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April-June 2012

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[Note: The views expressed in the following articles are not necessarily endorsed by the BRITISH-ISRAEL WORLD FEDERATION (VICTORIAN HEADQUARTERS) Inc.]

JACOB AND ESAU.

In the previous issue we mentioned that Esau hated his younger brother Jacob after not receiving his father's blessing:

Genesis 27.41 And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob."

27.42 And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, "Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, *purposing* to kill thee.

27.43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran;

27.44 And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away;

Also the descendants of Esau hated the descendants of Jacob and fought with them at every opportunity. We have already used copious Biblical narrative to demonstrate this.

We mentioned from Josephus's *"Antiquities of the Jews"* Book 13 chap. 9, para. 1, how that after the death of Antiochus Epiphanes [164 B.C.] who had been oppressing the Jewish Nation, John Hyrcanus, the High-Priest ruler of the Jewish nation now went to war against Syria. We quote Josephus thus:

He took also Dora and Marissa, cities of Idumea, and subdued all the Idumeans; and permitted them to stay in that country, if they would circumcise their genitals, and make use of the laws of the Jews; and they were so desirous of living in the country of their forefathers, that they submitted to the use of circumcision, and the rest of the Jewish ways of living; at which time therefore this befell them, that they were hereafter no other than Jews.

So now, Edomites,—**newly called Jews**, with their history of enmity against the Israelite Jews, **continued their enmity** and soon got the upper hand with their Israelite conquerors, and at the time of our Lord, the influential rulers of the Jewish Nation were now Edomites, violently opposed to our Lord.

How the Edomites got control of the Jewish Nation is told in the next book 14 of Josephus. There is little mention of these matters today and the confusion arising from such ignorance is the cause of so much world unrest today.

Knowledge of this history explains why our Lord calls the predominantly Edomite, rulers, in John 8.44: "Of your father the devil" and liars and murderers. It also explains our Lord's statement in John 5.46 that the Jewish leaders neither believed Moses's writings nor His (Christ's) own words. "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me." Also in John 8.37 our Lord agrees that these Jews are the seed of Abraham but in verses 39-40 He denies that these Jews are Abraham's children, for if they were, He said, they would do the works of Abraham. "But now ye seek to kill Me, a man that told you the truth," Esau was certainly of the seed of Abraham, since he was Jacob's elder twin brother. But he was not a child of God but of the devil.

The reason for all this is plain. There were now two radically different kinds of people called Jews in the Jewish Nation, who had always been enemies, Israelites and Edomites. We have gone to great lengths in the previous part of this article to show that the Edomites had always been avowed enemies of the Israelites. The Edomite Jews continually argued against our Lord, and eventually stirred up the Jerusalem crowd, including Israelites, to demand His crucifixion even though Pilate, the Roman governor, was determined to let Him go. This Peter later drew attention to in his oration concerning the miracle healing of the man who had been lame from birth.

Here is that quote from Acts 3:

Acts 3.13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus; Whom ye delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *Him* go.

After the crucifixion, and the Israelite Jews were told the truth, the Lord's sheep reacted in an opposite way from the Edomites rulers.

Acts 2.36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

2.37 Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, “Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?”

2.38 Then Peter said unto them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

2.39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call.

2.40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, “Save yourselves from this untoward [crooked] generation.

Peter was not exhorting the sheep to save themselves from the Israelite Jews, our Lord's sheep! He was warning them of the crooked unbelieving generation led by Edomites!

The misled true Israelite Jews repented bitterly as we read in Acts 2.37 above.

The other Jews continued to reject Jesus as the Christ with animosity and hindered Paul whenever they could. It was all a continuation of the Old Testament narrative of which we hear very little nowadays.

We read in John 10.14 “I know My sheep, and are known of Mine.” so our Lord knows His sheep AND EVIDENTLY THEY ALSO KNOW HIM.

Iceland Wipes Out Mortgage Debt

From American Free Press May 7, 2012

“Iceland is setting the new paradigm of resistance to the international bankers. A year ago, Iceland was the first country to defy the global debt prison and default on its debt despite scare stories from the mass media about what should happen if they did. Iceland has been a shining example of how repudiation of debt is real liberty. Over a year later, not only is Iceland surviving, its citizens are doing much better than most countries. In fact they are now striking the first major blow against the world-banking cartel by forgiving all mortgage debt in Iceland. The mainstream media is not writing a word about this, however, as the bankers are deathly afraid that this will trigger the collapse of their money racket. Iceland is calling their bluff and showing the world that debt (money manufactured out of nothing) is the biggest con game of all time.”

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Chapter 2 begins with a letter addressed to the “angel of the church of Ephesus”. Bullinger in his note describes the “angel” as the constant minister of this church, its overseer or Greek *episkopos* or bishop.

Revelation 2.1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; ‘These things saith He* That holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, Who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

* We see from Rev. 1.13 this is the our Lord.

2.2 I know thy works, and thy labour and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil, and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

2.3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for My name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

2.4 Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

Falling from their first love is the only failing mentioned here. Repent and get back to the first works is the remedy.

2.5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works: or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

2.6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

2.7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.'

2.8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; 'These things saith the First and the Last, Which was dead, and is alive;

2.9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and *I know* the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan.

