

## WHAT WE EXPECT

The hope of our change from the human, earthly nature, to a spiritual, heavenly nature, is of course the grand climax of our hopes. As begotten ones, we long for birth into the full and express image of our Father's person, into the glory of Christ's glorious body. This being the case, it is not to be wondered at that this most coveted thing is ever supposed to be the thing expected, when any date is referred to as being the fulfillment of a prophetic period.

We continually meet with this difficulty in referring to the present year, 1881. Since all know that we expect the Saints to be changed from human to spiritual being, and since we frequently refer to October of the present year as the terminus of a prophetic parallel, some readers have supposed that we expect the change at that time. This is not the case; we look to October of this year, as the limit of favor – the end of "the acceptable year (time or age) of the Lord" – the closing of the "strait gate" to the "narrow way" of opportunity to become a member of the Bride of Christ and partaker of his Divine Nature.

The Gospel age has been a period of selecting from the world those that have made a covenant with the Lord by sacrifice (Psa. 50:5, and Mal. 3:17.) They shall be his Bride. It has been a period of "sealing" of the saints – a marking of them off as separate; and our understanding of the matter is, that this choosing and sealing will cease in October and whoever would be of the "Bride, the Lamb's wife" must consecrate and sacrifice before that time, or it will be too late. Now some one will doubtless suppose from this expression, "too late," that we expect that the Bride will be withdrawn from the earth, and therefore it will be – "too late." Not so, however; we expect that while they will all be counted sealed and selected they may not be changed

for some time after: We do not pretend to know how long, but believe that there is a work of instructing the "great company," to be done before their translation – change.

Do you then believe that all those who are not thus consecrated and sealed before October are lost? – is asked by some one not familiar with our views. We do not believe that they will be "lost" in the sense generally understood by that word, viz.: to be put into everlasting torments: But we do believe that all such will have lost the great "prize of our high calling" – lost forever the opportunity of becoming members of the Bride of Christ – joint heirs with Him and partakers of the Divine nature. They still will have the old or human nature and it, Jesus has redeemed, and promises that it (when the Bride is complete – in the Millennial age) shall be restored to its original (human) perfection.

If then, we do not expect that the completion of the Bride will be indicated by their change, what do we expect as a sign then? We expect no sign visible to our physical eye; it has been with the eyes of our understandings enlightened by God's word that we have seen all that we do see, of what is now taking place – viz.: "The Harvest" and the presence of our Lord. And it is by that same eye of faith that we expect to see "the acceptable year (age) of the Lord" close, and "the day of vengeance of our God" commence with October next. This same thought is conveyed by the prophet when he says (Isa. 63:4): "The day of vengeance is in mine heart for the year of my redeemed is come" – vengeance follows immediately upon the completion of the "little flock."

This transition period following the Gospel age and preceding the Millennial age is often mentioned as "a time of trouble," or "day of vengeance" designed to punish evil doers and to prepare the world for the blessed reign of righteousness under "The Prince of Peace."

See the following texts: Prov. 6:34, Isa. 35:4; and 34:1 to 8, Rom. 12:19, Heb. 10:30 and 2 Thes. 1:8, some of which are symbolical.

This "day of vengeance" began chronologically in 1874, but the first seven years of it seem marked off upon the nominal church here, as a time both of trial and favor, just as the parallel period of seven years, was to fleshly Israel. Seven years there, (the seventieth week of Daniel 9:27) of favor – trial and separation of "Israelites indeed in whom was no guile" from nominal Israel. Seven years here, (the exact parallel) of favor – trial and separation of the Christians indeed (entirely consecrated) from the nominal church of professors.

Now if this be the correct understanding of the Word, we may expect vengeance to commence in October. As we have already shown, this vengeance begins with the nominal church and will cause pain, anguish, "vexation" and symbolic "gnashing of teeth" among those who are taught and governed by church creeds instead of by the word of God – among those who recognize Synods, Councils, Conferences, Presbyteries, etc., as the heads, "standards" and "authorities" from which emanate the laws by which they are governed, instead of recognizing Christ as the only head and authority – as Paul puts it: "Holding the head (Jesus) from which all the body... having nourishment, increaseth with the increase of God" – in grace and knowledge: (Col. 2:19.) Whose law – the Word – should be the ONLY "law" or "standard" for those who are truly his members.

