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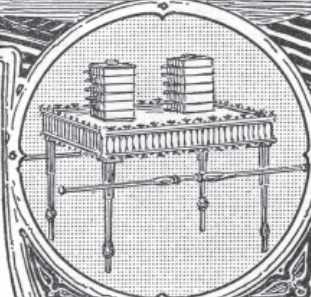
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"The Lamb opened the seventh seal." "Ye have approached Mount Zion, and the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem. . . See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh . . . saying . . . 'Yet once more I shake not the earth only but also heaven' . . . Wherefore, receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear." "Christ being come an High Priest . . . by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle . . . obtained eternal deliverance."—Rev. 8: 1; Heb. 12: 22, 25, 26, 28; 9: 11, 12.



THE PROPHECY OF HABAKKUK

CHAPTER I

Is both instructive and exhortational. As a teacher to his people Israel, the Prophet Habakkuk was directed by Jehovah God to inscribe the prophecies so that others could read, learn, and act accordingly.

CHAPTER I

TRUTH people in general have long been familiar with parts of this prophecy, because for many years Bro. Russell used Hab. 2:1 on the cover page of *The Watch Tower*, as well as in other connections. He used Hab. 2:3 as the text for an article in R 5374; and Hab. 3:17, 18 in the May 15 Manna and as the basis for the article, “*A Great Prophecy Nearing Fulfillment*,” in R 5383. The fact that over 100 years have elapsed since he published this last article, naturally raises the question in the minds of thinking Truth people as to whether or not that prophecy has now been fulfilled. The book of Habakkuk is of special interest, and we invite all to study it with us.

During the long period that the nation of Israel occupied the land of Canaan, God, from time to time, punished them in various ways for their violations of the Law Covenant. Finally, however, in the days of the last kings of Judah, He foretold through His prophets, notably Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk and Zephaniah, that, because of the people’s gross sins against their covenant, He would allow Jerusalem to be destroyed and their land to become a desolation. This came to pass at the hands of the Babylonians [Chaldeans—Babylon was the capital of Chaldea, a vast country] under Nebuchadnezzar, in the days of Zedekiah (Ezek. 21:25-27).

The experiences of Fleshly Israel have a counterpart in the experiences of Spiritual Israel—God’s people of the Gospel Age (see R 2401, col. 2; 3623, col. 1, bottom; R 5509, 5510). The overthrow of Jerusalem in Zedekiah’s day has a counterpart in the overthrow of Christendom here in the end of the Gospel Age (P-2, p. 394—Note III). During this Age, nominal Spiritual Israel has been highly favored by God; but, like nominal Fleshly Israel, they have sinned grievously against Him in many ways. Therefore, He has foretold the destruction of nominal Spiritual Israel, Christendom, in the present great Time of Trouble. The Lord specially used Bro. Russell to forecast this and as early as 1889, he set forth from the Scriptures even the very year, 1914, in which it would begin (P-2 Foreword, p. vi).

In *The Parousia Messenger* (E-14), Chapters VII-IX, Bro. Russell’s ministry toward Christendom is set forth in considerable detail as pictured in Jeremiah’s ministry to Fleshly Israel. A re-study of these chapters would be very helpful in this connection, for Jeremiah is supposed to have been a contemporary of Habakkuk, and Habakkuk’s message is like his in many respects. The applications made in E-14 concerning Jeremiah are very helpful to an understanding of the book of Habakkuk, especially in its application here in the end of the Age.

As shown in the E-14 reference, the solemn messages Bro. Russell preached to Christendom, foretelling its destruction, prove that he was pictured in Jeremiah. We will show from Hab. 2:1-3, how Bro. Russell identified himself as pictured in Habakkuk. The vision of Hab. 2:3 was to speak “at the end”; it was through the Miller



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Free from all sects, parties, organizations, and creeds of men, but bound to God as it understands His Word, this magazine stands for —

- The defense of the Parousia Truth, given by the Lord through “that Servant,” as basic for all further development of the Truth;
- The defense of the arrangements, charter and will given by the Lord through “that Servant,” as binding on controlling corporations and associations among Truth people; and for
- The exposition and defense of the unfolding Epiphany-Basileia Truth, as meat in due season for the Lord’s people, as He is pleased to provide it.

movement (1829-1844), after the beginning of the “time of the end” in 1799 (Dan. 12:9; P-3, pp. 23-60), that the vision began to speak (P-2, pp.14, 15; E-6, p. 463) and has been increasingly doing so. Therefore, in considering Habakkuk as applying at the end of the Gospel Age, we should bear in mind that while he represents Bro. Russell chiefly, he also represents Bro. William Miller and other true “watchers” in the Time of the End who have embraced (*Habakkuk* means *embracing*) the Truth as due, including especially its prophetic and chronological features (Bible quotations are from NKJ, unless noted otherwise).

A BRIEF SUMMARY

For assistance in understanding the scope and contents of the book of Habakkuk, we will first set forth some generalities, before we proceed to the details as applying in the end of the Gospel Age in relation to Spiritual Israel. Habakkuk ranks high among the Hebrew prophets and poets. In the field of literature, his writing, especially Chapter 3, is a masterpiece; and its logic, diction, simplicity, imagery, vividness, majesty, spirit and sublimity, are worthy of much admiration.

The central theme or keynote of Habakkuk’s prophecy centers in faith (Hab. 2:4—“The just shall live by his faith”), even as faith was the theme of much of the teaching of the Apostle Paul, who three times quoted this very text from Habakkuk (Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38). Faith, being the condition and proof of righteousness, is to Habakkuk, and to Paul, the rule and method of attaining eternal life. Habakkuk, in the light of his times, presents faith in its various aspects: in its perplexities, its testings, its mental appreciation, its absolute heart’s reliance on God’s promises, its calm and clear contemplation of surrounding adversities, its activation in declaring God’s counsel “Faith, ... if it does not have works, is dead”—(Jas. 2:17), its trust in God where it cannot trace Him, its final triumph and its full development and rest in God in the blessedness of joyful hope.

The general line of thought in the book of Habakkuk starts with his expression of grief over the gross sins of Fleshly Israel, God’s nominal people, and his expression of perplexity at God’s allowing such conditions to continue (Hab. 1:2-4); next we have God’s revelation of His intended strange work, His intended raising up of the Chaldeans to punish them (Hab. 1:5-11); then Habakkuk’s reply is given, in which he expresses confidence in God, based upon His eternity, power, justice and holiness, and a realization that God’s use of the heathen to chastise His people was to be disciplinary and correctional; however,

he still expresses perplexity as to how to harmonize God’s character with His intended use of the treacherous and wicked Babylonians to penalize and triumph over those who are more righteous than they; also, he questions whether God will allow the destruction of the nations to go on to a completion (Hab. 1:12-17).

Taking his stand as of one apart, on a watchtower, the prophet then watches carefully and waits trustfully upon God (Hab. 2:1); then God rewards him with a prophetic vision that gives him the answer to these questions. God tells him to write down the vision and to make it plain and publish it. Despite the seeming slowness of its fulfillment, God assures him that eventually it will come to pass (Hab. 2:2, 3); in it the oppressor is set forth under the figure of a self-exalted, degraded, drunken, proud, nomadic, insatiable and power-crazed man, in contrast with the just, those who are faithful to God, who shall live by their faith (Hab. 2:4, 5). Five woes are pronounced upon the oppressor, by all the oppressed: (*a*) woe to him and spoiling, because of his having spoiled many others, with much injustice, bloodshed and violence (Hab. 2:6-8); (*b*) woe to him because of covetousness, self-exaltation and wholesale murder (Hab. 2:9-11); (*c*) woe to him for having erected a wicked city (Babylon), through iniquity, bloodshed and vanity (Hab. 2:12-14); (*d*) woe to him for his drunkenness, his causing of drunkenness and shameful conduct with others and his lust of conquest (Hab. 2:15-17); and (*e*) woe to him for his practice of idolatry and teaching of falsehood (Hab. 2:18, 19). Then comes the solemn exhortation: “Jehovah is in His holy temple Let all the earth keep silence before Him” (Hab. 2:20).