The people of Smyrna are described as suffering "tribulation and poverty", but were regarded as "rich".

"Those who say they are Jews, and are not." It appears that these were Edomites who after 125 AD called themselves Jews but who are not Jews and came to rule over the Jewish Nation. (See Josephus's Antiquities Book 13 chap.9, para. 1). **I Thess. 2.15** calls these people "contrary to all men."

Of the seven cities that claim to be the birthplace of Homer, (the great Greek epic poet), Smyrna is regarded as the most likely.

Although Smyrna is described as a suffering church there is no mention of fault.

Halley's Bible Handbook p. 703 mentions: "The church was composed of poor people, with nothing like the number or prestige that the church in Ephesus had."

2.10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have a tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

The “tribulation ten days” is believed by many to refer to the Persecution under Roman emperors Diocletian and Galerius for ten years from A.D. Feb. 303, and ending in the Edict of Milan of Constantine in A.D. 313 which legalized Christianity throughout the Roman Empire.

2.11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.’

2.12 And to the angel of the church in **Pergamos** write; ‘These things saith He Which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

2.13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan’s seat *is*: and thou holdest fast My name, and hast not denied My faith, even in those days wherein Antipas *was* My faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

Augusta Cook, in her book *Light from Patmos* tells us, that when the religion of Babylon was overthrown the priests and others fled to Pergamos and that many Christians were martyred there. Christ makes special mention of Antipas, His faithful martyr. To those who overcame, Christ promised “the hidden manna,” which Augusta Cook reminds us is Himself, Who is the Bread of Life as we read in John 6.35.

Revelation 2.14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

2.15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.

Note, the church in Ephesus hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes but there is no mention of such hatred here.

2.16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

2.17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.'

In ancient courts of justice, the accused were condemned by black pebbles and acquitted by white.

2.18 And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; 'These things saith the Son of God, Who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass;

2.19 I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.

2.20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

2.21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

“Space to repent” is an interesting concept. The Byzantine Empire was given this after the First Woe of Rev. 9 but returned to its idolatry and the Second fatal Turkish Woe when Constantinople fell.

2.22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

2.23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He Which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

2.24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

2.25 But that which ye have *already*, hold fast till I come.

2.26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

2.27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father.

2.28 And I will give him the morning star.

2.29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.'

CHAPTER 3

Revelation 3.1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; 'These things saith He That hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

Sardis was the ancient capital of Lydia. Its commercial activity attracted merchants from parts of Asia. The remains of a vast temple to Cybel (the "mother of gods") still exists. (Bullinger)

3.2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

3.3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

3.4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy.

3.5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.

3.6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.'

3.7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; 'These things saith He That is Holy, He That is True, He That hath the key of David, He That openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth;

3.8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name.

3.9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

3.10 Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

3.11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

3.12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, *which is new Jerusalem*, which cometh down out of heaven from My God: and *I will write upon him* My new name.

3.13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.'

No specific fault is mentioned for the church in Philadelphia. Howard Rand in his *Study in Revelation* reminds us that following the French Revolution there was a new period of Christian activity and spreading knowledge of Scripture around the world. There were revelations of the Great Pyramid and the knowledge that the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic people are the House of Israel today. Expectation of the Second Advent was aroused by William Miller's preaching in 1844. This was followed by disappointment at the tarrying period. The war of 1914-18 closed the Philadelphia phase of Church activity, but revived interest in prophecy and the nearness of the Second Advent.

3.14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; 'These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

3.15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

3.16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth.

3.17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

3.18 I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

3.19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

3.20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.

3.21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.

3.22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.'

Augusta Cook reminds us that Laodicea like Sardis was "censured for mere outward formality, while within is deadness. Sardis was declared "*dead*", while Laodicea was rejected.

Revelation 3.1 . . . I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

3.16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth.

So seven letters were addressed to the angels (ministering messengers of God) of the churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.

Each has a message from "He That holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, Who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" —Revelation 2.1. This is our Lord, Who has already introduced Himself as such in chapter 1 verse 5.

In the *Horae Apocalypticae* of Mr. E. B. Elliott, Vol. 1, p. 75, we read:

With regard to *the seven moral sketches of the seven Asiatic churches*, the question arises whether these had a *prophetic* application, besides and beyond their primary and literal application to those Asiatic Churches then existing; and signified further *seven phases* that the Church Catholic would present to Christ's all-seeing eye, *in its progress through coming ages*, down to the consummation. Such is the view taken by not a few commentators; and which has been illustrated at large in a former age by Vitrunga and Sir I Newton, [and] in the present [mid 19th century] by Mr. Trotter.

Elliott gives a chart of the interpretations of these three writers, which vary widely. Had Elliott witnessed the lukewarm state of the church today and compared it with the previous era representing the church of Philadelphia he may have seen a prophetic application of chapters 2 and 3.

John S Fox in his book *A Flood of Light upon the Book of Revelation* tells his interpretation of future eras of the church in conformity to the descriptions of the seven churches as described in Revelation 2 and 3. He interprets characteristics of the various churches in the following ways:

EPHESUS "Early Christian Zeal" of the church period from about AD 30 to AD 100 approx.

SMYRNA "Pagan Persecution" from about AD 100-313 approx.

PERGAMOS "Papal Beginnings" AD 313-606 approx.

