we travel in supersonic airplanes, and even in spaceships.

In Matthew 24:27, we read, "For as the lightning (Greek: astrape) cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the coming of the Son of man" The bright shining is the shining of the Sun of Justice which is to bring healing in his beams. (Matthew 13:43; Malachi 4:2) As the light of the sun comes from the east and flashes as far as the west, so the presence of the Lord will be revealed. At first, only those who are awake recognize this presence (1 Thess. 5:4-6), then all men will become aware of his presence.

This verse also means to me: as the light of the sun rises progressively and shines afterwards in its full radiance, so the light of the sun of justice, the light of truth, symbolizing knowledge, is increasing and will reach its highest degree of brightness when it fills the earth, as the waters cover the sea. (Habakkuk 2:14)

The knowledge proceeds from the Lord, as it is written: "His lightnings [those of the Lord] lightened the world" (Psalm 97:4) "Out of the throne proceeded lightnings., (Revelation 4:5)

THE TIMES OF RESTITUTION

In answering his disciples, Jesus did not speak specifically of the restoration of all things. He made mention of it when he answered Peter, who asked him what the disciples would receive for having left everything to follow him. Jesus said: "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28) Jesus refers here to the regeneration of mankind.

It is only after he was raised from the dead that the Lord, through the mouth of John, spoke of a more general restoration, which would include not only the restoration of man, but also the restoration of the social structure. We read in Revelation 21:5: 'And he that sitteth on the throne said, behold, I make all things new.'" The throne is the great white throne on which our Lord is sitting. The Scripture declares that from his face (in his presence) the earth (the present society) and the heaven (the ecclesiastic powers) fled away (disappeared). (Rev. 20:11)

Heaven was to receive or retain Christ until the times of restitution of all things. Peter said, "Jesus Christ ... whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things" (Acts 3:21) This time of renewal requires his presence. We are in this time already, although the very restoration of man has not yet begun.

When God wanted to create Adam, he first of all prepared the garden of Eden. The Lord is doing the same at present. He is making the preparations and changes which will facilitate the future work of man's restoration. Saint Peter said that all things were to be restored, not only one thing.

The present progress leads to the disappearing of old fashioned institutions and to the establishment of new structures better fitted for our day, but also destined to disappear, because of their imperfection. Human society is being transformed. Man, enlightened more and more, thanks to the knowledge spread by the Lord, succeeds in making great progress, but finally he will realize that he can establish nothing perfect and satisfactory, because he is imperfect and sinful. Moreover, understanding better and better the perfect principles of justice and truth, he will no longer support every imperfect thing and he will overthrow everything he has set up and bring about anarchy in the earth.

For the Lord himself (that is, in person) descended from heaven with the trump of God. This trump of truth and liberty is blaring into all the earth. The whole world is waking to the sound of this trumpet and all the peoples claim liberty and the abolishment of every form of slavery or colonialism. Almost all countries which were dominated by others have gained their independence, and possess the same rights and privileges as their former masters. Those which have not yet obtained their autonomy claim it forcibly. Even the countries which were considered as independent, but were under the constant pressure of a powerful neighboring country, now have full freedom of action. Thus a certain leveling has been performed, and is still being performed among the nations. In Isaiah 40:4, we read this symbolic passage: "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low."

The Apostle Paul says to us that at the sound of this trumpet, those who died in Christ will rise first. (1 Thess. 4:16) In 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52, the same Apostle declares concerning the members of the Church: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trump shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible." In these two passages of scripture, it is said that the resurrection of the Church is done at the sound of a trumpet. Therefore, in these two cases, it is the same trumpet. This trumpet corresponds to that of the Jubilee, which symbolizes the times of restitution of all things.

There are two more texts which are full of significance. They are Ephesians 1:10 and Colossians 1:20. First, Ephesians 1:10: "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." Now, Colossians 1:20: "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" In the fifth volume, on page 424, Brother Russell applies the things in earth to the fallen men and the things in heaven to the fallen angels. Later on, in a sermon delivered in 1910, he said concerning the text of Colossians 1:20: "The Apostle indicates the great scope of Christ's work as it shall be eventually, when finished Now, we know very well that the gathering and reconciliation of the things in heaven precede the gathering and reconciliation of the things in earth.