Deeply impressed, the prophet utters a psalm of prayer and adoration. He stands in awe before God as he, in faith, prays for a revival of God’s work in the midst of the years and that justice might be tempered with mercy (Hab. 3:1, 2). He recounts God’s wondrous works of the past in the destruction of the wicked, for the salvation of His people (Hab. 3:3-15). Because of the tremendous trouble thus revealed as having been in past instances, incidental to and necessary for, the deliverance of God’s faithful people, and the prospect of similar experiences before him, Habakkuk stands before God in extreme trepidation (Hab. 3:16), yet fully trusting in Him (for the righteous shall live by their faith—Hab. 2:4) and resting joyously in the God of his salvation, even though the invasion of the enemy will bring starvation conditions and utter desolation (Hab. 3:17, 18). The triumph of an unwavering faith and an unflinching hope

is brought to a climax in Hab. 3:19.

By summarizing the book of Habakkuk, and noting only its surface application, we see that it is a marvelous prophecy, filled with many practical lessons for those who would walk the way of faith in God's favor. However, as already noted, the experiences of Fleshly Israel of the Jewish Age have a counterpart in the experiences of God's Israel of the Gospel Age, even as we read (Isa. 9:8): "The Lord sent a word against Jacob, and it has fallen [shall alight—see Rotherham, R.S.V.] on Israel" (see also 1 Cor. 10:11). The study of the details of Habakkuk's prophecy in its application to Spiritual Israel here in the Time of the End should be helpful and full of interest to all of God's people.

THE TIME OF THE END

Habakkuk introduces his prophecy (Hab. 1:1) as "the burden" which he "did see" (in prophetic vision). The Hebrew word here translated "burden" signifies an oracle or revelation, usually one relative to a solemn message, perhaps a severe sentence or punishment or future calamity, in the sense of its being a heavy weight under which the subject or subjects would sooner or later be afflicted (2 Kg. 9:25; Isa. 14:28-32; Zech. 12:1-3). Therefore, "the oracle of which Habakkuk the prophet had vision" (as Rotherham renders it) refers particularly to the solemn message given by God here in the Time of the End, pointing out from prophecy and chronology the payback and destruction to come upon Christendom; however, it is nevertheless a heart-cheering message, for it also gives assurance of the deliverance to come for all of God's true people. This message began to be given through Bro. Miller and other faithful "watchers" from 1829-1844 before the beginning of the Harvest in 1874; but it was given through Bro. Russell, and subordinately through other true "watchers," in a much clearer and more comprehensive sense (including an understanding of the entire plan of the ages—R 5374, R 5731) here in the Harvest (which in the wider sense includes the Epiphany period—see PT 1938, pp. 68, 164), when the vision was especially *to speak and not lie* (E-6, p. 463, par. 3). We will consider it especially as applying from 1874 onward.

GREAT EVILS

Though there have been many evils in Christendom throughout the Gospel Age, the Harvest was the special time for the abounding of iniquity (2 Tim. 3:1-9, 13; Matt. 24:12; E-17, pp. 289, 290, 298, 299, 305). "The Jordan River represents the curse of sin, error and death and overflows all its banks during the whole time

of harvest" (Josh. 3:15; E-11, pp. 75-81). Many and disgusting were the evils, especially along religious lines by opposing the due Truth of the Harvest (Jer. 1:16), which have been committed by God's nominal people in Christendom during that time.

Bro. Russell, early in the Harvest, and other faithful "watchers" contemplating such evils, became distressed at heart, and mourned because of them (Ezek. 9:4), and called upon God in earnest supplication, asking how long (Rev. 6:10) He would allow such things to go on among His nominal people, seemingly without any evidence of His recognizing and correcting them and without delivering the righteous (O LORD, how long shall I cry, and you will not hear! even cry out to you of violence, and you will not save! Hab. 1:2). They were perplexed over God's allowing such gross wrongdoing to be publicly practiced in Christendom "Why do you show me iniquity ... trouble?" (Hab. 1:3; Jer. 12:1), even robbery under the cloak of religion, and violations and devastations as to the Truth and its Spirit "plundering and violence are before me" (Jer. 6:7; Ezek. 7:23; 8:17; 9:9), with sectarians fighting against the Truth and its Spirit, professed Christians biting and devouring one another and some, actively sowing discord among their brethren, "raise up strife and contention" (Gal. 5:15).

Adding to antitypical Habakkuk's distress was the fact that they saw that because God allowed such conditions to continue, even permitting the wicked to prosper in their wickedness, therefore, (Hab. 1:4), His professed people, nominal Spiritual Israel, were becoming hardened by such violations of truth and righteousness, and more and more, His law of duty and disinterested love was becoming powerless to restrain them—it was becoming a mere dead letter "the law is slacked" [*benumbed*—Rotherham]), and justice and truth were not practiced "judgment does not go forth" (Jer. 5:1-5; 6:13); for the covenant-breakers, in the great majority among God's professed people, were surrounding and getting ready, it appeared, to swallow up the comparatively few who remained faithful "for the wicked surround the righteous," with the result that righteousness and truth were perverted, twisted and wrested, and injustice and error were in the ascendancy "therefore perverse judgment proceeds."

Amid such conditions, antitypical Habakkuk was indeed very distressed and ill at ease. As indicated in Bro. Russell's case (Jer. 9:2), they would gladly have fled from contact with such symbolic adulterers and such treacherous covenant-breakers, and have lived entirely

apart; but, as the Apostle Paul explained (1 Cor. 5:9, 10), that was impossible, “for then you would need to go out of the world.”

GOD’S STRANGE WORK

God’s reply to the inquiry of antitypical Habakkuk, Bro. Russell and other faithful “watchers,” as to why He seemingly prospered rather than opposed the evils which have been committed by His nominal people, especially in the Harvest of the Gospel Age, is found in Hab. 1:5-11.

This prophecy was one of sufficient importance to be recorded by two of the Lord’s prophets (Isa. 29:14). The Apostle Paul made reference to it when speaking to the people of his day in Acts 13:40, 41. St. Paul here quoted from the Septuagint, which was familiar to his hearers that this was the end of the harvest of the Jewish Age. We see that it had an application to that peculiar time, since that Age with its Harvest, and all its peculiar circumstances was, as we have seen (P-2, pp. 201-245), a type of the Gospel Age and its Harvest. We recognize this prophecy, as well as the other prophetic features of the context, as having a fuller and more special application to the Harvest period of the Gospel Age. It is true, as it was in the Harvest of the Jewish Age, that there were many despisers of the Truth—especially of the Truth that was due and coming to light. Nevertheless, the Lord’s great work went steadily forward: He was doing “His work, His strange work, and bringing to pass His act, His strange act” (Isa. 28:21, 22). It was indeed a strange work to those unacquainted with the Lord’s plan, which set aside all human theories and plans, and pursued a course in direct opposition to them all. In R 1487, as elsewhere, (R 2813; 5718), Bro. Russell applies the “strange act” to the Gospel-Age Harvest.

In answering antitypical Habakkuk’s query, God addressed Himself directly to nominal Spiritual Israel, whose sins had occasioned the query; and He called upon them to consider carefully their surroundings and the forces He was already marshaling against them, to recognize the solemnity of the situation and the awful retribution about to be visited upon them.

“Behold you among [*Look ye about among*—Leeser] the heathen [nations, or peoples], and regard, and wonder marvelously” [Hebrew—*be astounded, astounded*; the doubling of the word is a Hebrew idiom, denoting the excess and the continuance of their astonishment at the unparalleled and strange events that were about to take place], (Hab.1:5); for He was then preparing the great scourge of trouble (Isa. 28:18) which was shortly (in 1914) to break forth in all its fury “for I will work a work

in your days” [this answers the question “how long?” in Hab. 1:2], to accomplish His purpose of exacting retribution for the evils committed, of overthrowing the errors of His nominal people and of shattering their pride, false hopes and human schemes for the uplifting and blessing of the world. It was to be a trouble so terrible and unprecedented (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21, 22) and came in such an unexpected way (1 Thes. 5:3), which is gradually accomplishing their downfall, despite all their efforts to prevent it. They would not believe it, though it was told to them from the Scriptures “you would not believe, though it were told you.” Instead, they preferred to believe their lying prophets (Jer. 27:9-14), who, with their cries of “peace and safety,” encouraged them not to believe the Truth message regarding the coming retribution on Christendom.