THYATIRA "Papal Supremacy" 606-1866 approx.

SARDIS "The Reformation" 1365-1600 approx.

PHILADELPHIA "Liberation" 1558-1800 approx. Rand has this era ending in 1914.

LAODICEA "Stagnation" 1800- approx..

Now we proceed to chapters 4 & 5, then on to that which lies ahead of 96 A.D., which is the starting point of chapter 6.

When putting forth prophetic statements especially to non-believers and to believers it is important to realize that one must come to an agreement with the sceptics as to what criteria they will accept as a true prophecy.

In the Preface of his book *Horae Apocalypticæ* p. vii E. B. Elliott makes special reference to this point. He refers to four criteria as set out in a book by a Mr. Greg entitled "Creed of Christendom".

Quoting from Elliott:

At the beginning of his 4th chapter on "The Prophecies," he thus expresses himself. "In order to establish the claim of any anticipatory statement, promise, or denunciation, to the rank and title of a *Prophecy*, four points must be ascertained with precision:—viz. 1st, what the event was to which the alleged prediction was intended to refer; 2ndly, that the prediction was uttered, in specific, not vague language, before the event; 3rdly, that the event took place

specifically, not loosely, as predicted; 4thly, that it could not have been foreseen by human sagacity.

It is of interest that Elliott states on the same page vii of his preface, "I am perfectly willing to accept the criteria laid down by one who has argued out the plea of infidelity with as much ability, and as elaborately and temperately also, as any other of our modern sceptics."

CHAPTER 4

Chapters 4 and 5 are described by Elliott as "THE OPENING VISION OF THE HEAVENLY THRONE AND COMPANY, PREPARATORY TO THE REVELATIONS OF THE FUTURE." In the two preceding chapters we have been reading about the "things that were", the "state of the church then existing" as Elliott describes it. The errors described in these churches are common to all ages and act as a warning!

Now we are elevated from the scene of the view of the seven lamps, to a higher scene. The revelations to be made now were to be communicated to beings of a higher order.

Revelation 4.1 After this I looked, and, behold, a door *was* opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, "Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter."

4.2 And immediately I was in the Spirit:

The vision now sets the scene in heaven:

.... and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *One* sat on the throne.

4.3 And He That sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and *there was* a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

4.4 And round about the throne *were* four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

4.5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

4.6 And before the throne *there was* a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, *were* four beasts* full of eyes before and behind.

* “Beasts” Elliott describes as “living creatures”.

4.7 And the first beast *was* like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast *was* like a flying eagle.

Notice the four living creatures are arranged around the throne in the same order as the tribes of Israel were arranged around the Israelite encampment.

See Numbers 2 for the arrangement of the tribes and the standards of the principal tribes.

These four symbols of LION, CALF, MAN AND EAGLE are mentioned in Ezekiel 1.10, & 10.14,

4.8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying,

“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Which was, and is, and is to come.”

Six wings. In Isaiah 6.2 we read of the seraphims with six wings.

4.9 And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to Him That sat on the throne, Who liveth for ever and ever,

4.10 The four and twenty elders fall down before Him That sat on the throne, and worship Him That liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

4.11 “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.”

CHAPTER 5

5.1 And I saw in the right hand of Him That sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

5.2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?”

5.3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able

to open the book, neither to look thereon.

5.4 And I wept much because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

5.5 And one of the elders saith unto me, “Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.”

5.6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts [living creatures], and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

5.7 And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne.

5.8 And when He had taken the book, the four beasts and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

5.9 And they sung a new song, saying, “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

So here we can now say that the four beasts [living creatures] and also the four and twenty

elders, are of the redeemed ones spoken of in Luke 20.35-36:

Luke 20.35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

20.36 Neither can they die anymore: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

Revelation 5.10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

The rendering in Exodus 19.6 is more likely here where they were made “a kingdom of priests:”

Exodus 19.6 And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

There is no suggestion here that “we” should reign in heaven. The “we” here in verse 10 are told “we shall reign on the earth.”

Revelation 5.11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

5.12 Saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb That was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

5.13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, “Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, *be* unto Him That sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.”

5.14 And the four beasts said, “Amen”. And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him That liveth for ever and ever.

Who were these twenty-four elders seated around the Deity, and the four living creatures closer still around the Deity? We can say from chapter 5 verse 9, that they are of the redeemed of God. They were to witness the revelation of things yet to come which was also to be revealed to the world. However, just as in the revelation of the “mystery of the Kingdom of God”, so here evidently it will be found that there will be those of the world to whom it is given to understand, while to others it is not given.

Almost immediately after the power of this Revelation was given to the world, the forces of evil worked to distort and suppress it. So now we find that the superb prophecy which could, if faithfully taught, prove the truth of the Scriptures, lies largely untaught and the Scripture almost in oblivion. In fact, this destruction was very largely the work of nominal Christians as we mentioned earlier.

Scripture tells that it is with the power of truth from God that God will correct the workers of evil. Reference is made to this

power in symbolic language in the following quotes from the book of Revelation:

Revelation 1.16 And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and His countenance *was* as the sun shineth in His strength.