In the type, it was the priests that were commissioned to sound the trumpet. They were sounding the trumpet of silver. (Numbers 10:7-10) In the antitype, it is the royal priesthood that sounds the trumpet, Jesus as a Head and the Church as his Body. If our Lord Jesus has come with the trump of

God, it is also the duty of the members of his Body, of the antitypical priests, to sound the trumpet of Truth and proclaim the beginning of the antitypical Jubilee, the times of restitution of all things. At the sound of this trumpet, as we have already seen, the Harvest is to be performed and the elect are gathered together from the four winds. (Matthew 24:31)

The whole present social structure of the nation is being shaken to the ground and is being transformed. Equality of rights for all the individuals is acknowledged almost everywhere and the increasing knowledge, which is in a way the growing light of the first beams of the Sun of Justice, has considerably changed the physiognomy of the world. Although the knowledge has often been used for selfish purposes, nevertheless it has brought many blessings to the world. The Lord has already made great changes in the world.



Jesus Ascending. "If I go away, I will come again..."

The nation of Israel, symbolized by the fig tree, and the other nations, represented by all the other trees, are coming to life again and are putting out leaves.

It is not difficult to notice that the Gospel age is finishing and the Millennial age is beginning; that the night of ignorance is coming to an end and the day is beginning to break; that the old things are being eliminated and new things are being introduced.

We see that what God declared to Adam and Eve after their transgression is being changed. Only sin and death still rule fully, because the ransom, although furnished, is not yet paid for mankind. The ransom will be paid, when the Church is complete. Man works less and less in the sweat of his face; thorns and thistles are more easily extirpated and the pains in giving birth may be lessened.

THE INCREASING OF INIQUITY

“And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold” (Matthew 24:12) When men no longer believe in God, they lose the fear to do evil. As it is easier to do evil than to do good, and as the fear of God is no longer in men to brake their passions, it results in an increase of iniquity.

Widespread unbelief is to me a sign of Christ's presence. Jesus said, “However, when the son of man comes, will he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8) Paul said that in the last days perilous times would come and that men would be corrupted. (2 Timothy 3:1-4) Violence and immorality are gaining ground more and more.

I believe that the main reason for the increase of iniquity is the progressive loosing of fallen angels who are exerting a pernicious influence on human beings. They were responsible for the wickedness which prevailed before the flood, and they are also responsible, to a large extent, for the wickedness of our day. (Luke 17:26)

THE REVIVAL OF ISRAEL

Israel is the first nation to enjoy the blessings of the antitypical Jubilee. In 1878, the double for all their sins came to an end. Ever since, the favor of God returned to them gradually and the prophecy of Isaiah 40:1, 2 began to be accomplished. The hopes of the Jews revived, their return to the promised land began, and their rebirth as a nation has become a reality.

This national awakening of Israel is spoken of by the Lord in these words: “Now learn a parable of the fig tree. When its branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near [the Kingdom of God, according to Luke], even at the doors. (Matthew 24:32, 33)

THE DRYING UP OF THE RIVER EUPHRATES

It is written in Revelation 16:12: “And the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river, the river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way might be made ready for the kings that come from the sunrising.”

Babylon represents nominal Christendom. (Revelation 17:5) The waters of the river symbolize the multitude of peoples, of nations and tongues. (Rev. 17:15) Cyrus, whose name means sun, typifies our Lord Jesus Christ, the Sun of Justice. (Isaiah 44:28; Matthew 13:43; Malachi 4:2) The army of Cyrus foreshadows the members of the Church already raised up, the kings of the rising sun. Our Lord does not destroy Babylon literally as soon as he comes again, but he acts as it is shown in the type. He surrounds her first, diverts the water of the symbolic Euphrates and dries up in this manner what sustained the great city.

