

is that of a genial humanitarianism. Our manners are soft, our beliefs are invertebrate. And the Church's condition corresponds somewhat to the condition of the age. For years now we have been bemoaning our ineffectiveness and lack of power. The fact is, a genial humanitarianism will never carry a Church to victory. What we need is a new vision of God—the Mighty God.

Men have called the Puritan religion "the Hard Church." But is it not time, as Professor PEABODY says, to face the perils of "the Soft Church"? That is our peril to-day—the peril of the Soft Church. We want a breath of the Puritan's bracing faith. For Churches and for men it remains eternally true—"the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

## A Solution of the Chief Difficulties in Revelation xx.-xxii.

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IN the year 1892 I was struck by the remarkable contradictions existing in the text of the above chapters. To some of these I drew attention in my first edition of the *Book of Enoch* in 1893, where on p. 45 I wrote as follows: 'We have here (*i.e.* Rev 21<sup>1-2</sup>) a new heaven and a new earth, and a New Jerusalem coming down from heaven: yet in 22<sup>15</sup> all classes of sinners are said to be without the gates of the city. But if there were a new earth, this would be impossible.' This is only one of the many difficulties that confront the serious student of these chapters. Now, to make the problem before us clear, it will be best to deal shortly with a few of the passages which make it impossible for us to accept the text as it stands.

1. In 20<sup>7-10</sup> after the close of the Millennial Kingdom, Satan is loosed, and the nations (Gog and Magog) which have refused to accept the Christian faith, march against Jerusalem and the camp of the saints, but are destroyed by fire from heaven. Satan also is cast finally into the lake of fire and brimstone to be tormented there for ever and ever. *Thus the prime source of evil and his deluded followers (Gog and Magog) are removed finally from the world, and their power to influence the world for evil made impossible for ever.*

2. In 20<sup>11-15</sup> the old earth and the old heaven are given over to annihilation. Then the final judgment takes place, and all the dead are judged according to their works, and death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire, together with all whose names are not found written in the book of life. *At this stage we have arrived at the final overthrow of all evil, together with the destruction of death itself.*

3. Now that all evil and death itself are cast into the lake of fire, the new heaven and the new earth come into being, and the New Jerusalem comes down from heaven, and God Himself dwells with men (21<sup>1-4</sup>).

*It is clear from this passage that we have arrived at the closing scene of the great world struggle between good and evil, and that henceforth there can be neither sin, nor crying, nor pain, nor death any more. In fact, there can be no place at all for these in the universe of God—the new heaven and the new earth and the New Jerusalem that cometh down from God to the new earth.*

The conclusion just arrived at is inevitable, if there is a steady development in the visions of the Seer. Now since such a development is manifest in chapters 1-20, when certain verses and glosses are excised, and a few disarrangements of the text set right—especially that in 18—we naturally conclude that our author will not lightly fall into contradictions, even of a minor sort, in the last three chapters. But unhappily this is not our experience as we study them; and at last we stand aghast at the hopeless mental confusion which dominates the present structure of these chapters, and are compelled to ask if they can possibly come from his hand, and, in case they do so, to ask further, if they have been preserved as they left his hand.

But we must first justify the above statement, though we shall adduce here<sup>1</sup> only a few of the main contradictions in these chapters.

<sup>1</sup> Others will be brought to light in the rearranged text which is printed at the close of this study.

1. Inasmuch as according to our text the New Jerusalem does not come down from heaven till Satan is bound for ever in the lake of fire, and all sin and death itself are at an end, and the place of the old world has been taken by a new and glorious world, wherein there is neither spot nor blemish nor any such thing, how is it that we are told that, outside the gates of the New Jerusalem which has come down from God to the new earth, there are 'the dogs and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie' (22<sup>15</sup>)? A greater contradiction in thought and statement is hardly conceivable. But if this statement were made in connexion with the Millennial Kingdom, everything would be intelligible.

2. Again, since the new earth is inhabited only by the blessed, on whom the second death could have no effect, and since these are all righteous, and God Himself tabernacles among them, how is it that in 22<sup>2</sup> the leaves of the tree of life are said to be for the healing of the nations? This statement can have no meaning unless it applies to the period of the Millennial Kingdom. During Christ's reign of 1000 years, the surviving nations have still a further period of grace accorded to them. This evangelizing of the nations during this period has already been proclaimed in 14<sup>6-7</sup> 15<sup>4</sup>. It is twice elsewhere referred to in the last two chapters, *i.e.* 20<sup>14</sup> 22<sup>14</sup>.

3. Only on the supposition that the Millennial Kingdom is still in existence can we explain 21<sup>24-27</sup>:

'And the nations shall walk by the light thereof:

And the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it.

And the gates thereof shall not be shut day or night.'<sup>1</sup>

'And they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations into it:

And there shall not enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination or a lie;

But only they which are written in the book of life of the Lamb.'

<sup>1</sup>A necessary emendation. The corruption in the text arose from the present disorder, and the influence of 22<sup>5</sup>, 'and there shall be no more night,' where this clause is wholly justifiable.