Revelation 2.16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

Revelation 19.15 And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

The fact that we have been given so much prophecy in this book and elsewhere in Scripture and have lived to see its fulfillment, leaves little excuse for those who have covered up the truth given by God to His People. It is a fearful thing to stop God's word from reaching His people! This we are reminded about in Scripture as in Jeremiah 23.21-22.

Jeremiah 23.21 I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.

23.22 But if they had stood in My counsel, and had caused My people to hear My words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.

Then in verse 28 we read:

23.28 The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What *is* the chaff to the wheat?" saith the Lord.

Most reliable authorities believe this book was written 95-96 AD, so for it to be prophecy one would expect its record to begin not much after that year. It begins with the prophecy of the four horses and their riders. The first is the white horse with a rider who "had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer". It was in the year 96 AD that the Roman emperor Domitian was assassinated, to be succeeded by the first of five emperors, described in secular history books as "**the five good emperors**". Edward Gibbon in his book *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chapter III, describes the era of these five good emperors as the "most happy and prosperous" period in human history. **It is from this era that the prophecy of the Book of Revelation begins, as also does Gibbon's history.** This prophecy, as with all prophecy, progressively becomes history with the passage of time. This is an exciting study! The forces of evil know that fulfilled prophecy must not be widely known, for this would reveal with certainty the Divine origin of Scripture. The evil forces would then stand to lose all. **James 5.8** Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. , ,
To be continued, God willing.

British-Israel World Federation

(Victorian Headquarters) Inc.

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REVELATION 6

To understand the Book of Revelation, one must decipher the **Apocalyptic Symbols**.

J. A. Wylie has written on these in his book "The Seventh Vial". He writes on page 5:

The key to the Apocalypse is to be sought for in the Old Testament Scriptures. There is not a single figure or character admitted whose use had not been already sanctioned, and its meaning determined, in the Law, the Psalms, or the Prophets.

The Apocalypse differs from them only in that it is **symbolical throughout**. It resembles those monuments and temples of Egypt, which, being wholly written over with hieroglyphics, were illegible till the accidental discovery of the Rosetta stone. This furnished the key, and instantly the graven monuments of that ancient land stood forth, fraught with secrets of past ages.

In some chapter of Isaiah, or in some Psalm, we find the Rosetta stone of the Apocalypse. We mean that we there find this and the other symbol used in such a way that it is impossible to miss its meaning. Thus we make out an alphabet, by the aid of which we come to read the whole of this symbolic writing. **In the prophets the heavenly bodies uniformly symbolize the rulers of kingdoms.** We find this symbol employed particularly in the denunciations against Egypt and Babylon.

Of Egypt, **Ezekiel** [32.7] says, — “I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee.”

From the **Psalms** [80.8] we hear that a vine is the symbol of the true Church: — [“Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt.”]

J. A. Wylie is a great help in this study and we shall see later how he corrects the almost universal misconception of the historicist interpreters of the “Little Book” of Revelation 10 as being the open Bible of the Reformation. Yet here we read him reiterating the vine as being the Church. Had he completed the verse Psalm 80.8 he may have seen the vine as Israel because it says:

Psalm 80.8 Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: Thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.

Surely this is **Israel** going into the Promised Land where the heathen were cast out that **Israel** might be planted! (We leave the reader to decide on this, but the meaning seems obvious.)

Continuing the quote from Wylie we read:

In **Daniel** we are told that a **wild beast** is the symbol of a conquering and despotic power; and that a horn denotes a kingdom.

Daniel 7.24 And the ten horns out of this kingdom *are* ten kings *that* shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.

Thus, by diligent search in the Scriptures, we discover the symbols here employed in such connection, that their meaning is obvious; and when we meet the same symbol in the Apocalypse, we have only to transfer its ascertained meaning to the prediction under review, and without much ado, we translate it into plain language. As an example of the way in which an alphabet of the Apocalypse might be made out, we may instance a few of its more important symbols.

EARTH symbolizes society in a settled state. [As in Rev. 12.16]

SEA symbolizes society in a state of convulsion. [See Rev. 17.15]

RIVERS, the nation through which it runs. [E.g. Rev. 16.12]

A FLOOD, nations in motion. [Rev. 12.15-16]

MOUNTAINS AND ISLANDS, great and small kingdoms.

AIR, the political atmosphere.

HEAVEN, the civil or ecclesiastical firmament.

SUN, the monarch.
STARS, inferior rulers.
HAIL and THUNDER, wars.
EARTHQUAKE, revolution.
HEAD, a form of government.
HORN, a king or kingdom.
BOW, war.
CROWN, victory.
ALTAR, martyrdom.
COALS, severe judgments.
VINE, a church.
WILDERNESS, a state of affliction.
RAINBOW, a covenant.
KEY, ecclesiastical authority.
ANGEL, a minister of God's purposes.

Wylie, in *The Seventh Vial* top of page 8:

Having determined the importance of the individual symbols, it becomes easy to interpret them when found in combination.

Thus, when we are shown in the Apocalyptic drama, *coals* of fire taken from the *altar* and cast upon the *earth* [Rev. 8.5], we understand that the action indicated is the infliction of terrible *judgments*, on account of the martyrdom of the saints, on the inhabitants of the *Roman world*. Again, when we read, (from Revelation 13.1): "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy," all that is necessary to the right interpretation of the prophecy is to give to each of its component symbols its appropriate meaning.