God emphatically declared that it is He, the one whose longsuffering is sometimes apt to be misunderstood as being neglectful of justice, who now, in the Day of His Preparation, raises up the great army of warriors, revolutionists and anarchists, who will encroach against and finally overthrow Christendom; “For, lo, I [*For behold me*—Rotherham] raise up the Chaldeans [*encroachers*]” (Hab. 1:6); (Isa. 42:13, 14; Jer. 21:4-6; 32:23-35; E-14, p. 407; P-4, pp. 542-552). They were not to begin this overthrow until the Lord’s Second Advent, during the Time of Trouble (Jas. 5:1-8; Zeph. 1:14-18; 3:8, 9), beginning in 1914, though they were making preparation for it beforehand. They are embittered, relentless and quick to act; they infiltrate and will conquer every nook and corner of Christendom, as they enter spheres not rightfully theirs “bitter and hasty ... march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling places ... not theirs.”

God stated further that these antitypical Chaldeans are formidable and frightful; their principle is, “My will is my law”—they are not governed by God’s laws, but their standards of what is right and their proper stations are determined by their own desires “They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves,” (Hab. 1:7). Their teachings “horses,” (Hab. 1:8) come upon Christendom stealthily, yet spread with great rapidity “swifter than the leopards,” and they attack more fiercely “more fierce [*more sharply they attack*—Rotherham] than the evening wolves”; *evening* wolves are the most savage, for they have been kept hungry all day, waiting for that darkness under the cover of which “all the beasts of the forest do creep forth”—(Psa. 104:20). The proponents of their teachings

penetrated all fields and came from a sphere of teaching and spirit far from Christendom; with great speed they attack “their horsemen shall spread ... shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hastens to eat.”

God said that this great army will not hesitate to use rash and violent measures (They shall come all for violence, Hab. 1:9) [God’s retributive justice measures to Christendom violence for violence (Ezek. 7:23-27); this answers the question and cry concerning *violence* in—Hab. 1:2, 3]]. Their destruction of Christendom, as such, will be complete, their faces shall sup up [swallow all] as the east wind [which in that country dries up the moisture very quickly]: “nothing shall escape them”—(Joel 2:3); the A.R.V. and others render this clause: “the set of their faces is forwards [or, *toward the east*—margin]” which suggests the thought that “they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks”—(Joel 2:7); also that, although they are opposed to truth and righteousness, nevertheless they are advancing toward the symbolic east, where, after the symbolic fire of the Time of Trouble works its destruction of the present evil heavens and earth, leaving the wicked neither root nor branch for further development, the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings—(Mal. 4:1, 2; see P-1, pp. 69, 319, par. 2; P-4, pp. 11, 528, 552, 616; R 622, col. 1). Through propaganda, secret agencies, mass psychology,

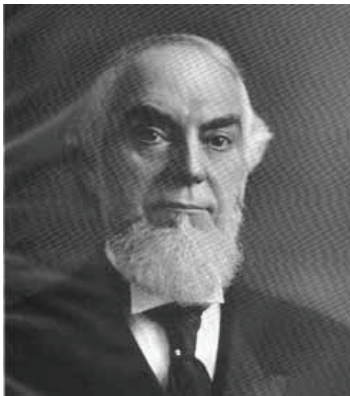
they captivate great numbers in Christendom “they shall gather the captivity [*captives*—A.R.V.] as the sand.”

Furthermore, God declared that the antitypical Chaldeans will belittle Christendom’s government, aristocratic (including the financial) and ecclesiastical rulers and make their subordinate leaders a laughing-stock “they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them” they will ridicule all of Christendom’s supposedly strong positions of state, aristocracy and ecclesiasticism “they shall deride every strong hold” (Hab. 1:10), (Nahum 3:12); for by the aid of teachings and facts of history, as fortifications of their position, they will easily overthrow them “they shall heap dust [or, *earth*; the Chaldeans erected their fortifications] and take it.” As they succeed more and more in their efforts, their spirit or disposition will become more and more arrogant and their consequent violence will be very great as they transgress the laws of justice and propriety “Then shall his mind change, and he shall pass over [all bounds and restraints; *transgress*—Young, A.R.V., margin; *bath committed excess*—Rotherham] and offend” (Hab. 1:11). Not realizing that they are being used to overthrow Christendom as a punishment for its evil practices, they will boast that their victorious achievements are solely the work of their own hands, the result of their own efforts “imputing this power unto his god” (or, *he, whose might is his god*—A.R.V.).

THE PROPHECY OF HABAKKUK

CHAPTER 2

ANTITYPICAL HABAKKUK



Bro. Russell identified himself as being typed in Habakkuk, in R 621, 769, 5731, P-3, p. 89, on the front cover of every *Watch Tower* from 1895 onward, on the Chart of the Ages, and he included other faithful watchers also, in R 621, and additionally in R 1475,

where we read: “God says (Hab. 2:2) to some to whom He has granted a measure of ability to serve the household, and who (Hab. 1:1) are watching (studying His Word) to know what He would have them communicate—“Write the vision [what you have seen of Divine Truth], and make it plain upon tablets [A.R.V.]”—also, Bro. Russell writes: “It was in *the time of the end* that antitypical Habakkuk (Hab. 2:3) declared that the vision concerning the glorious consummation of God’s plan should speak and not lie; and that, to some of God’s children it should speak so plainly that they would be able, as directed, to make it plain on tables; that through their instrumentality others might be enabled to read it clearly” (Leeser).

Bro. Johnson shows in E-9, p. 407, that Bro. Russell was typed in Habakkuk, particularly in his “Views From

The Watch Tower,” and also in P-2, pp. 3, 4 and in some tracts. In E-10, p. xxi, he states: “Bro. Russell is pointed out in numerous texts (Isa. 21:6-10; Ezek. 40:1-47:12; Hab. 2:1-3; Matt. 20:8; 24:45-47; Luke 12:42-46;) and in E-6, p. 630 and E-9, p. 385, he gives similar thoughts. He also includes himself and others in antitypical Habakkuk (PT 1938, p. 72, par. 4), “The Lord charged us to watch more than ourselves ... we are to watch ... the unfolding of the Lord’s Truth” (Hab. 2:1).

Antitypical Habakkuk took his position as a careful watcher, and stationed himself on a lofty vantage point, high above the masses in Christendom “I will stand upon my watch, and set me [*station myself*—Rotherham] upon the (symbolic) tower,” (Hab. 2:1; Isa. 21:6-12), where he remained alert for indications from the Scriptures and the signs of the times, of unfolding Truth that God would have for him (watch to see what he will say to me; (Psa. 77:6; 85:8), including such features of the Truth as could be used to refute opposers “what I shall answer when I am reproved.”

It was only after much careful, prayerful study of the Scriptures and signs of the times that God graciously rewarded antitypical Habakkuk with an understanding of further revelation of the Truth as due, including the answers to his questions “And the LORD answered me,” (Hab. 2:2). We note the account of some of Bro. Russell’s experiences (R 3824, col. 2; E-9, pp. 370-373). However, God made it clear to antitypical Habakkuk that the Truth as due, which he had received, was not merely for his own information and guidance; it was to be given to others also; he was to declare it, proclaim it, making it clear, especially by the use of charts (tablets), such as the Chart of the Ages, the Tabernacle Chart, the Edgar charts (R 3574-3579). “Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables [tablets, A.R.V.], so that all could readily understand it and be profited thereby “that he may quickly read it” (Leeser).

