

[R509 : page 7]

THE SIXTH PLAGUE.

"And the sixth poured out his bowl on the GREAT RIVER – the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way of those kings who are from the sun-rising might be prepared." (v. 12).

Literal Babylon was built upon the river Euphrates. Its wealth, supplies and sustenance came largely from this source. It had immense walls and strong gates over the river. Within the city, in bondage, were Israelites, God's covenant people, and to overthrow Babylon and deliver these God appointed Cyrus the Median General. (Isa. 45:1-5; Dan. 5:30,31.) He, coming to this strong city, did not attack it directly, but, by digging another channel for the waters of the river, he dried up the old [R510 : page 7] channel, through which he marched his army under the gates and captured the city.

That this historic fact is used as the basis of a symbol in Revelation, none can question. Babylon and her fall are frequently mentioned, and here the drying up of the Euphrates adds to the correspondence. While "Babylon" is used as a general name for the entire nominal Church, it is used and is specially applicable to that portion of it called "the mother of HARLOTS." This sixth plague, or form of evil, is upon Babylon, the mother, and while other systems have channels, or rivers, her system is built upon the "GREAT RIVER." "And in her forehead was the name written BABYLON THE GREAT, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." (Rev. 17:5.) Following the literal, and applying it to the symbol, we reason that the waters of this great river represent the people who, by their influence and money, support Papacy – from which Babylon the great draws her revenues. And to this agrees the explanation by the angel: "The waters which thou sawest where the harlot sitteth are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues." (Rev. 17:15.) The

millions of Papacy's subjects are of every tongue and clime, and this symbol shows that a disaffection is to spring up between the subjects and the church authorities which will turn aside her support and "dry up" her revenues, and thus speedily lead to Babylon's complete destruction. "The drying up" will probably require years for its accomplishment.

The direct cause of the drying will be the relationship existing between Papacy and the kingdoms of earth. Papacy, under the claim that it was Christ's vice-gerent – His representative – in the days of her prosperity claimed the right to appoint the kings of earth, and did so; and subjects had a right TO REBEL against any government or king not thus recognized by Papacy. Since she has lost her power over the kingdoms of earth, she does not press this old claim, but would rather conciliate all the kingdoms; both those which she appointed and those appointed and sanctioned by other daughter churches. In this she is arraying herself directly on the side of these kingdoms, and in opposition to the increasing desire and effort of the people for liberty. Therefore, when present tendencies have produced a closer affiliation of religion and State than has existed for some time, it will result in leading the masses to throw off the yoke of the Church as well as the State, since both will be leagued against their cherished ideas of liberty and equality. The support of the people – the waters of the Euphrates – being thus withdrawn, the Babylon Church organization will become weak and helpless, by reason of the drying up of the waters from its channel.

A hint in this direction is furnished in the history of the past month. Though the rulership of Great Britain is not of Papacy's appointment, and in fact was created in violation of her laws and claims, yet the Pope has issued a "bull" or edict to its faithful in Ireland commanding both priests and people to desist from hostility toward the laws and government of England. Not to speak of the

merits of the question, this action is certainly contrary to the previous claims and theories of this Church; and from their words it is evident that some of the Irish people are not slow to see this. At a public meeting held to consider the Pope's edict, a famous orator among them (Charles O'Brien) said, "The Irish people will neither be ruled by Rome nor Westminster." [The Protestant Irish are mostly Presbyterian, ruled by the principles of the "Westminster Confession of Faith."] And among the masses it was freely proposed to "Boycott the Pope" by refusing to pay "Peter's pence" (a regular collection among Romanists, the world over, for the support of the Pope). Does not this look like a beginning of the turning away or drying up of one of the tributaries of that "great river"? As surely as God has given the symbol, so surely will it be fulfilled, and even now it hasteth greatly.

The "drying up" is "to prepare the way of the kings from the Sun-rising." These kings we understand to be the saints – those who, with Christ, will be "kings and priests" to reign over the earth. (Rev. 10:5.[Rev. 20:6? - site Editor]) They come, not to the Sun-rising, but from the Sun-rising. They come bringing light with them. This is a beautiful symbol of how "the righteous shall shine forth as the Sun in the kingdom of their Father." They bring with them light, liberty and joy to the groaning creation, for "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings." The object of all these changes is to prepare mankind for the rule of righteousness – the kingdom really of God's appointment which is to take the place of these which Anti-christ has attempted to authorize.