Dealt with on this principle, the passage reads as follows: —I was shown (*sea*) society in a state of convulsion, and out of these convulsions emerged a (*beast*) powerful despotic monarchy, having, *i.e.* having had, seven (*heads*) distinct forms of government, but broken up at the time of its emergence into ten (*horns*) separate kingdoms, with their (*crowns upon the horns*) kings. Each of its heads, or seven forms of government, possesses an impious and idolatrous character, as intimated by the name of blasphemy written upon its seven heads. Amid the closing scenes of the Apocalypse there occurs the following: —**Revelation 14.17** And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

14.18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. What a picture of the final doom of the Papacy! No description could convey, in ten times the space, one half of what the few symbols disclose respecting the manner and severity of Babylon's destruction.

A vine is before us, — the symbol of a church; but it is the vine of the earth, — a false church. The vine is ripe, and is to be cut down.

[Here again Wylie apparently does not see the Israel as the bride of Christ and His Church as His body. Yet the rest of his teaching is so helpful.]

Continuing the quote from Wylie "*The Seventh Vial*" p. 10:

The symbols of the Apocalypse were not arbitrary signs as are the letters of the alphabet and the hieroglyphics of the Egyptian tablets. The leading error of expositors hitherto has been, that they have treated them as if they were so, and as if there was no defined relation between the representative and that which it represents.

Continuing the quote from Wylie "*The Seventh Vial*" p.11:

There must be a law that governs symbolic representation; and knowledge of that law is essential to the right interpretation of the Apocalypse. That law, we are persuaded, is founded on the analogy existing between the symbol and the thing symbolized, —constituting a **natural fitness in the one to represent the other.**

Numerous opportunities of expounding this law will present themselves as we proceed. Let us give an instance. Expositors generally hold that the **seven heads of the beast** from the abyss symbolize the seven forms of government * of the Roman Empire. Now if this interpretation is correct, there ought to be an analogy which may be traced, *first*, between a wild animal and a despotic empire; *second*, between the beast from the abyss and the empire that emerged from the Gothic flood; and *third* between the heads of the beast and the successive forms of the Roman government, —that is, we must be able to show that the *place* and *functions* of the head in an organic body are analogous to the *place* and *functions* of a government in the body politic. So with regard to every symbol in the Apocalypse.

THE SYMBOL, IN ITS *NATURE* AND *USES*, MUST BE ANALOGOUS TO THE THING SYMBOLIZED.

There can be no right interpretation of the Apocalypse but on this principle; for on this principle is founded the **law of symbolization**. It follows that *agents* must always be held as symbolizing an analogous body of *agents*, and *agencies* as symbolizing an analogous class of *agencies*.

* Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Decemvirs, Tribunes, Emperors and Military Rulers. See Rand's *Study in Revelation* p.195.

The reverse of this can never be true. We ought never to make an agent the symbol of an agency. An **angel**, for instance, ought never to be viewed as the symbol of an **event or epoch**; for there is no analogy between the two. There is no natural fitness in the one to represent the other; and the interpretation that would link them together would violate the very first law of symbolization. All that we can do here is simply to indicate what we conceive to be the law of symbolic representation. A clear and sound exposition of this principle, with special reference to the symbols of the Apocalypse, would form one of the most acceptable services which could be rendered at this moment to this department of study.

There are **two additional rules** which must be rigidly adhered to; otherwise our interpretations of the Apocalypse can possess neither certainty nor consistency.

First, we must always treat its symbols as such. We must not regard them as **figures** in one place, and **literal descriptions** in another. The earth can never mean literally the earth, but some other thing, society in a particular state. When we read, "In the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand," we must understand the statement as having reference, not to a literal, but a symbolic slaughter,

—the defection from a certain interest, of a large body of adherents.

And so with regard to all the symbols in the Apocalypse. There are interpreters of no mean name who disregard this rule.

Second, we must always give the same interpretation of the same symbol. Just as we attribute the same power to the same alphabetic character, and just as we attach one meaning to the same hieroglyphic, wherever we find it on the Egyptian monuments, so we must preserve uniformity in our interpretations of the Apocalyptic symbols. A slight variety of interpretations may be admitted; but that variety must never be inconsistent with, but always embody, the *radical* meaning of the symbol. If we find that the meaning which we have given to a certain symbol does not carry us from beginning to end of the Apocalypse, and that it is not in all places perfectly natural and easy, and that its interpretation does not piece in with that of the other symbols with which it stands in combination, we may be sure that we have not yet discovered its true import. There will always, till the Apocalypse has been all fulfilled, be some doubt about the commencement and termination of its grand epochs; but if regard be had to what we have now said respecting the interpretation of its symbols, there can

be no difficulty in determining the character of the great events which the Apocalypse predicts.

There are some who regard the Apocalypse as wanting in arrangement and meaning, — who decry the study of it, and deny its claims to inspiration. And why? **Because it is symbolical.** Do such persons depreciate the value and reject the authority of other symbolical writings? Would they not account the labours of a lifetime well spent in successfully deciphering the Egyptian tablets, and in bringing to light the secrets which lie hidden under the mysterious characters which cover the Sinaitic Mountains? Why, then, should such take offence at this book because it is written in symbolic characters? And why should that which stimulates ingenuity and excites to labour in other cases be held as a sufficient reason for declining all inquiry and investigation in this?