The use of charts, *etc.*, in making the advancing Truth clear was especially desirable because of certain features of Truth having fulfillments for which God had fixed times—the fulfillments in many cases being future to the time in which He revealed such features of the Plan “For the vision is yet for an appointed time,” (Hab. 2:3). God had planned that during the Time of the End, particularly during the Parousia period and the Epiphany period which in its wider sense continues beyond 1954-56—(PT 1954, pp. 51-54, 79), He would reveal in clear and unequivocal terms to antitypical

Habakkuk, and through him to others, His great Plan of the Ages, including His punishments upon the antitypical Chaldeans and His deliverance of God’s real people here in the end of the Age; also, He had arranged that during the same period He would bring to pass the glorious consummation of His Gospel Age purposes, so not betraying the confidence of those trusting in their fulfillment “at the end it shall speak [Heb., *puach*, literally, to breathe, break out, break forth], and not lie.” Bro. Johnson, in referring to Hab. 2:2, 3 (PT 1938, p. 188, top), states: “This passage refers to the continued unfolding of the Parousia and the Epiphany Truth as of one vision—the whole Plan of God. It did not lie as to Parousia matters; it is not lying as to the Epiphany matters.”

GOD’S PEOPLE TESTED

At the time Habakkuk wrote his prophecy, Jerusalem’s overthrow at the hands of the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar evidently was imminent, and the nation of Israel was about to be taken into captivity to Babylon; but the overthrow of the Chaldean oppressor and the deliverance of God’s people from Babylon, the capital city, was not due for a long time—70 years later, at the hands of the Medes and the Persians, under Cyrus. God foreknew that this long interval until the fulfillment of the prophecy respecting the Babylonian overthrow would be very difficult for His true people, involving numerous delays and consequent perplexities and disappointments; hence He graciously gave them the special exhortation (Hab. 2:3) to wait for its fulfillment—that despite its seeming slowness, it was sure to come to pass in due time.

Antotypically, in the Time of the End, there is similarly a long interval, between the time the vision began to speak in the Miller movement (E-6, p. 463) and the time—in the Epiphany—when the destruction of Satan’s empire (P-3, Appendix, p. 382) and the deliverance of God’s Gospel Age people is finally consummated, after which our Lord [antitypical Cyrus] will establish the two phases of His Kingdom, typed by the Medes and the Persians—(E-9, p. 450).

This long interval in the Time of the End has proved to be a very sore trial time for God’s enlightened people, because of numerous delays and consequent perplexities and disappointments connected with the seeming tarrying and slowness of the fulfillment of various features of the antitypical vision, though actually, from the standpoint of God’s pre-arranged Plan, there has

been no postponement of His time for their fulfillment.

Through such delays and consequent perplexities and disappointments, God has been testing His enlightened people, and under these trials many have given up, partially or totally, their Christian course; they fainted by the wayside, and turned again into the nominal church or to the beggarly elements of this world; others have fallen away into various errors and speculations.

Such results were evident in 1844 in connection with the “disappointment” of those affiliated with the movement led by Bro. Miller (P-3, pp. 85-92, 118), and in 1874 in connection with the failure of the Second Adventists’ expectations, and in 1878, in a similar failure of expectations, resulting in Mr. Barbour’s seeking to divert attention from it by denying the ransom (R 3821-3823; PT 1950, pp. 148-150).

Similar results occurred in other instances in the years between 1878 and 1914. However, they were minor compared to the results of the apparent tarrying of certain features of the antitypical vision in 1914 (R 5731). As a result of the apparent tarrying in 1914, many of God’s enlightened people lost interest in the Truth, either partially or wholly, and went back into the nominal church or into the world. Many others went into more or less of error and speculation. Prominent among these were leaders in the various Truth groups and those who followed them in giving up the Bible chronology as given through Bro. Russell, and accepting instead, a nominal-church chronology (E-7, Chap. VI). Also, many fell away which, despite the outbreak of the World War in 1914, as predicted, which evidenced that the Gentile times had ended and that this prominent feature of the antitypical vision had been at the very time Bro. Russell had forecast.

Also, at various times since 1914—in the Epiphany period—there have been minor events that have seemed to tarry in the fulfillment of various features of the antitypical vision, such as occurred in 1923 when Bro. Johnson expected (a) antitypical John’s beheading (b) Jesus’ class cut off from mouthpieceship to the world and (c) Armageddon; (PT 1938, p. 110); 1933-1934 (PT 1935, p. 129); 1954 and 1956 (PT 1954, pp. 51-54, 79; PT 1956, pp. 90-94; PT 1957, p. 4). These delays also have occasioned perplexities and disappointments to God’s enlightened people, and under these testings, some have lost interest in the Epiphany Truth, either partially or wholly, and have gone off into more or less of unbelief, worldliness, error and speculation.

In God’s great foreknowledge, He, of course, knew all about these special trials that would come to His enlightened people here in the Time of the End. He gave through antitypical Habakkuk the special admonition that, although the vision in its various parts might seem to tarry in its fulfillment, His people were to wait for His time for these fulfillments “though it tarry, wait for it,” (Hab. 2:3). He graciously added special assurance that the fulfillment would transpire, that definitely there would be no delay beyond the best time for all concerned “because it will surely come, it will not tarry” [will not be late—Rotherham; two different Hebrew words are used in this verse, both of which the A.V. translates by the word “tarry”; *mahah*, the former one, denotes a delay which causes perplexity, seeing that the root word pertains to questioning; *achar*, the latter one, denotes procrastination, implying a postponement in time until matters are too late for rectification].

Those of God’s people who have heard and heeded this admonition have been reassured and have stood firm in the Truth as due, despite all of the seeming delays and the consequent perplexities and disappointments and falling away of many others into more or less of unbelief, worldliness, error and speculation. They realize and have full assurance of faith that the antitypical vision will all be fulfilled in God’s due time—that no feature of it, including the destruction of Satan’s empire and their final deliverance, will really tarry or be delayed beyond the time God has appointed for its fulfillment, which, even though it may be at a later date than they had expected, it is the best time and has been arranged by God in the best interests of all concerned. They realize that God is not slack concerning His promises, as some men count slackness (2 Pet. 3:9), hence are content to wait on Him.

THE CHALDEANS—TYPE AND ANTITYPE

As already mentioned, Hab. 2:4, 5 set forth the oppressor under the figure of a self-exalted, degraded, drunken, proud, nomadic, insatiable and power-crazed man, in contrast with God’s faithful and just people, who shall live by their faith. In Hab. 2:6-20 five woes are pronounced upon the oppressor, as being taken up against him by all the oppressed.

While God did not here, as elsewhere (2 Chron. 36:20, 21; Jer. 25:11), specify the (70 years) length of the period of Fleshly Israel’s oppression, until destruction would overtake the Chaldean oppressor, and they would be freed from bondage, He made it very clear that spoiling and

destruction would eventually overtake the church nominal as the oppressor. God therefore eased Habakkuk's mind in his perplexity as to why He would allow the oppressive and wicked Babylonians to devour the comparatively more righteous ones—Fleshly Israel—and also in his perplexity as to whether God would allow them to continue their destructive work to a finality.

In the antitype, there evidently is a double picture:

(1) As already mentioned, the Chaldeans, the encroachers, who destroyed Jerusalem and desolated the land, represent the warriors, revolutionists and anarchists who encroach against and will finally overthrow Christendom. From this standpoint Hab. 2:4-20 set forth the qualities of these oppressors, and the spoiling, destruction, which, particularly in the later features of the Time of Trouble, will come upon them. (2) The Babylonian oppressor, with his great capital city, Babylon, very fittingly represents the great Antichrist, the Man of Sin (P-2 pp. 267-362), with his religious government, Babylon the Great, which is called the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth. Mystic Babylon reigned over the kings of the earth making all nations drunk with her false doctrines, illicitly uniting with the state in symbolic fornication (Rev. 17:1-6, 18; 18:2-5; Jer. 50, 51; E-14, pp. 469-484). The Parousia and Epiphany Messengers set forth this latter application also, in treating of Hab. 2:5.

In HE 1949, p. 8 and E-16, p. 224, Bro. Johnson states: "Here Antichrist is described. He continues to enlarge his desire, which is never satisfied, even as Sheol is never satisfied. He is as death to those who come under his dominion. He gathers to him all nations and heaps to him all people for their destruction. His covetousness is like death in that it never has enough."

We will now examine Hab. 2:4-20, considering them from the standpoint of the application to the great Antichrist, the Man of Sin. Incidentally, these verses will be recognized as having an application also to the little papacy in Little Babylon.