Terrible indeed will it be to those, to find their organizations crumbling and their laws and creeds torn to shreds and their "standards" and "authorities" (their heads) losing power, being cast off and disregarded. ["Woe unto them that give suck (teach) in those days."] It will be because the true Head, Authority and Standard of the church – Christ, shall have taken to himself his great power, and begins his reign (Rev. 11:17) that these false heads, "standards" and "authorities" – will be overthrown – for "His lightnings (shall)

enlighten the earth." Light and knowledge will so increase that all forms of error and evil will be finally dispelled by "the bright shining of the present one." (2 Thes. 2:8.)

Let none hereafter think, that we are expecting translation this year; and to those who did so think, we suggest a second careful reading of the article in the May number headed **[R248 : page 7]** "The Year 1881." Let us add, that while the "vengeance" or "trouble" will be no longer hindered after October, yet, it does not follow, that great results need be looked for in a day. It will require months and years for its full accomplishment.

It has been asked what do you mean by saying "come out of her" – do you really mean for people to sever their connection with the church of Christ? By what authority do you denounce the church of Christ – or lay anything to the charge of God's elect – in which we know of many undoubtedly the Lord's Jewels?

Ah yes, there is your mistake. We never advised any one to sever their connection with the church of Christ ("whose names are written in heaven.") No, far, far from that. We never denounced that church whose creed is the Word of God, whose organization is that of the Spirit; and whose union is in the "bonds of love;" and when we quote the denunciations of the Word, we do not offend "God's elect" – the Saints – because, "Great peace have they that love thy law and nothing shall offend them." Nor have we ever claimed that the nominal church is devoid of those whom the Lord calls his "jewels": on the contrary it is because there are such in the nominal church, that the Spirit through the Word calls to that very class and to them only – "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues." And those who do not free themselves and come out from bondage to creeds and isms we shall be forced to conclude are so bound by "the fear of man that bringeth a snare," that they have obeyed men, rather than God, and consequently are not "overcomers."

Look about you in the nominal churches, you who think that they are the church owned by the Lord as the chaste virgin soon to be made his bride; apply the scriptural conditions of discipleship to them and to yourselves and let them judge themselves whether they come near the standard: Jesus said "If any man will be my disciple let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Now do you think there are many in the nominal church who are thus entirely consecrated – time, money talents, reputation, all? All of the members of the real church are thus consecrated, but few of the nominal. Have you any reason for supposing that one in ten of those who are professors, are performers of this their covenant? Yet, those who are thus following in the footsteps of Jesus, are the only ones who are overcoming the world and who will be his joint-heirs. Of the others, some are being overcome by the world and others never were consecrated, consequently always were of the world.

In conclusion, let us add: If you realize that we are now in the "harvest," you can readily see that the work in order is to separate and divide. The work of the Reaper King, now present, is to gather his jewels, and he calls his sheep by name, and they know his voice and they follow him.

When we come to see the matter from the right standpoint, we realize that nothing is really injuring and crippling the usefulness and influence of the truly consecrated "little flock" so much as the great worldly-minded institutions claiming the honor of being the followers of the meek and lowly Saviour – who indeed draw nigh to God with their lips, but whose hearts are far from him. By attending to making clean the outside they divert their own attention from the real inward condition, and so exalt the commandments and creeds of men as to inspire their members with a fear of future torment if they should think for themselves. It is from these institutions which have gained so strong a hold upon society as to be able to threaten with ostracism any

who venture to gainsay their mandates, which "make void the law of God (His word) through (their) traditions, that God's word calls, "Come out of her" into a place of freedom from man and man worship and creed worship, to a place where you can worship God and be taught of God; come out where you can grow in grace.

Many will and have said – are there not many "good people" still in the church? – and because of them we cannot condemn it – neither will we leave it. Ah but Jesus condemns it and says – "I will spew thee out of my mouth." – (Rev. 3:16.) The call comes to all these "good people" and will test their goodness. If not obedient, they are not reckoned good in God's sight, but as partakers of Babylon's sins, and they shall be sharers in her plagues. Let not these be stumbling blocks in the way of your obedience; consider God's call to you as imperative as though you were the only jewel to be saved.

The call now is, come – from "the housetop," "the bed" and "the mill": The message is, "gather my saints (holy ones) together, (out from among the tares,) unto me; those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." – (Psa. 50:5.) Those who sacrifice all in willing obedience are his "jewels."

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