If the graven pillar that rises amid the sands of the Nile awakens within us so engrossing an interest, and is regarded with awe, because it still holds forth, to those who can read its record, those great transactions of the past which gave to Egypt her glory and renown, would it not be strange if we should regard without either awe or interest this venerable monument, which God Himself has set up in the field of revelation?

We wish to know the future: here it is already come. We wish to know how the world's drama shall end: here it is already wound up. The past, the present and the future, here meet. Let us turn aside then, and see this great sight.

By the help of these heaven engraven hieroglyphics, we can survey the whole history of the Christian Church at a single glance. We can trace her path from the Mount of Olives to the gates of that holy city, New Jerusalem, which John saw coming down from God out of heaven. We see her in all the variety of their earthly condition; — in the wilderness, where for twelve hundred and sixty years they were clothed in sackcloth, engaged in war with the beast, their blood flowing like water; on Mount Zion, with the Lamb in white, ascribing salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto God, when He sees the smoke of Babylon's torment ascending up; living and reigning with Christ a thousand years; delivered from a dreadful combination of foes to be formed against them at the close of time; redeemed at last from the grave itself; and after all their toils entering in and made to dwell through ages that have no end, amid the living waters of the paradise of God. Brought thus into one view, we are better able to trace the admirable order and progression that reign among these events, and especially among those more immediately under our review, and which fill up the long and momentous period extending from the white horse of the First Seal, to the lightnings and thunders and earthquake of the Seventh Vial.

The date of the writing of the Book of Revelation is discussed at length in Elliott's "Horae Apocalypticæ" vol. 1 p. 32, as being at the end of the Flavian or second dynasty of Roman emperors with the assassination of Domitian in AD 96. The emperor **NERVA** began the next or third dynasty which lasted until **AD 180** when Marcus Aurelius died and was succeeded by his 18-year-old son Commodus.

Chapter 6 of the Book of Revelation deals with the opening of the **first six** of the seven seals of the Book of Revelation.

Revelation 6.1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, "Come and see."

6.2 And I saw, and behold a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

Edward Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, begins, as does the Book of Revelation, at the time known in secular history as the beginning of the time of the "five good emperors". This period of just under a century is the **high point in Roman history from which the decline of the empire begins**.

In Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chapter 3, paragraph 31, we read:

If a man were called to fix the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian, [AD 96] to the accession of Commodus, [AD 180]. The vast extent of the Roman Empire was governed by absolute power, under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. The armies were restrained by the firm but gentle hand of four successive emperors, whose characters and authority commanded involuntary respect. The forms of the civil administration were carefully preserved by **Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius & Marcus Aurelius** who delighted in the image of liberty, and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws.

The labours of these monarchs were over-paid by the immense reward that inseparably waited on their success; by the honest pride of virtue, and by the exquisite delight of beholding the general happiness of which they were the authors. A just but melancholy reflection embittered, however, the noblest of human enjoyments. They must often have recollected the instability of a happiness which depended on the *character of a single man.*

The fatal moment was perhaps approaching, when some licentious youth, or some jealous tyrant, would *abuse, to the destruction*, that absolute power which they had exerted for the benefit of their people. The ideal restraints of the senate and the laws might serve to display the virtues, but could never correct the vices, of the emperor. The military force was a blind and irresistible instrument of oppression; and the corruption of Roman manners would always supply flatterers eager to applaud, and ministers prepared to serve, the fear or the avarice, the lust or the cruelty, of their masters.

These words Gibbon published around 1776-81, describing the “**high point of happiness and prosperity**” from which he commenced his historic description of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire.

Now turn to what Rev. E.B. Elliott writes in his *Horae Apocalypticæ*, Vol. 1, page 130:

I turn to Gibbon, whose History, by a singular co-incidence, in respect of commencing date, as well as of subject, agrees with the Apocalyptic pre-figurations: and find him, just as the first Seal’s symbolic sketch, deferring for a while to enter on his great subject of the *decline* of the Roman empire; in order in the first place, to describe its *glory* and its *happiness* in this precise era, as being that which immediately preceded its declining.

In fact, he makes it the bright ground, if I may say so, of his historic picture: whereon to trace out afterwards more effectively in dark colouring, the successive traits of the empire's corruption and decline.

He represents it (and his representations are well confirmed by the original histories remaining to us) as a "golden age" of prosperity, union, civil liberty, and good government; a period "*unstained with civil blood,*" (like the *white* of the first apocalyptic horse, in contrast with the *red* of the second,) and "undisturbed by revolution;" (see Gibbon chapter 3 paragraph 22).

In support of Gibbon, E.B. Elliott in a footnote in Vol. 1 p. 131 of his *Horae Apocalypticæ* quotes Dugdale Stewart's *Life of Dr. Robertson* (Works I, 38, Ed. 1817) a Letter from Mr. Walpole to Dr. R. is inserted; in which he intimates the idea which he had entertained of writing the history of this era of Nerva, Trajan, and the Antonines, as the "the most remarkable period of the world;" i.e. for good government. This was 1759, before Gibbon's writing of his history.