Today, peoples alienate their affections from the nominal church. They leave the churches or neglect to attend religious services, and the recruiting of priests is more and more difficult. Saint Paul says to us in 2 Thessalonians 2:8: “And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming.” (Revised version) Let us notice that the Apostle speaks firstly of the destruction by “the breath of his mouth” The breath of the Lord's mouth is the Word of God, the Bible, which is spread today by millions of copies and which undermines the very structure of Babylon. Then the overthrowing of the lawless one, of Christendom, will happen, at the time of the manifestation (epiphania) of the coming (parousia) of our Lord, at a late time of his presence, when the way of the kings that come from the sunrising is made ready, that is to say when the Church is entirely resurrected. (Revelation 16:12; 17:14; Isaiah 66:7)

Thus, the Lord, to a large extent, is drying up the Euphrates. He is flashing the light of the Truth; he is spreading the knowledge of his Word; he is revealing the wicked one by laying bare his gross

errors; he is enlightening the masses of people, making them more and more able to distinguish the truth from the error.

In the type, it is shown to us that before the destruction of Babylon, the Israelites were called out of this city. They had to flee out of Babylon. (Jeremiah 51:6) It is the same in the antitype; before the literal destruction of mystic Babylon, the spiritual Israelites are called to come out of her, in order to not share in her plagues. (Revelation 18:4)

This coming out of the spiritual Israelites of the midst of Babylon took place in a large measure as soon as the antitypical Euphrates began being dried up, and corresponds to the work of harvest described by our Lord in Matthew 13:30; 24:15-18 and shown to John in Revelation 14:14-16. The expression “kings that come from the sunrising” gives us to understand that these kings are on the march. It suggests the idea that the members of the Church are also coming as they pass one after another beyond the second veil. When the Euphrates is dried up, the way will be made ready for them to destroy mystic Babylon. They will take part with their Lord in the overthrowing of nominal Christendom. (Revelation 17:14; 16:17-19)

THE PURIFICATION OF THE SONS OF LEVI

Malachi declares: “But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire ... and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver.” (Malachi 3:2, 3) This passage of the Scriptures reveals two important facts: 1) that those of God's children who would still be in the flesh at the Lord's coming would pass through fiery trials for some time, 2) that only those who would do the will of God would abide the day of the Lord's coming and stand before him. The sons of Levi are the church of the first-borns, the little Flock and the great multitude. This purification is being performed on this side of the veil. Let us watch and pray that we may stand before the Son of man. (Luke 21:36)

Amen.

- *Antoine Papajak, France*

FROM A READER

One point in your comment [“From a Reader,” May, 1991] on Lev. 9:5, you understood “they” to mean the elders. I must question this, in Lev. 9:1 we find Moses calling Aaron and his sons and the elders. I understand “they” to mean Aaron and his sons, the elders if they were not priests or Levites could not handle any of the items of the Tabernacle. (The elders were there just looking on.)

- *S.S, New York*

The Transfiguration

In Luke 9:27 Jesus said something remarkable: “But I tell you of a truth there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God” Although the account doesn't state it directly, it appears this was fulfilled about a week later when Peter, James, and John saw a remarkable vision. That vision was described by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. From the context found in Matthew and Mark, we surmise it took place on Mt. Hermon [the name means “Consecrated Place”]. Here is Luke's description of the vision:

“And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered and his raiment was white and glistening. And behold there talked with him two men which were Moses and Elias [Elijah], who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory and the two men that stood with him. And it came to pass as



The Transfiguration

they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here. And let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen” Luke 9:28-36

Although the word is not used by Luke, both Matthew and Mark say Jesus was “transfigured” before them. (Matt. 17:2, Mark 9:2) That's why this is called the Transfiguration Scene. Matthew says this was a vision (17:9) which it surely was since both Moses and Elijah were dead and would not have been resurrected just

for the purposes of this drama. In many respects it was like the Revelation vision John received on the isle of Patmos. It was as real to their minds as though it was actually happening. Like the Revelation vision, it was not a diorama or a frozen moment in time. The three men talked together about the coming death [Greek: *exodos*] of Jesus. And that was why it was given.

