

## VIEW FROM THE TOWER.

"Watchman, What of the night? The morning cometh, and also the night."

Our last "VIEW" scanned the advantages of the present over all past time, to the consecrated child of God, both for his own up-building and for preaching the glad tidings to others; but now we look beyond the present, into the future. We see beyond, the brightness of the Millennial Day whose dawn-streaks may even now be seen as we look from the WATCH TOWER in the right direction. We know that there the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in its beams, shall ultimately dispel all darkness – every error and wrong; but between the present comparatively favorable hour, though it is not without its difficulties, and that coming time of unhindered righteousness, what may we expect? Will it continue to be as favorable for study and helps as the present, or more so, or less so? Will it be favorable as the present for labor in the vineyard, or more or less favorable? That is the query now.

We have no desire to draw a dark picture; we prefer rather to think of and point out the glory to follow, the joys of the grand incoming Millennial Day, than the afflictions and discouragements of the nearer future, which precedes full sunrise.

But it is necessary as a portion of "meat in due season," that the saints should be at least in a measure forewarned of impending events, that when they come to pass they may not be alarmed or disheartened, but being fore-armed may know how to meet them; and also that they may more fully appreciate the blessings of the present, so as to most diligently "Work while it is *called* day, for the night [a much darker time in comparison with the present, which is *called* day,] cometh *wherein no man CAN WORK.*" Though the Watchman proclaims to the inquirer that the Millennial morning cometh, he should

also forewarn of the approaching night between, darker than the present.

The Apostle asserts that "The time will come when they will *not endure* sound doctrine." (2 Tim. 4:3.) He speaks of the general or nominal Church, which in our day includes "all sorts" of what a prominent Methodist Bishop has styled "the ring-streaked and speckled of Christendom." While this is true now in the same sense that it has been true for centuries, is it not to have a more forcible and clear fulfillment future? It is true now that the Church nominal will not endure preachers who ignore their creeds and "preach the Word," the "whole counsel [plan] of God;" but having "itching ears" they love human speculations on evolution, and philosophies falsely so called, rather than the Word of God, which to them, seems old and unrefreshing; for none get the refreshing "meat in due season" from the Word, except those who possess its spirit and are walking in obedience to its light. And yet because they cannot hinder it, they endure the sound doctrine to some extent – to an extent far beyond what Rome in her palmy days would have endured. Men have been burned at the stake, imprisoned, etc., for expressing truths with far less force and plainness than is used in the TOWER.

Just before the words we are considering (2 Tim. 4:3), the Apostle refers directly to the perilous times of the last days of this age, (Chap. 3:1-13), pointing out its high minded, pleasure-loving and good-despising characteristics, with its formalism, covetousness, pride and unthankfulness; and declares that (in the church) Evil men and leaders astray (from the truth) shall grow worse and worse, deceiving others and being deceived themselves by their sophistries. And since the Apostle was thinking and writing specially about the last days, and not about the middle ages, we are surely justified in querying whether a time may not be but a short distance before us, when sound doctrine will not be *endured*, or permitted, to any degree in the "last days."

While it is true now, to a large extent, that none are permitted to buy or sell [trade in the truth] in the common marts or synagogues, except those who have the mark of the beast or the number of his name, (Rev. 13:17) yet we manage to do considerable trading *outside* – among the people. And the question is, May not this statement of the Revelator mean still more than our present experience, and like the Apostle Paul's statement imply that a time will come in the last days, in which sound doctrine will not be *endured* at all?

In back numbers of the TOWER, we have shown that the *true* Church, while in the flesh, is the antitypical Elias or Elijah, which introduces and prepares the way of the true Spiritual Church – the Christ in glory. We showed that the prophet Elijah's ministry was typical of the Church's ministry, and that his tribulations at the hand of Jezebel and her priests and Ahab, were typical of the persecutions of the true saints at the hand of the antitypical Jezebel, the false church – Rome, and her priests, and her husband – the Roman Empire etc., etc. We also showed that John the Baptist was another type of the Church in the flesh during this Gospel age, in that he fulfilled the work of the antitypical Elijah to the Jewish people, when the kingdom was offered them *formally* and figuratively at the first advent. John was called the Elias because he was another figure, as Elijah was, of the real Elijah, antitypical – the true church in the flesh. (Matt. 11:14.) So, then, whatever we find in the life and experience of either Elijah or John, which seems to fit well to the experience of the Church, and to the testimony regarding her future earthly course, we are justified in recognizing as typical.