E.B. Elliott's *Horae Apocalypticæ* (we refer to Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia) "is without an equal in exhaustive research in its field, it was occasioned by the futurist attack on the Historical School of interpretation. Begun in 1937, its 2,500 pages are buttressed by some 10,000 invaluable references to ancient and modern works. It ran through five editions (1844, 1846, 1847, 1851 and 1862)"

Charles Spurgeon wrote in 1876, the year after Elliott died, that *Horae* was "the standard work on the subject."

Reverend Elliott wrote to support the supernatural inspiration of Scripture against the rationalist attacks from within the Protestant faith. He believed that if he could show "the fulfilment of Apocalyptic prophecy in the history of Christendom since St. John's time then he had gone a long way towards showing how essential the supernatural was to an understanding of all Scripture. He was strict as to what proof would be required. It needed distinct events, predicted beforehand, without vagueness and which "could not have been foreseen with human sagacity."

Before moving on with our study of the "golden age" depicted in chapter 6, verse 2 of the Book of Revelation, we might digress somewhat to mention that this "**golden age**" **did not occur in a democracy**. We are told that democracy is the best form of government. But for whom is democracy the best form of government? Here we see the greatest happiness and prosperity occurring under a monarchy. This, however, all changed with the accession of Commodus the son of Marcus Aurelius and the ushering in of the war period symbolized by the Red Horse.

Many will hasten to tell us that the ancient Greeks showed us the glory of democracy. It may, however, be of interest to read of the dim view the Greek philosophers themselves had on this important subject. **Aristotle** in his "The Politics" book V chapter v writes that democracy is apt to be overthrown because of its own internal excesses.

Aristotle's states in his "Ethics", Book 8, chapter 10, where he writes:

“There are three forms of political constitution together with an equal number of perversions or corruptions of these. The three constitutions are: **kingship, aristocracy, & timocracy.**

The last is the form of constitution that is based on a property qualification or *timema*.... Of these constitutions the best is kingship, the worst timocracy. The perversion of kingship is tyranny. Both are monarchies, but they are poles asunder. The tyrant thinks of nothing but his own advantage, the king studies the good of his subjects. He can hardly be called a king unless he has enough of his own and is better off in every way than his subjects; but if he enjoys these advantages there is nothing else he needs and he will be in a position to consult the interests of his subjects without bothering about his own.

Plato similarly discusses tyranny arising out of democracy in his writings in “The Republic” part 9, on Imperfect Societies, in chapter 8 on Tyranny.

Returning to the first and second verses of the sixth chapter of Revelation, we read:

Revelation 6.1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, “Come and see.”

6.2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

To assist in the attempt to interpret this first prophecy, let us go on to consider the second prophecy.

6.3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, "Come and see."

6.4 And there went out another horse *that was* red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

Elliott, in “*Horae Apocalypticæ*” Part 1 chapter 6, page 125, in his consideration of the symbol of the horse, draws attention to the use in other prophecies of animals to depict nations. He also makes a contrast in the use of **wild** animals as compared with **domesticated** animals.

Wild beasts apparently convey a **persecuting** quality, whereas the domesticated animal seems to make reference merely to **national history** e.g. the Persian nation as a *ram*, the Macedonian as a *goat*. The fitness of the *war-horse*, sacred to Mars, to signify the *martial Roman nation*, — especially as they claimed to be the *Marvortia proles*, with Mars for their father, — seems almost self-evident. Of which their fabled parentage the memorial, we read, was ever publicly kept up: at spring and at autumn, each year as it rolled round, from Romulus’

time, it is said, down to the time of the emperors, the Romans being wont to see the horse exhibited in sacrifices and in games, as the animal sacred to their father Mars.

See footnote in Elliott vol. 1, page 125, here we read that the horse and his rider is an expression continually used in Scripture in designation of a *heathen* military powers: See Ex. 15.21, Jer. 51.21, Ezek. 23.6, Hagg. 2.22, Zech. 9.10. There is an exception in the O.T. in Zech. 10.3 where God speaks of making Judah "His goodly horse in battle." Elliott goes on to draw our attention to the most interesting point that this last quote is "borrowed, if I may so say, from the custom of Judah's enemies boasting of their horses and riders. Israel was to have FAITH IN GOD RATHER THAN PUT THEIR TRUST IN BUILDING UP GREAT NUMBERS OF HORSES FOR BATTLE. See Deut. 17.16, Ps. 20.7.

Turning again to the first and second verses of the sixth chapter of Revelation, we read:

Revelation 6:1. And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, "Come and see."

6.2 And I saw, and behold a **white** horse: and he that sat on him had a **bow**; and a **crown** was given unto him: and he went forth **conquering**, and to **conquer**.

Note the FOUR symbols used in verse 2: **white**; **horse**; **bow**; **crown**. Here **white** represents very well the peace, happiness and prosperity of this period which was **unstained by civil wars**, though not without occasional wars.

Trajan warred against Parthia c. AD 114, and there was the Jewish War under Hadrian in AD 135, confined to a single province, in which the rebellion of that unhappy people was put down with fearful slaughter. Lesser wars occurred on the frontiers under Antoninus Pius which were always successful. This contrasts with the **red** of the **second horse era** in verse 4.