Now from the above contradictions—the solution of which is in part already suggested—it follows either that (a) a considerable part of 20–22 is not from the hand of our author, or that, (b) if it is from his hand, it is disarranged.

Now the solution offered by (a) is that which has been adopted by most of the leading German scholars of the past thirty years. Thus with Völter (*Die Offenbarung Johannis*, 1904), Weyland (*Ontwerkings-en Compilatie-Hypothesen toegepast op de Apocalypse van Johannes*) and J. Weiss (*Die Offenb. des Johannes*, 1908) assume that 20–22 is derived from three different sources, Spitta (*Die Offenb. des Johannes*, 1889) finds traces of four authors, while Erbes (*Die Offenb. Johannis*, 1891) and, on the whole, Bousset (1906) are content with two. Bousset, in fact, regards 20–22 as the work of the Apocalypticist, with the exception of the fragment 21<sup>19-22</sup><sup>5</sup>.

But, even though for the time being we yield to the arguments of any one of these scholars for a plurality of authorship, we have still two insuperable difficulties to face. (a) The first of these is that *the more closely we study 1–20<sup>3</sup>, the more convinced we become of the structural unity of these chapters*—a fact which does not exclude the occasional use and adaptation of sources—and *the clear and masterly development in thought, working up steadily to a climax. This being so, how is it that 20–22 shows no such orderly development but rather a chaos of conflicting conceptions?* (β) But the second difficulty is still greater. The hypotheses of the above scholars, with the partial exception of Bousset, break down hopelessly in the face of the general linguistic unity of 20–22. In fact, these scholars were lacking in an exact knowledge of the style, vocabulary, and grammar of the Apocalypse. Bousset, it is true, has done much to compensate for the deficiencies of his predecessors in this field, but a deeper study of his materials would have precluded his assuming the existence of 21<sup>19-22</sup><sup>5</sup> as an independent source, seeing that it is internally self-contradictory and that yet *linguistically it is from the hand of our author*. To the conclusion, in fact, that, with the exception of a few verses, chapters 20–22 are from the same hand to which we owe the bulk of the preceding chapters, a close and prolonged study has slowly but irresistibly brought me. If, then, this is so, we must conclude that the text in 20–22 *is disarranged in an astonishing degree and does not at present stand*

*in the orderly sequence originally designed by our author.*

To what cause, we must now ask, is this all but incredible disorder due? It cannot be accounted for by accidental transpositions of the text in the MSS—a phenomenon with which the students of MSS in every ancient language are familiar. For no accident could explain the intolerable confusion of the text in 20<sup>4-22</sup>, and apparently the only hypothesis that can account for it is that which a comprehensive study of the facts forced upon me some eight months ago, and this is that *John died either as a martyr or by a natural death, when he had completed 1-20<sup>3</sup> of his work, and that the materials for its completion, which were for the most part ready in a series of independent documents, were put together by a faithful but unintelligent disciple in the order which he thought right.*

This hypothesis we shall now proceed to establish by adequate proofs, though the full evidence can be given only in my commentary, by far the greater part of which is already completed.

1. First of all, it is a matter beyond dispute that 22<sup>15</sup> 21<sup>27</sup>, which state that outside the gates of the New Jerusalem evil in every form exists but that it can in no wise pass within the gates of the holy city, prove that *the New Jerusalem here referred to was to descend before the disappearance of the first earth and the first heaven and the final judgment described in 20<sup>11-15</sup>.* A kindred expectation is found in 4 Ezra 7<sup>26-28</sup>, where the heavenly Jerusalem,<sup>1</sup> the Messiah, and those who had been translated to heaven without seeing death are to be manifested together on the earth for 400 years. The same view appears in the same work in 13<sup>32-36</sup>. In this latter passage evil in every form exists outside the heavenly city.

From the above facts we conclude that in our author the account of the New Jerusalem should have been inserted after 20<sup>3</sup>.

2. Verses 22<sup>2</sup> 21<sup>24-26</sup> 22<sup>14, 17</sup> assume that the nations are still upon the earth, that the gospel is preached to them afresh from the New Jerusalem (as was prophesied already in 14<sup>6</sup> 15<sup>4</sup>); that they are healed thereby of their spiritual evils, their sins washed away, and a right to eat of the tree of life given to them. And to this salvation they are bidden of the Spirit and the New Jerusalem (*i.e.* the bride, 22<sup>17</sup>).

<sup>1</sup> Box, it is true, regards 7<sup>26</sup>, which tells of the manifestation of the heavenly Jerusalem, as an interpolation.

In 1 Enoch 90<sup>30</sup> (161 B.C.) we find this expectation of the conversion of the surviving Gentiles after the advent of the New Jerusalem from heaven.

That the above prophecies can apply only to the New Jerusalem, which was to be the seat of the Millennial Kingdom, is too obvious to dwell on further.