THE ANTICHRIST SYSTEM

God, through His Word, has pointed out Antichrist as being self-exalting and degraded "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him," (Hab. 2:4), even from the time of its small beginning—its begettal—which occurred in Apostolic times (2 Thes. 2:7; 1 John 4:3; HE 1922, p. 37). At first the unholy ambition of the power-hungry leaders was confined to the secret recesses of their own unrighteous hearts. However, it was not long before this

unholy ambition manifested itself in the development of the hierarchy, culminating in the papacy (E-8, pp. 331-341); as it continued to grow and expand, it caused the power-hungry leaders to set aside waiting on the Lord for His due time for establishing His Kingdom and exalting His elect; instead, it gradually led to the development of the erroneous teaching that it is the Church's mission to convert the world and establish the Kingdom before Christ's Second Advent (E-11, pp. 419-421).

Nevertheless, despite these conditions, God indicated that His true people would, by contrast, continue steadfastly, in true mental appreciation and heart's reliance (E-8, p. 528), to wait on Him and His due time for establishing His kingdom and exalting them; the just shall live by his faith [Heb., *emuna*, faithfulness; see Rotherham and PT 1937, p. 2].

Additionally, God pointed out that because of Antichrist's sinning through imbibing many false doctrines [a partial list of these is given in E-11, p. 420], such as apostolic succession, the pope's headship over the Church and Post-Millennialism, it has become puffed up and arrogant (because he transgresses by wine, he is a proud man, (Hab. 2:5). Pride, accentuated and inflamed by intoxicants, will go to great lengths to secure its ends; so Antichrist, with its pride, intoxicated by error, left the proper sphere of the Church for the Gospel Age, and, in its efforts to gain power and converts, played politics, used worldly methods, entered into diplomacy and unions of church and state and meddled in the civil affairs of the nations (neither stays at home). As it increased in power and gained one victory after another, and multiplied converts, its covetousness and lust for power constantly increased and became boundless (enlarged his desire as hell—Prov. 27:20; 30:15, 16; Isa. 5:14), even as death ever claims more victims, and is insatiable (is as death, and cannot be satisfied).

Like a giant octopus, Antichrist, the great encroacher, has reached out its tentacles and laid hold of the nations of Christendom, ruling over them, making and unmaking kings to suit its own convenience and pleasure, and seeking to subject all groups and people to its own will (gathers to him all nations, and heaps unto him all people), invading their secular and religious rights and suppressing and oppressing them in much ignorance, superstition and error.

WOE ON ANTICHRIST

In the form of a rhetorical question, God asks, Will not all of the oppressed take up a ridiculing denunciation

against Antichrist “Shall not all these take up a parable ... and a taunting proverb against him?” In Hab. 2:6-20 the oppressed are set forth as denouncing Antichrist in five separate woes, which we will consider in turn.

The first woe declared upon the oppressor might be stated as an aphorism: “Oppression creates insurrection,” or “The spoiler shall be spoiled.” Antichrist is the outstanding example among those, who, during the Gospel Age, have directly or indirectly robbed others, especially God’s people, of possessions, prerogatives, powers, privileges, services, *etc.*, and have appropriated these to their own selfish use. To gain its ends, Antichrist has used fear of punishment here and hereafter, political intrigue, *etc.*, and has fomented wars.

The oppressed denounce Antichrist, as unjustly amassing to itself that which rightfully belongs to others, and, as a result, being exalted and reveling in luxury; by word and act they ask how long this will continue “Woe to him that increases that which is not his! How long?” (Rev. 6:10). Additionally, they denounce Antichrist because, by its many injustices, it has heaped upon itself, as it were, a huge burden of debt, rightly reclaimable by the multitudes it has wronged, “and to him that lade himself with thick clay” [Hab. 2:6; rather, heavy pledges—Young’s Literal Translation; A.R.V.; Rotherham].

Next, we have another rhetorical question: Because of these wrongs, will not those who devour Antichrist strike it quickly? “Then sudden destruction comes upon them” (1 Thes. 5:3) “eat her flesh” (Hab. 2:7; Rev. 17:16). Those who distress Antichrist will arouse themselves as the light of truth reaches them “all the remnant of the people shall plunder you,” with the result that they will break the shackles it has bound upon them, and it will be rich plunder for them “you will become their booty.”

Because of Antichrist’s widespread plundering of many nations and united groups of people, those remaining of them will in due time plunder it “Because you have spoiled many nations, all the remnant of the people shall spoil you,” (Hab. 2:8; Jer. 50:3, 9, 10; 51:48, 56; Rev. 18:6-8), that it has violently wrested from others, others shall violently wrest from it (Jer. 51:44).

This comes as a just retribution upon Antichrist, because of the immense number of people, especially God’s people, that, in furthering its own selfish interests, it has killed, literally (estimated some years ago at 50 millions—P-2, p. 346) and figuratively, whose blood cries out for vengeance “because of men’s blood” (Gen. 4:10; Luke 11:50, 51), and also because of Antichrist’s

encroaching against and devastating others’ spheres of teachings, spirit and practice, especially the sphere of the Truth, its Spirit and ministries, and because of its pillaging the Church as a religious government and all who are in it “for the violence of the land, and the city, and all who dwell in it” (Hab. 2:8).

A SECOND WOE ON ANTICHRIST

The second woe mentioned here is declared particularly against the oppressor’s covetousness, self-exaltation and destructiveness. Antitypically, the oppressed are represented as denouncing Antichrist for unjustly and avariciously appropriating, to its own aggrandizement, many possessions, privileges, powers, prerogatives and services rightfully belonging to others “Woe to him that covets an evil desire [gains an evil increase—margin] to his house,” (Hab. 2:9; Jer. 22:13), thereby seeking to establish its rulership over all the earth, exalting itself above all that is called a god—mighty ruler—or that receives homage, and seating itself in the Temple of God, openly displaying itself as a god “that he may set his nest on high” (2 Thes. 2:3, 4; P-2, p. 269; comp. Jer. 49:16; E14, p. 465), thus hoping to fortify itself against any possible disaster “that he may be delivered from the power of evil.”

Like the builders of the tower of Babel, who used brick for stone and slime for mortar, and thus sought to erect a tower with its top reaching to heaven, and foolishly thought that by it they could avert any possible dispersion and disaster; so the avaricious leaders who, with erroneous instead of true doctrines and arrangements, constructed the hierarchy, culminating in the pope as its supreme head, foolishly thought that they could avert any possible dispersion and disaster (PT 1944, p. 31).

In following its sinful and ambitious course of seeking to gain its object of gathering together under the headship of the pope all nations and heaping unto itself all people, Antichrist has had little concern for the rights of others. It has sought to justify its actions of unjustly and avariciously appropriating to itself that which rightfully belongs to others, and of ruthlessly murdering them in many cases, literally or figuratively. The saying, “The end justifies the means,” has frequently been used as an excuse for such sins; but no matter how good and desirable the end may be, it cannot justify the use of evil means in gaining it. Antichrist has brought great dishonor to itself by its wrong acts and policies, especially by its ruthless murdering of others, in the

Holy (?) Inquisition (P-2, pp. 341-347), and sinning against itself, to its own undoing “You have consulted shame to your house by cutting off many people, and have sinned against your soul,” (Hab. 2:10). Because of Antichrist’s great injustices, cruelty and violence, perpetrated in connection with building its shameful house, with the pope as its head, its entire structure is corrupt, from bottom to top. As the facts of history show, from every section of its structure these evils cry out, figuratively speaking, for vengeance, and they witness against it “For the stone shall cry out [the same Hebrew word is used for cry out in Hab. 1:2] of the wall, and the beam [properly, the tie-beam; fastening—margin] out of the timber shall answer it” [witness against it—margin], (Hab. 2:11).

A THIRD WOE ON ANTICHRIST

The third woe here mentioned is directed against the oppressor for having built a city (Babylon) through much bloodshed and iniquity. The Man of Sin has similarly erected the great symbolic city of Babylon. Mystic Babylon represents primarily the Romanist Church (Rev. 17:1-6, 15, 16, 18); and in a secondary sense the Protestant sects are included in the same general family as her daughter systems (Rev. 17:5; E-14, p. 469; P-3, pp. 154, 155; P-6, p. 202). In the third antitypical woe the oppressed denounce Antichrist for having erected such an iniquitous system, and that at the expense of destroying many and with much violation of secular and religious rights, “Woe to him that builds a town with blood and establishes a city by iniquity” (Hab. 2:12).