In Matt. 16:22 Peter upbraids Jesus: “Be it far from thee, Lord: this [suffering and death in Jerusalem] shall NOT be unto thee’ “ If Peter and the disciples believed a person's death ended

everything, of course they would try to keep Jesus from allowing himself to be killed. What they did not understand is that death is not the end. For new creatures, it's the beginning. By hearing this discussion about Jesus' death (and undoubtedly about his subsequent resurrection to follow), and seeing him in "glory," these disciples began to understand the Heavenly Father's plan for his son, and by extension, for them as well.

That was the primary reason for this experience. There may even be more in this vision of the "kingdom of God" than Peter, James, and John may have realized. Why, for example, were Moses and Elijah present? Ezekiel names Noah, Daniel, and Job as unusually righteous (Ezek. 14:14, 20). Why not have these three appear in the vision instead of Moses and Elijah?

It is not that these two fasted for 40 days in the wilderness as had Jesus. It was not that their bodies were never found after their death as also occurred with Jesus. Nor was it that some of the last words in the Jewish Bible coupled Moses and Elijah together (Mal. 4:4, 5). This was a vision of the kingdom in its glory. With the glorified Jesus are two who represent the two phases of that kingdom.

Moses represents the earthly phase, the house of servants. "Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant" (Heb. 3:5) Elijah represents the heavenly phase, those who are "caught up into heaven" if faithful. (1 Kings 2:11)

While seeing this vision Peter probably recalled the words of Deut. 18:15, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall harken" " He certainly knew that text for he quoted it in Acts 3:22 when he preached to the people of Jerusalem and applied those words to Jesus. It was as though Moses had moved through time and personally showed Peter who this Prophet was to whom people were to harken. If seeing that Moses' words were fulfilled in Jesus did not happen at the moment Peter saw this vision, the action of the holy spirit on his mind certainly caused that connection to be made at Pentecost.

When their mountaintop experience was over, the three disciples descended back into the valley where they had to confront the world, the flesh, and the devil. Their own sufferings were not over, but now they really knew this was God's will for His son and for them. They had received a glimpse of the coming kingdom's glory. And that is exactly the way Peter characterized it many years later:

"For we have not been following cunningly devised tales in making known to you the power and appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were beholders of that greatness. For having received from God the Father honor and glory, a voice of this kind was brought to him by the magnificent glory -"This is my son, the beloved, in whom I delight." And this voice which was brought from heaven we heard, being with him on the holy mountain." - 2 Peter 1:16-18 [Diaglott]

Jesus was transfigured (Greek: *metamorphoo* - metamorphose in English) to show the future glory that would be his after his death. This same Greek word is also used to describe the change that must come upon us BEFORE we become actual spirit beings. Notice the words in Romans 12:2 following the well-known consecration verse: "And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed [Greek: *metamorphoo*] by the renewing of your mind We are to be changed from the

fashion of this world into the fashion of our Lord Jesus Christ. If we are not changed/transformed/transfigured, we will not be a part of the body of Christ for we will not be acceptable to God. Paul also used this Greek word in his second letter to the Corinthians:

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed [Greek: *metamorphoo*] into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” - 2 Cor. 3:18

In the earlier verses of this chapter Paul talks about the face of Moses after he returned from communing with God. Moses had to put a veil on his face and so the words “open face” should be understood as “unveiled face.” When the people looked at the face of Moses, they saw the glory or radiance of God shining from it. Moses “mirrored” the glory of God. As we commune with the Lord, the glory we behold should have a transforming influence upon us as we seek to become a copy of that glory. And the world should see that our relationship with God has had an effect upon us; they should see God in our face. Moffatt conveys this with his translation of the Greek:

“But we all mirror the glory of the Lord with face unveiled, and so we are being transformed into the same likeness as himself, passing from one glory [*the one we behold*] to another [*becoming a manifestation of that glory*]

Our mountain-top experiences are meant to increase our faith so we can be faithful even in the face of adversity. Peter assures us that if we are faithful, the “transfiguration” that we desire will be a reality:

“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”-2 Peter 1:10, 11

- *Michael Nekora*

Common Days

One of the chief dangers of life is trusting occasions. We think that conspicuous events, striking experiences, exalted moments have most to do with our character and capacity. We are wrong. Common days, monotonous hours, wearisome paths, plain old tools, and everyday clothes tell the real story. Good habits are not made on birthdays, nor Christian character at the new year. The vision may dawn, the dream may waken, the heart may leap with a new inspiration on some mountaintop, but the test, the triumph, is at the foot of the mountain, on the level plain.