We shall not here refer at length to Elijah and the wonderful correspondence between his experience and that delineated in the Revelations, in which even his persecutor Jezebel is mentioned by name, and the application made of it to the Church's persecutor, nor to the exact correspondence of time there pointed out and the fulfillment of all these in the history of the true (not the nominal) Church. For this we refer you to your file of TOWERS. (See, Nov. '83.) We here draw

your attention merely to the closing events of the lives of Elijah and John, as illustrative of what we may expect to be the closing events in the history of the "little flock" in the earthly condition – the true antitypical Elias which was to come, and whose failure to turn or convert the hearts of the world before the great Millennial day of the Lord, makes necessary the smiting of the earth with a curse (Mal. 3:23,24.) – the time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, needful to prepare the world for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Elijah passed from earthly scenes *in* a chariot of fire, representative of the spiritual glory and exaltation awaiting at the end of the earthly race course, those of the Church alive and remaining to the last; but we should also remember that it was *by* a whirlwind or storm-burst that he was taken away; and a storm is the symbol of trouble as much as the fiery chariot would be a figure of victory and glory in that trouble.

John the Baptist's closing experiences mark the trouble feature more clearly. Though he was not obeyed by the people (Matt. 17:12), they for a short time recognized him as a sincere man, a servant and prophet of God (Jno. 5:35), yet when he had announced Jesus as Messiah, [R968 : page 2] his work soon began to wane, as he had testified it should do, saying of Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease." So it must be in the end of this age: the work of the John class or Elijah class, closes with the announcement that The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, and the King is present. This is now being done; and strange to say the testimony is in almost the same words used by John, who declared: "There standeth one [present] *among you* whom you know not," "whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge [cleanse] his [threshing] floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" [in a time of trouble]. – John 1:26; Matt. 3:12.

As John decreased – his work being done when this message was delivered – so the Church in the flesh must decrease when its last

message is given, until the last member has laid down his consecrated life and passed beyond the veil into "glory" thenceforth to be a member of the glorious reigning Christ. As John said that Jesus must increase, so now that the real Kingdom is about to be established, we can confidently say, that the King is present, and that his kingdom must increase until it fills the earth. And, John's announcement of the "harvest" work – the gathering of the wheat, and the trouble coming upon the chaff, finds its parallel in the present time.

John's liberty was restrained soon after the delivery of this message announcing the *present One* and the work before him; he was cast into prison because he had reproved the king of improper union with a woman (Matt. 14:4); and though the faithful children of God have often pointed out that union between the church and the civil power was out of order, being in the Scriptures termed harlotry (Rev. 17:5), and though in great measure the world has separated from the churches, the union still exists and bids fair to increase; for the Scriptures seem to point out that in the time of trouble approaching, the churches, professedly virgins of Christ, will be on the side of and will be [R969 : page 2] united to the kings of the earth; and the true church like its prototype, John the Baptist, will be unpopular and restrained of liberty, because of faithfulness in opposing and condemning this error.

In John's case and Elijah's, it was a woman that persecuted, a king acting as her agent and tool: with the true church it has been in the past, that which these symbolize, and doubtless will be so in the future – the nominal Church represented by a woman and civil government by a king. Not only does prophecy point out a closer union between these than at present exists, but common sense teaches us the same; for any one can see, that the principal *lever* by which the aristocratic classes rule the masses, is the superstition that God appointed these "great men," often both weak and vicious, to rule over them; and that to rebel against tyranny, and injustice, and to claim justice, liberty and equal right, is to oppose God's will. The church of Rome laid the foundation for this when she had power over the nations. She made and unmade

kings and emperors, and claimed to do so as God's representative, and taught that when such were appointed, they reigned by *divine authority*.

Protestants followed in her footsteps and tacitly admitted these claims; and hence to-day Protestants and Catholics stand virtually pledged to the monarchies of Europe, and will be bound to deny the right of the people to redress their wrongs, or assume self-government, except by constitutional means, which is impossible, except in such countries as Great Britain, whose present liberal constitution whereby the majority of the people are able without violence to redress their wrongs, was gained *by revolt* against the autocratic power of their kings. (See, "*Magna Charta*" in English history.)