It is God’s plan to overthrow and utterly destroy symbolic Babylon; therefore, are not all the frantic and exhausting efforts put forth in the great Time of Trouble by those in symbolic Babylon, to prop it up and save it, utterly in vain? “Behold, ... not of the LORD of hosts that the people shall labor in the very fire, and ... weary themselves for vanity” [in vain—margin], (Hab. 2:13); (Jer. 51:58; P-4, p. 40; E-14, p. 483). It is doomed (Isa. 13:1-13; P-4, pp. 21-46; Jer. 51:9; E-14, p. 477), as is evidenced by the antitypical handwriting on the wall (Dan. 5:5, 17-28), which was interpreted by Bro. Russell (E-9, pp. 447-450), and no efforts, however strenuous, can save it from destruction.

In God’s plan it is necessary that “the great city Babylon be thrown down, and be found no more at all” (Rev. 18:10, 16-21), in order to make way for the coming universal reign of truth and righteousness, in which the entire earth will be filled with the knowledge of God’s

matchless wisdom, justice, love and power, as manifested in the Truth and its Spirit “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea,” (Hab. 2:14; Num. 14:21; Psa. 96:3; Isa. 40:5; 60:1).

A FOURTH WOE ON ANTICHRIST

The fourth woe here mentioned is directed against the oppressor’s drunkenness, his causing of drunkenness and consequent shameful conduct in others, and his lust of conquest. Antotypically, ethical and doctrinal errors cause spiritual intoxication, which brings God’s displeasure (Isa. 28:1-7; E-8, p. 138); and to intoxicate and thus poison others with such errors is an even more flagrant sin— “a sacrifice to Satan” (PT 1938, p. 93, pars. 4, 5).

The oppressed denounce Antichrist for having spread its false doctrines to others and for prevailing upon them to imbibe these errors, thus causing them to become intoxicated also, “Woe to him that gives his neighbor drink, that puts your bottle to him, and make him drunk also,” (Hab. 2:15; Jer. 51:7; Rev. 17:1-6; 18:2, 3; E-14, p. 477). Antichrist’s purpose in this was to befuddle their reasoning powers “make them mad” (Jer. 51:7) to such an extent that it would see them brought into an undone and very shameful condition “that you may look on their nakedness” in which it could easily plunder, exploit and keep them in subjection, even as a besotted drunkard wallowing on the ground, with senses dulled, can easily be robbed, abused and kept in subjection.

While such practices have brought great numbers into subjection to Antichrist, they have not thereby brought honor or lasting dominion to it; it reaps dishonor instead. “You are filled with shame for glory,” (Hab. 2:16), for God has arranged for it to drink of its own medicine (drink you also; comp. Jer. 51:57; E-14, p. 483), so that it also has lapsed into an undone and very shameful condition, in which it will become more and more exposed, as not being truly consecrated to God, as not having the circumcision of the heart (Deut. 10:16; Rom. 2:28, 29; E-6, pp. 196, 712), as teaching unholy theories (E-9, p. 581, line 3) and as indulging in sin, error, selfishness and worldliness, “and let thy foreskin be uncovered” (Isa. 47:3; Jer. 4:4; Nahum 3:1, 5; E-14, p. 334).

God will bring the bitter experiences of the great Time of Trouble upon the Man of Sin “the cup of the LORD’S right hand shall be turned to you;” (Jer. 25:15-29; E-14, pp. 387, 464); and the very ones or classes of people who were made drunk with his ethical and doctrinal errors

will reject them, with the result that his dignity, wealth and dominion, in which he prided himself, will thus be disgraced “shameful spewing shall be on your glory,” “even as his tables are filled with vomit” (Isa. 28:8; E-6, p. 393).

Lebanon, like Zion, is used to represent, sometimes the real, and sometimes the nominal people of God (Zech. 11:1; E-5, p. 264; Jer. 22:20; E-14, p. 379). Antichrist is to be ravished by the nominal people of God, particularly by its own subjects “For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee,” (Hab. 2:17); and it will tremble with fear under the devastation brought against it by lawless ones “and the spoil of beasts ... made them afraid and wasting by wild beasts shall cause thee terror”—Rotherham; thus retribution will be visited upon Antichrist for its outrages, especially against God’s people, which are here again described in exactly the same words as in Hab. 2:8, which we have already treated.

A FIFTH WOE ON ANTICHRIST

The fifth woe here mentioned is directed against the oppressor’s practice of idolatry and his teaching of falsehood. Through various councils and the infallible (?) decrees of its popes, Antichrist has invented its own erroneous creeds and dogmas, and it worships them, placing them on an equality with, or above the Word of God, despite its many condemnations of idolatry, as Isa. 2:8: “They worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made” (Ex. 20:4, 5; Isa. 44:9-28).

These creed idols include such erroneous dogmas and teachings as the Divine right of kings, clergy and aristocrats, purgatory, eternal torment, the consciousness of the dead, the inherent immortality of the soul, the trinity, the Mass (the desolating abomination—P-3, pp. 102-104), the efficacy of indulgences, the worship of saints (hagiolatry), the infallibility of the pope, the worship of Mary as the “queen of heaven and the special intermediary of believers in approaching God and Christ” (Jer. 7:18; E-8, p. 311). These are indeed lying vanities; and “they that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy” (Jonah 2:8).

What advantage will the Man of Sin derive from such skillfully fashioned erroneous creeds and dogmas, which are based on falsehoods, especially on Satan’s monumental lie (Gen. 3:4)? No matter how much their devisers rely on them, cannot give forth truth. “What profits the graven image ... a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusts therein, to make dumb idols

(Heb., *illemim elilim*, not *elohim*)—thus implying a strong contrast between the helpless little man-made idols and the Almighty God?” (Zech. 10:1, 2, Hab. 2:18).

The oppressed denounce Antichrist for setting up such creed idols, such “Dumb Nonentities” (Rotherham; 1 Cor. 8:4), as teachers of truth “Woe unto him that says to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach!” (Hab. 2:19); for despite their beautiful and attractive surface appearance, with a veneer of Divine Truth, they are senseless, lifeless and speechless, insofar as the Truth and its Spirit are concerned “Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it” (Jer. 10:2-5, 14, 15).

Jehovah has not dwelt by His Truth and its Spirit in the creed idols or their makers; on the contrary, He has dwelt by His Truth as due and its Spirit in His sanctified true Church, “But the LORD is in His holy temple,” (Hab. 2:20; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16; 1 Cor. 3:16, 17). Under Jesus they alone are the depository of the Truth as due; they alone have the understanding, as due, of the true oracles of God, every word of which is Truth, sure of fulfillment in His due time. Therefore, all are admonished to quiet their contradictory dogmas, theories, opinions and fabrications in His presence, as it is manifested in the Truth as due, given through His true Church “let all the earth keep silence before him.”

As the great further revelation of God’s purposes respecting the Chaldean oppressor (Hab. 2:4-20) came as a source of great encouragement and blessing to Habakkuk, so, antitypically, the revelation of God’s purposes respecting Antichrist, the great encroacher, came as a source of great encouragement and blessing to Bro. Russell, Bro. Johnson and other faithful watchers. In view of Antichrist’s gross injustices, cruelty and violence, which, as just seen, are so vividly portrayed in the woes taken up against it by the oppressed, and which have reached unto heaven crying to God for vengeance, all of God’s people may indeed thank Him that Antichrist, the “little horn” that “made war with the saints, and prevailed against them” (Dan. 7:8, 21), will shortly reach its ignominious end, for its time is very limited—it is only “Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom” (Dan. 7:22).

HABAKKUK CHAPTER 3

(To be continued in Summer PT 786)

JESUS CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE

“While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light” John 12:36.

Those who are Consecrated Epiphany Campers have the privilege of understanding the deeper truth because they bear their cross and follow after Jesus, so they can be His disciple! Cross-bearing signifies endurance of our trials in conditions permitted of the Father. Bearing the cross does not mean running away from it or getting alarmed at it but enduring it. Luke 14:27 includes the words “come after me,” “be my disciple,” yes, one who follows a teacher or leader.