The workshop of character is everyday life. The uneventful and commonplace hour is where the battle is won or lost. Thank God for a new truth, a beautiful idea, a glowing experience; but remember that unless we bring it down to the ground and teach it to walk with feet, work with hands, and stand the strain of daily life, we have worse than lost it, we have been hurt by it. A new light in our heart makes an occasion; but an occasion is an opportunity, not for building a tabernacle and feeling thankful and looking back to a blessed memory, but for shedding the new light on the old path, and doing old duties with new inspiration. The uncommon life is the child of the common day, lived in an uncommon way.

- *Our Most Holy Faith, page 541*

The Exodus - Part II

A continuation of "An Introduction to the Exodus. A Picture of the Plan of the Ages," appearing in the previous issue.

THE PASSOVER

The passover lamb is a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 5:7). The Passover has been the subject of many good studies and summaries (e.g., Studies in the Scriptures, Vol. 6, Study XI, "The Passover of the New Creation"), which will not be repeated here. But we should address the question, Why is the Passover given in connection with the last plague?

Christ's First Advent could hardly have waited until Armageddon! It would appear, then, that the Passover is shown just before the Exodus begins in order to remind us that it is Christ's Ransom Sacrifice at His First Advent that leads to the deliverance of all peoples from the world of sin, sickness, and death.

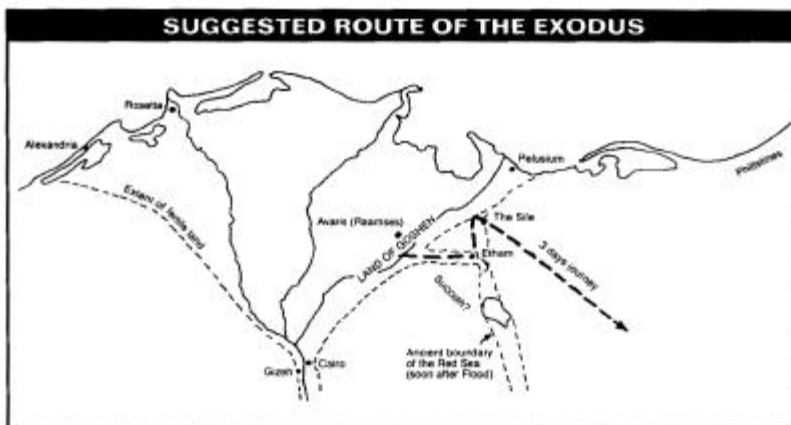
In like manner, "Behold, I come as a thief" in Revelation 16:15, given just before the Armageddon plague, is a reminder that Christ's Second Advent is also necessary to the deliverance of all peoples. (Neither the First or Second Advent is delayed until Armageddon.) It is to be inferred from Revelation 15:8 that when the last plague is ended humanity will come to the temple (Christ and his church, 2 Cor. 6:16) to receive the blessings of the Millennial-Age covenant. - Rev. 21:24

THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

It seems good to close with a thumbnail sketch of the world's great hope. Unleavened bread symbolizes pure and uncorrupted spiritual food, as in 1 Corinthians 5:6-8. The passover itself was to be eaten with unleavened bread (Exod. 12:8), as we with the heavenly hope must now partake of Christ's sacrifice. On the morrow began a seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread. (Exod. 12:15-20, Lev. 23:4-8) The first day and the last day were each to be holy convocations. The first day of the Exodus (from Avaris/Ramses to Succoth, Exod. 12:37) represents the beginning of the deliverance of the Lord's people from the kingdom of bondage, or the deliverance of ransomed mankind at the beginning of Christ's Thousand-Year Kingdom on earth. Imagine what rejoicing there will be as

people begin to come back from the dead!