Not only so, but the coming struggle between the Aristocracy and the Masses of every civilized land, will be so peculiar, so unlike any former experience, that moderate, conservative, religiously and peaceably inclined people, fearing the utter wreck of society in chaos and anarchy, will naturally prefer monarchy, oppression and bondage, to anything certain to be worse. Hence such will side with church and empire, with wealth and aristocracy, in the general effort to repress and prevent that irrepressible conflict. – "The battle of the great day of God Almighty."

Eventually almost the only exceptions to this course, among the lovers of peace and true religion, will be such as ourselves, to whom the King of kings is pleased through his Word to reveal his plans (John 16:13), and who have full confidence in his wisdom and love, as well as in his power to make all things work out according to his prophetic promises. Only such among the conservative, order-loving people as see the part which the coming social revolution *must* play in God's plan, in removing effete systems whose day is past, and in preparing the world by a great levelling process, for the Millennial reign of righteousness, will be able to comprehend the situation and to act accordingly. But these will be misunderstood, and their endeavors to

point out the true state of the case, and the real and only remedy, will probably be interfered with by those who see not the grand outcome, and who because unwilling to submit their own wills, ideas and plans, are unable to see God's plans. When repressive, restrictive and coercive measures are thought to be necessary, such measures will probably include not only labor organizations and the organs which advocate their rights and *wrongs*, but probably such publications as point out the plan of God, and the real cause and only remedy for the great distress of the nations. Yes, the time may not be far distant when repressive measures may be brought to bear against the TOWER, the MILLENNIAL DAWN, and against every efforts of the saints to spread the good news of the coming Kingdom, all on the plea that the general interests and the public welfare demand such a course.

Thus will be fulfilled the predictions of the second Psalm, and probably in the end with more bitterness than can now well be imagined, though it has been partially fulfilled already upon the Head of the body. – Acts 4:25-29.

The same necessity for restricting liberty on political and social questions, will probably be seen to apply equally to freedom of expression on religious questions, which really lies at the foundation of all liberty. It would not surprise us if a "strong government," a monarchy, would some day replace this present Great Republic; and it is entirely probable that a common standard of religious belief will be deemed expedient and will be promulgated, to teach outside of which, will be treated and punished as a political offence. Such a persecution would not only furnish in the end or harvest of this age another parallel to the harvest of the Jewish age (Acts 4:10-13,23-30; 5:29-41; 11:19), but would also give a wider and deeper meaning than we had before expected, to the words of the Apostles Paul and John, quoted at the beginning of this article, and to the typical illustration of the close of the earthly career of the true church, as represented in Elijah's whirlwind and John the Baptist's imprisonment and beheading.

Two lessons we may draw from this to advantage, whether future developments shall prove that we have read the prophetic testimony correctly or incorrectly, and they are these: First, we should be so prepared, so armed, and so thoroughly furnished with the invincible truth, that persecutions would move us only to greater zeal, and not lead us through surprise or fear to lower our standard, nor to surrender when the Kings of the earth stand up and with the religious rulers of the people are gathered against us and the truths to which God has granted us the privilege of witnessing, as his servants and ambassadors, to them who know us not, even as they knew not our Lord. (1 John 3:1.) Second, such reflections relative to the future, contrasted with the privileges of the present (See last month's VIEW) should serve to stimulate every consecrated child of God to make diligent use of the present grand harvest opportunities and privileges, remembering that "he that reapeth receiveth wages," as truly as they that planted and watered, and that now is pre-eminently a time for *gathering fruit* unto eternal life. The little quiet of the present favorable time, with its greater liberties and advantages in every way, is divinely arranged in order to the sealing of the true servants of God in their foreheads (intellectually). – See Rev. 7:3.

The Master saith: "Work while it is *called* day; for the night cometh when no man can work." Ask yourself, What am I doing? Then lay aside weights and hindrances, and multiply your efforts. Be assured that if you are not a servant of the truth in *some* of the many ways now open, you are unworthy of it, and will lose your hold on it, because now is the harvest, the sifting and *separating* time. Various things will tend to draw you away from the truth; fathers, mothers, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters will oppose and seek to separate you from the truth and its service. You must remember the Lord's words, that the "harvest" is not a time for peace, but on the contrary it will surely produce *separation* and alienations between true wheat and all else. See, and treasure up his words on this subject. – Matt. 10:30-39 and Luke 18:28-30.

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