The words of a song we learned as a child: “Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so” carries forward into our adult lives, continuing to bring comfort in a time of need. John makes the declaration that Jesus as our example knew beforehand that he had reached the end of his earthly career and was especially solicitous of improving the closing hours with his particular, chosen friends and companions by inculcating some good lessons for the truly consecrated to this very day. “He loved them to the end”—completely, fully; his own sharp trials, present and approaching, did not distract him nor absorb his attention.

He was still thinking of and endeavoring to bless others. We do not suppose that this love for the Twelve applied to them exclusively; rather, that He viewed the Twelve as the representatives of “them also which shall believe on me through their word”—as He expressed the matter in His prayer to the Father (John 17:20). With this view in mind, we can realize that what our Lord said and did to the Apostles was intended to be applicable and instructive to all who have become His since then.

Luke’s account shows that on this occasion there was a strife among the Apostles, a contention, respecting which of them should be esteemed the greatest (Luke 22:24-30). This strife may not have been solely one of selfishness, in the evil sense of the word, but may have been partially prompted by love for the Master—it may have been in respect to their several positions at the table, the coveted position possibly being closeness to our Lord’s person. We recount how the mother of James and John had made request that they might be on the right and on the left of our Lord in the Kingdom (Matt. 20:21); and we remember that in connection with this narrative it is declared that John was next to our Lord and leaned upon His bosom (John 13:23).

Quite possibly this dispute respecting greatness arose in part from the fact that they were not in this instance treated as guests, but merely had the upper room put at their disposal; having no host, no provision was thereby made

for the usual washing of the feet, and it was neglected. The matter of feet-washing in Eastern countries, when sandals were worn, was not merely a compliment, but a necessity, the heat of the climate, the openness of the sandals and the dust of the roads, making it almost indispensable to comfort that the feet be bathed on arriving at a house after a journey. Apparently, this question of which one of the Twelve was greatest, and who should perform the menial service of the feet-washing for the others, had developed the situation in which none of them was anxious to take the servant’s position. It seems that our Lord permitted them to disagree without settling their dispute, without appointing any of their number to the menial service.

He allowed them to think the matter over—time to relent and reconsider, and they even proceeded, contrary to custom, to eat the supper with unwashed feet.

FEET-WASHING

Then it was that Jesus arose from the supper, laid aside His outer garment, and attaching a towel to the girdle of His undergarments, took a basin and a pitcher for the water, and began to pour the water and wash the feet of His disciples (John 13:4, 5). We are to remember that in the East at that time, tables, and chairs such as we use were not in fashion. On the contrary, the tables were low and shaped somewhat like a horseshoe, and those who sat really reclined, lying partly upon the table, with the left elbow resting upon a pillow or divan, their heads toward the inside of the horseshoe where there was a space provided for the food, and also a space for a servant to enter and place the food. It will be seen that the feet extended backward and could quite easily be reached without disturbing those who were eating.

Our Lord evidently had already washed the feet of several of the disciples before He came in turn to Peter. Seemingly none of them offered objection, although no doubt the thought of their own contentions regarding this subject, and unwillingness to serve one another brought them blushes of shame and confusion of face. But when it came to Peter’s turn, he protested. It would never do, he thought, to permit our Lord to perform so menial a service. He asked (v. 6), “Lord, dost thou wash my feet?” Our Lord did not stop to reprimand Peter—to give him a thorough “setting down” and scolding, as some of His followers might have been inclined to do under such circumstances. Jesus merely continued treating Peter the same as the others, saying that He would explain the matter later, and that if He washed him not, he could have no part with Him.

One cannot help admiring the noble traits in Peter's conduct, even though with the same breath we are forced to acknowledge some of his weaknesses; and herein all the Lord's followers find a lesson of encouragement; for though they find weakness and imperfections, if they find also the heart-loyalty to the Lord which was in Peter, they may continue to have courage and hope to press on as he did, from victory to victory, and at last to have the prize, the reward of faithfulness.

When Peter learned that there was more meaning to the washing of the feet than merely its kindness and comfort, and its reproof of the lack of the spirit of humility among the disciples, he wanted not only his feet, but also his hands and his head washed (v. 9). A noble, thorough going-over, for a wholehearted, fervent Peter! But our Lord explained that this was not necessary, saying, "HE who has been BATHING, has no need unless to wash his FEET, but is wholly clean; and you are clean, but not all." (v. 10—*Diaglott*). [Note "But not all." There was one in the number whose heart was not clean (Judas).] Public baths were in use at that time, but even after having taken a general bath, on return to the home it was customary to complete the matter by washing the feet; and this seems to be the implication of our Lord's remark. The Apostles had been with our Lord, under the influence of His spirit of love, meekness, gentleness, patience, humility, for three years, and had been greatly blessed by "the washing of water by the word" spoken to them (John 15:3; Eph. 5:26).

There is an intimation in the Lord's words, too, that this spirit of pride which had manifested itself among them had been inspired to some extent by their treasurer, Judas—as evil communications are always corrupting (1 Cor. 15:33). This final lesson from their great Teacher was a very impressive one upon the eleven, whose hearts probably were in the right condition to receive the reproof and the lesson; but upon Judas, although his feet also were washed, the effect evidently was not favorable. The spirit of evil which had entered into him before the supper to betray the Lord evidently continued with him. Instead of being influenced aright by our Lord's humility and service, he was the more motivated in the opposite direction (John 13:2). So it is, with all who have professed the Lord's name in every time. Those instructions, examples, and experiences, which are working out blessings and proving beneficial to some, are manifesting bad characters in others, to this very day. Take Egypt's Pharaoh for an example. It was God's goodness and mercy that hardened Pharaoh's heart (Ex. 7:13), so it was the love and humility of Jesus that hardened Judas' heart, and these principles remain active and may be seen in the attitudes of some today.

After accomplishing the work of washing the feet of all, our Lord put on again His outer garment and reclined again at supper; this was the Passover supper. The Memorial Supper of bread and the cup of the fruit of the vine was instituted afterward. Our Lord now improved His opportunity and explained to them the meaning of what He had done. He pointed out to them that this menial service did not signify that He was not the Lord and Master, but did signify that as Lord and Master He was not unwilling to serve the lesser members of Jehovah's family, and to minister to their comfort, even in the most menial service; and that they should not have been unwilling, but glad, to have rendered such service one to another (John 13:12-15).

OUR LORD'S EXAMPLE

The example which our Lord set was not so much in the *kind* of service (feet-washing), as in the *fact* of service. Nothing in this example, as we understand it, was in the nature of a ceremony to be performed by the Lord's people, annually, weekly, monthly, or at any other time; but *the principle of His service* constituted the *example*, and is to be observed among His followers at all times—they are to love one another and to serve one another, and to consider no service too menial to be performed for one another's proper comfort and good. Service is a privilege not an inconvenience or ceremony.

All who are truly the Lord's followers should heed carefully and follow exactly the true example of the Master's spirit of meekness, humility, and service to His faithful followers. The whole thought is contained in His words, "The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things [if you appreciate these principles, applicable to all the affairs of life], happy are ye if ye do them [if you live according to this rule, loving and serving one another]" (John 13:16, 17).

Feelings of rivalry, strife and vainglory seem to especially beset many of the Lord's people who possess any degree of talent, ability, or honorable situation in life. Those who are in influential places among the brethren need to be especially on guard against this besetment of the flesh. It should not be forgotten that, as someone has said, "There is a pride that looks *up* with envy, as well as a pride that looks *down* with scorn." The Lord's followers are to remember that pride in any person, in any station, respecting any matter, is highly reprehensible in God's sight and displeasing to Him. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble" (Jas. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5). All who would abide in the Lord's love have need to be very careful along this line—to keep very humble, very lowly

in conduct, and particularly lowly in mind.