"And I saw out of the MOUTH of the DRAGON, and out of the MOUTH of the BEAST, and out of the MOUTH of the FALSE PROPHET, three impure spirits like frogs" (verse 13). The DRAGON, as before explained, symbolizes civil government (especially that which once constituted civil Rome). The BEAST still and always, means Papacy. The FALSE PROPHET is a new symbol,

and takes the place of both the "two-horned beast" and "the image of the beast," and, we believe, is a still more comprehensive symbol, representing all systems teaching error – those called "orthodox" as well as many considered heterodox. These three classes will all give forth one kind of teaching, called symbolically unclean spirits (impure, erroneous teaching), like frogs.

This harmonious teaching in which these can all unite, we believe to be the dogmas of "the divine right of kings," the "authority of the clergy," and the claim that mankind is bound to submit to these and be controlled by them. Many of these – kings and clergy – and many of those who will recognize their claims, will doubtless be honest, but will be thus in opposition to God, because they know not that they are in the hour of his judgment, and that the time for the displacement of these Anti-christs, and the governments of their appointing, has come. It is a blessed fact that these beastly governments will eventually give place to the kingdom of God; that the times of the Gentiles will END by being FULL-filled; and while this is now due to be understood and appreciated by the saints – those entirely consecrated to God's word and will – yet "none of the wicked shall understand": hence they will be found fighting against God and his arrangements.

Frogs have a very wise look, large mouths, are much puffed up, and utter only croakings. These doctrines, called spirits in symbol, which are to be common to these three classes, frog-like – much puffed up – are proclaimed with great swelling words, with a show of superior wisdom – wise look – and with much croaking.

In brief, this indicates that when these systems give forth these unclean spirits or doctrines of the divine rights of kings and clergy and submission of the people as to God, it will be with boastfulness, an attempt to overawe with dignity, superior wisdom and ability, and with continual allusion to the disasters which must attend any change

of present arrangements. This croaking, already beginning, as this darkness of trouble draws on, will increase with it. It will be heard from every mouthpiece, large and small, religious and political, officers and press. In fear they will be uttering warnings and threats, and few will be the independents to plead the cause of right, or to show that the time for the reign of righteousness has come, and hence the conflict.

These are the "spirits of demons, working signs," i.e., doctrines of devils – the devils' theory relative to present evil governments, indirectly of Satan's appointment, through his agencies. These doctrines show signs in proof of their authority. They will give evidences and seemingly plausible reasons for the rights of kings and clergy; chief among these will doubtless be God's appointment of kings and priests over fleshly Israel – which, however, was typical of the church and not of worldly systems (1 Peter 2:9).

These unclean spirits, erroneous doctrines, "go forth to the kings of the whole habitable earth, to gather them together for the war [conflict between right and wrong] of the great day of the omnipotent God." (verse 14.) The kings of the whole world may properly be supposed, in symbol, to include not only kings, but princes, generals, also those termed financial kings and merchant princes, and the GREAT ONES among religious teachers. These classes influence and encourage each other with this impure doctrine of Satan – hence they gather or unite them all together on the one side of the conflict already drawing nigh. Were it not for this harmony and unity inspired by this teaching, each of these classes of kings and rulers would have felt the weakness and erroneousness of their claims, and truth might have prevailed more easily against them; but in their union they find strength and hope for success in retaining their hold upon the people.

"And THEY gathered them together into THAT PLACE which is called in Hebrew ARMAGEDDON" (verse 16). Armageddon means mount of DESTRUCTION; and this describes what will be the result of this doctrine. It will unite all these systems in one cause as against the masses of the people and their liberties, and the result will be the total destruction of all those erroneous systems of Church and State. They shall fall.

The fifteenth verse is abruptly thrown in as a parenthesis. It reads literally thus: "Lo, I come AS A THIEF! Blessed the one WATCHING and keeping the garments of himself; so that not naked HE may walk, and they see the shame of HIM." This is very significant. It declares that at the time when this evil doctrine will be apparently uniting all upon the side of law and order – upon the side of kings and clergy – our Lord will then be PRESENT, but secretly and unknown except to the watching ones. **[R511 : page 7]** Only those who are truly his and watching in the light of his Word will not be deceived by this impure teaching, but will realize his presence and the necessity of the foretold fall of all these things, because the rightful king is present to remove these out of the way of his kingdom.

The position of this declaration – thrown in disconnectedly – is significant. It teaches that our Lord will be present before the impure teaching begins to GATHER them to their destruction.