3. It is finally to be observed that, since the earthly Jerusalem was in ruins and never in the opinion of the Seer to be rebuilt, a new city was of necessity to take its place as the seat of Christ's kingdom and the abode of the blessed martyrs, who were to come down from heaven to reign for 1000 years with Him. Since this new city was to be the abode of Christ on His Second Advent from heaven and of the martyrs coming down from heaven with Him in their glorified bodies, it follows that the new city must be from heaven also, if it was to be a fit abode for its inhabitants from heaven. Even as early as 161 B.C. (as we have already mentioned above), we have a like expectation in Enoch 90<sup>28-38</sup>, where it is said in the vision that God Himself set up the New Jerusalem, to be the abode of the Messiah and the transformed and glorified Israel.

From the above facts the conclusion is inevitable that after 20<sup>3</sup> *our author had intended to add a description of the New Jerusalem that was to come down from heaven and be the habitation of Christ and the martyrs that accompanied Him from heaven in their glorified bodies: and also that this very description has been preserved in certain sections of 21-22.*

*We have next to determine the extent of this description.* Now even the cursory reader will observe that there are two accounts of the New Jerusalem in these chapters, which have been rudely thrust together by the Seer's literary executor. A close study of these chapters will show that the section 21<sup>9</sup>-22<sup>2</sup> constitutes a unity, though incomplete in itself, as we shall see presently, and gives a description of the New Jerusalem that was to be the centre of the Millennial Kingdom. Two further fragments of this description are to be found in 22<sup>14-15</sup> and 17. This description fits in perfectly with the conditions of the millennial reign of Christ and the martyrs for 1000 years. It is conceived of as a period of beneficent rule and evangelizing effort in regard to the surviving nations who visit the New Jerusalem and bring all their

glory and honour into it. Wickedness, of course, still exists without it, but nothing that is unclean nor any liar or abominable person is permitted to enter into it (22<sup>15</sup> 21<sup>2</sup>).

So far for the first description. But what are we to make of the second, which begins with 21<sup>1</sup>? Only the *dissecta membra* of this description remain. Two fragments of it are recoverable in 21<sup>1-4c</sup> and 22<sup>3-5</sup>. These should be read together, as the first clause of 22<sup>3</sup> forms the last line of the stanza, the first three lines of which are preserved in 21<sup>4ab</sup>.

In this second description the former heaven and earth have passed away for ever, with all the sin and sorrow and pain that prevailed on the former earth. Death itself shall be no more throughout the new heaven and the new earth and the New Jerusalem (21<sup>4</sup>). And whereas in the New Jerusalem that came down from God for the Millennial Kingdom the saints reigned only 1000 years, in the later New Jerusalem they are to reign for ever and ever (22<sup>5</sup>).

(To be concluded.)

## In the Study.

### Virginibus Puerisque.

#### The Candle of Life.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM UPRIGHT.

'The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord.'—Pr 20<sup>27</sup>.

THERE was a time when candles were often used in public worship. In the early days of Christianity the followers of Jesus were so bitterly persecuted that they could meet together only at night, or in dark underground places. Thus they needed artificial light, and as they were not rich people they made use of candles, which could be cheaply and easily obtained. In time it came to be thought that the candles represented something, such as 'the Light of the World' or 'the light of faith,' and when these meanings were given to them, they were soon regarded as a necessary part of public worship, to be lit at every service, even when their light was not required. This practice is still retained in the Roman Catholic Church, but it has been laid aside by the Protestant churches as unnecessary and superstitious. I think we shall all agree that at the present day candles are more useful in the kitchen than in the church, but there is one candle at least, which should burn brightly in the church as well as in the home. It is called 'The Candle of Life.'

The Book of Proverbs says, 'The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord,' and one of our great poets speaks about 'the vital spark of heavenly flame' that burns within the breast. When people wish to speak about the shortness of life they often compare it to the glimmer of a spark, which glows for a moment in the darkness and then dies away.

But what is the origin of the spark? Where does it come from? What is the Source of this light within us, which we call Life?

If you ask some savage tribes about the origin of fire, they tell you that there was a time when people did not know how to make fire, and it came down from heaven as a gift from the gods. That is why many savages regard fire as sacred. When the lightning sets fire to a tree, they put all their fires out and relight them again at the fresh supply which their gods have sent. Of course, our scientists have another explanation. They tell us that lightning is due to what are known as 'natural causes,' and therefore fire can no longer be regarded as a direct gift from heaven. Now some people are afraid that just as the scientist has explained the origin of fire, so he will also explain the origin of life. But there is no need to be afraid. Whatever science may have to teach about this subject, it will always be right to regard our life as a gift from God. 'The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord.'

In ancient Rome there was a temple for the worship of Vesta—the Goddess of Fire, and in that temple the sacred fire was always burning in honour of the goddess. The candles were trimmed and the fires tended by six virgins, who guarded the temple night and day. The sacred fire could not be used for any unlawful purpose; it must all be devoted to Vesta, who was thought to have given men the precious gift of fire. If any one had entered the temple and taken the sacred fire for his own uses, he would have been guilty of a great crime—the crime of sacrilege. That is what we are guilty of