Let us be assured that our heavenly Father has none of the feelings mentioned above! Yes, some six thousand years ago in Eden our maker in justly sentencing His disobedient children to death, intimated that ultimately the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. This hidden promise was the first intimation of the Divine mercy which our gracious Creator purposed in Himself from before the foundation of the world. Ever noble, kind, and gracious, our Creator restrained His mercy for the good of His creatures—that they might learn to appreciate the exceeding sinfulness of sin. For the good of the angels also, and that they might fully know of His justice, as well as of His wisdom and power, God insisted upon dealing with His creatures from the standpoint of exact justice. They had sinned, and thereby had forfeited all claim upon the eternal life which He had given them conditionally.

The Divine program was not changed, but more explicit statements were given respecting it. This remark has been given six times in the writings, first in HE 1927, p. 1; PT 1973 p. 27. We now present it in bringing to light the pertinent work of the Consecrated Epiphany Campers of Gentile lineage, in addition to Youthful Worthies of Gentile lineage, are as pre-restitution consecrators included among those who will have precedence over the fleshly Israelites, in general, in the Kingdom.

This is as it should be, for God always holds out His highest pertinent favors to *the consecrated*—who by Him are all reckoned as Abraham's seed, even if not of Jewish lineage—in preference to *the unconsecrated*, regardless of whether they are of Jewish or of Gentile lineage. On the Chart of the Ages, Bro. Russell properly showed the Gospel-Age consecrated on plane M, the plane of Spirit-begettal, a higher plane than plane N, the plane of human perfection, actual or reckoned, where the tentatively justified have their standing, with fleshly Israel having their standing on plane P, the plane of typical justification, a lower plane than planes M and N.

Jesus is the "surety of a better covenant" (Hebrews 7:22) than the Old Law Covenant. He has now completed the preparation of His Body members, the 144,000 (Rev. 7:4-8; 14:1-5; 19:5-8) and the Great Multitude (Rev. 7:9-17). The Youthful Worthies (Joel 2:28) as antitypical Levites, are nearly completed and He is preparing the Consecrated Epiphany Campers as their assistants as antitypical Nethinim, for the ministering of the New Covenant. He will seal it with the blood-merit of the great Sin-offering and make it with the Worthies, the Consecrated Epiphany Campers and "the house of Israel" in general "after those days," for the blessing of all mankind

(Heb. 8: 8-13; Gal. 3:7-9, 16, 29). The lasting glory of the Gospel Age and Millennial Age ministrations is connected with the New Law Covenant, this covenant will be made with fleshly Israel after the antitypical Priests, Levites and Nethinim are fully prepared and made ready to perform their office duties connected with the inauguration and administration of that glorious New Covenant.

Especially from 1954 onward, our Lord has been building up the Epiphany Camp; and since 1954 He has been preparing the Consecrated Epiphany Campers to serve as special assistants to the Worthies. The spirit-enlightened, but non-spirit-begotten consecrated ones of this life; the Ancient and Youthful Worthies and the Consecrated Epiphany Campers, will be the first to come under the terms of the New Covenant, after which it will be made with Israel.

CONSECRATED EPIPHANY CAMPERS AS AN EXAMPLE

God's faithfulness as the Leader and Guide of His Fleshly Israel is thereby set forth, and antitypically His faithfulness as the Leader and Guide of His Spiritual Israel is taught. And, beloved, this certainly has in the past proven true; and it will ever prove true. The antitypical fiery cloudy pillar will always be among God's real people, resting upon them; for God designed it this way.

The post-Exilic Nethinim (*given ones, dedicated ones, Saints*) type the Consecrated Epiphany Campers. These CEC's are shown in this light by Bro. Jolly in PT 1978, p. 87. We have every confidence that even though the Great Company finished their earthly course, that our Lord will continue His special shepherding care for His people through the Youthful Worthies, and that after the Youthful Worthies have finished their course in this life, He will continue it through the Consecrated Epiphany Campers (E-8 p. 631).

Among the classes of Campers are found the post-1954 antitypical Nethinim, namely, those who have left Babylon, who have come, at least measurably, into the Truth and who have specially assisted the antitypical Levites—the Great Company and the Youthful Worthies in their Epiphany Temple service of preparing the Levites in the Epiphany Court for their places in the Millennial Age and building up the Epiphany Camp from among Jews and Gentiles. These antitypical Nethinim with knowledge and understanding (1) have more or less cleansed themselves from evil qualities to the following of the instructions of God's Word, (2) have cleaved to their brethren, their worthy leaders, and (3) have entered into a solemn and binding agreement to conduct themselves obediently according to God's Word (Neh. 10:28-29).



HAVE YOU MOVED OR
ARE YOU GOING TO BE MOVING?
RENEW TODAY!

They have been specially given, or dedicated, to the service of the Great Company and the Youthful Worthies.

Let us be certain of this understanding; the Laver that pictured God's Word is not available to the Consecrated Epiphany Campers. This begs the question: how do the CEC's receive the Truth? Since the Tabernacle picture has changed to the Transitional or Epiphany setting and the tentatively (provisionally) justified are shown in the Camp, they still have to come into the tentatively justified condition. Those who consecrate in the Camp have the secrets of the Lord revealed to them by His holy Spirit, as we read in Psa. 25:14, "The secret of the LORD *is* with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." (This text applied in the Old Testament, and it applied when the High Calling was open. It still applies now even though The High Calling is closed. In other words, it applies to all times.) The secrets of the Lord are therefore for those in the Camp who are justified and consecrated. They receive the secrets of the Lord because they reverence God. The secrets of the Lord are with them and to them he will show His covenant. It is true that there is no Laver in the Camp, nor do we need to move it into the Camp, because God so nicely pictured His Word in the Curtain! Bro. Johnson expressed to us and emphasized that we should (in building up the Epiphany Camp) hold up the Curtain showing Christ as Savior and King (E-5, p. 420). However, some might say, "But that is not the whole Bible." It certainly is, it certainly is the whole Bible. Didn't Jesus say to the Scribes and Pharisees, "Search the Scriptures; . . . and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). Isn't that Christ? Therefore, by the whole Scripture from Genesis to Malachi was referred to when Jesus said, search those Scriptures for they testify of me. Therefore, in holding up Christ as Savior and King, we hold up every one of the books of the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. Of course, it's the whole Word of God. Again, where was the whole Word of God pictured in the Court for the Levites and the Priest? It was in the Laver. Where is the Word of God pictured for those in the Camp? It is in the Curtain!

Bro. Jolly cautioned us along the lines of developing a proper character. Some say, the Lord's walking with me, when He is not walking with them in their ways of

TO:

sin and error. He does not walk in that way. Noah, for example, the one that built the ark, and how God walked with him as he walked with God. He was a preacher of righteousness. How many years did he preach? 120 years with NO converts! His sons, of course, and their wives and his own wife went along with him in faith to God. We don't know if it took 120 years to convert them. How many of us would last 120 years like Noah, who pleased God with his faith. As God's consecrated children, we should live up to the standards that the Ancient Worthies did, with what little light that they had, for we have so much more light. And the Bible says, "to whom much is given much is required"; God is proving us according to the "much" that He is giving us (PT 2006, p.55).

We often think or feel that our tests are very hard to bear. For example, consider Abraham. We should do what Paul said, consider these servants, this great cloud of witnesses and consider what they went through, it will make our trials seem very light instead of heavy. Our light affliction, is but for a moment compared with eternity, very light; light like a feather, compared with the exceeding eternal weight of glory that we attain to as a result of faithfully standing under our test. As with our Lord Jesus, we thank God for our trials "Blessing shall we accept from God, and misfortune shall we not accept?" (Job 2:10 Rotherham).

OBITUARIES

Sr. Jen Boorsma, born October 5, 1924; died November 25, 2023. Sr. Jen was an avid Bible Student associated with the Muskegon, MI. class. She has recently resided at the Lakewood Nursing Home where she continued to dispense tracts as opportunity permitted. She is survived by daughter Roxann (Kevin) Ball residing in Amarillo, TX.

Sr. Barbara Boots, of Chandler, AZ died peacefully Sept. 5, 2023. Her husband of 54 years, James Boots, son Reggie, sister Leah Murphy preceded her in death. Sr. Barb had a loving and generous heart for family and strangers alike. Sr. Barbara was an avid student of God's Word of Truth.

**Let us keep the memories of their service for the Lord
green in our hearts.**