A second day brings Israel from Succoth to Etham (near modern Ismailia), just at the edge of the desert (Exod. 13:20), and on the third day they turn 90° and go along the edge of the desert to near Pihahiroth, to a narrow



part of what once connected to the Red Sea. A fourth day is spent crossing the sea and watching Pharaoh (sic!) and his hosts drown. Thereupon they sing a beautiful song of thanksgiving for their deliverance (Exod. 15:1-18), showing the world's thanksgiving for final deliverance from all enemies at the end of the Millennium. - 1 Cor. 15:25-26

Days five, six, and seven fulfill their original call to go three days journey into the desert to serve Jehovah their God. (Exod. 3:18, 5:3, 8:27,15:22) Thus the holy convocation on the seventh and final day of the feast depicts the rejoicing of mankind throughout the perfect ages of eternity. -Rev. 5:13

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A lad of seventeen, Joseph was sold successively to the Midianites, Ishmaelites (nomadic merchant Arabs), and the Egyptians about BC 1851, during the reign of Sesostris III. Towards the end of this reign Joseph was falsely imprisoned. In the second year of the new king, Amenemhet III felt insecure and imprisoned his butler and baker (perhaps on charges of food poisoning), where Joseph interpreted their dreams. In the fourth year of Amenemhet Joseph was exalted to the highest office in the king's government. After eight years the famine began, and in the ninth year Jacob and all his family moved to Egypt, BC 1830.

Jacob died in the 29th year of Amenemhet 111, and Joseph was given leave to go to Canaan to bury him. Sixteen years later Amenemhet died, after a 45-year reign, and his son took the throne. The dynasty ended eleven years later, BC 1786. Twenty-seven years later Joseph also died. Then a new king arose over Egypt, who knew not Joseph. The Hyksos kings were the original builders of the capitol city of Avaris (later renamed Raamses), about BC 1724. (The Hyksos were merchants and craftsmen, who evidently stepped into a power vacuum. They were immigrants of mixed Semitic and Hamitic stock. They introduced horse-and-chariot warfare into Egypt.) Moses was born BC 1696 and adopted by Pharaoh's daughter.

When Moses was about 37, Khian ascended to the throne (possibly usurping it from Moses) and became the greatest of the Hyksos kings, even reuniting the country. In Khian's 3rd year Moses left the royal court (perhaps dissenting from Khian's methods and practices) and fled Egypt.

After Khian's 40-year reign, any successor would have to be ambitious to leave his mark in history. Israelite slave labor was an integral part of fulfilling this ambition. But in his third year Moses returned to Egypt. (Exod. 4:19) Pharaoh's ambition ran counter to the LORD's determination, which brought on the destruction of Egypt (compare Exodus 10:7), and the following year the death of Pharaoh himself. His name is still unknown.

Thirty-nine years later the last of the Hyksos dynasty had been driven from Egypt and were destroyed at Sharuhin, in southern Palestine. "Ye shall see them no more again for ever" (Exod. 14:13), for in the fortieth year the Israelites entered Palestine (Canaan).

Later, an Egyptian queen left the following monument to the Exodus: "I have restored that which was ruins, I have raised up that which was unfinished, Since the Asiatics (Hyksos) were in the midst of Avaris (Raamses) of the Northland, And the barbarians (Israelites) were in the midst of them.

- James Parkinson

Errata

In the article of last issue titled “I Saw God,” two typographical errors unfortunately changed the sense of the writer.

Page 6, column 2, second bulleted item, should have read:

- John noted 4 “living creatures” having 6 wings each. Each had only one face, but the appearance of the faces was, again, of a lion, ox, eagle and man.

Page 7, column 1, first 3 lines, should have read:

with human faces. This gives us grounds to believe that the cherubim's “body” from Ezekiel's vision was the missing element of resemblance to a lion.