However, towards the end of the first seal period under the second Antonine, wars arose again with the Barbarian world which had been stirred to its foundations to overwhelm the envied glory and prosperity of the Empire. Victory after victory went to the Roman second Antonine, till the German barbarians, driven to their forests, were reduced to submission.

So the destiny assigned to the **White Horse's** rider "and to conquer" continued to be realized by the Romans even to the end of the period under review.

What is the significance of the **White Horse** upon which the rider sits? Elliott draws our attention to: "white having been both in earlier times the chosen colour for horses used by Roman generals in their triumphs, and still by Roman emperors."

To support this he refers in a footnote in the *Horae Apocalypticae* v. 1 p. 135. Here he quotes Pliny's account of Trajan's return to Rome from his foreign victories on a white horse. So also, Plutarch writes of Camillus' triumph after taking Veii. Also Seutonius relates that Domitian rode on a white horse in his father's (Vespasian's) Jewish triumph.

The **Crown** given to this rider in this First Seal seems to support this impression. From the time of Augustus, the *triumphal* crown-wearing was apparently regarded as too great an honour for subordinate generals, and from Domitian's accession this triumphal crown wearing was restricted to the reigning emperor.

It is significant, however, that the **Bow** given to the White Horse rider is given to the rider **before** the **Crown** is given. Elliott gives many references to the emperor Nerva's **Cretan** ancestry and to the fact that the **Bow** was historically **symbolic of Crete**. Elliott mentions that Nerva received his Cretan ancestry before he received his crown; hence this order in verse 2 is correct. He shows that the four emperors following Nerva would also, under Roman law, be regarded as Cretans *by adoption*. Nerva who acceded in AD 96 adopted Trajan because he did not feel he himself was strong enough to control the Roman Empire. He resigned in favour of Trajan in AD 98.

Trajan adopted Hadrian who succeeded him in AD 117. He was followed in 138 by Antoninus Pius, who adopted Marcus Aurelius who reigned AD 161-180, being the last of these adopted Cretans.

This is why in the prophecy the **Bow** was given to these emperors before the **Crown**. They received their Cretan ancestry *by adoption*, before receiving their **Crown**, the **Bow** being a Cretan symbol because Cretans were renowned archers.

In AD 177 Marcus Aurelius began a systematic persecution of the Christians at Rome, who had opposed emperor-worship. Many Christians took refuge in the Catacombs where the **fish** became a symbol of Christianity.

Three years later Marcus Aurelius died aged 58 years, after an illness of one week. His *son* Lucius Aelius Aurelius Commodus, aged 18 years succeeded him and with his accession **ended the Seal with its White Horse rider.**

Elliott comments that Tacitus, the greatest contemporary historian of the commencement of the First Seal's era, left his strong testimony respecting the astonishing change to national happiness which was introduced with the **New Age under Nerva and Trajan.** (Ref. Horae v. 1 p.131, Note 6). Tacitus, who had lived and held office in 'the iron age' preceding these days, lived also to enjoy and to record the 'golden age' that followed.

JACOB AND ESAU

We should never forget the proverb stated in the book of Proverbs 25.2 "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings *is* to search out a matter."

We have shown many Scriptural passages where Esau and his descendants carried on a very long and continuous hatred of Israel and his descendants the children of Israel. **GOD COMMANDED THAT THIS HATRED MUST NOT BE A MUTUAL HATRED FOR WE READ IN DEUTERONOMY 23.7:**

Deuteronomy 23.7 Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he *is* thy brother:

The stories of the conflicts arising out of this hatred, ties together, and gives meaning to, much of Bible narrative and some of it is very easily missed.

There was one conflict we missed and was omitted in these Notes as we went through the conflicts recorded in Scripture. This is found in I Kings 11, verses 14-25, and concerns a person named Hadad who was a trouble to king Solomon.

1 Kings 11.14 And the Lord stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he *was* of the king's seed in Edom

11.15 For it came to pass, when David was in Edom, and Joab the captain of the host was gone up to bury the slain, after he had smitten every male in Edom;

11.16 (For six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom:)

11.17 That Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad *being* yet a little child.

11. 18 And they arose out of Midian, and came to Paran: and they took men with them out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; which gave him an house, and appointed him victuals, and gave him land.

11.19 And Hadad found great favour in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen.

11.20 And the sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house: and Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh.

11.21 And when Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Let me depart, that I may go to mine own country."

11.22 Then Pharaoh said unto him, "But what hast thou lacked with me, that, behold, thou seekest to go to thine own country?" And he answered, "Nothing: howbeit let me go in any wise."

11.23 And God stirred him up *another* adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah:

11.24 And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them *of Zobah*: and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus.

11.25 And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, beside the mischief that Hadad *did*: and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.

In the last issue we told how Jerusalem passed from being ruled by the true Israelite (Maccabee) ruler Antigonus, to Herod an Edomite. This story is told in Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews* Book XIV, chapter XVI.

In *The People's Chronology* by James Trager, we read for the year 37 B.C.

Judea's Herod the Great begins a 33-year reign at age 36, 2 years after his confirmation as king by Marc Antony, Octavian, and the Roman Senate.

In our last issue we also mentioned that by the time of our Lord, there were two types of Jews in the Holy Land, the most opposite of each other. We had also shown in great detail how these two types of Jews had, previously been avowed enemies. The Israelite, and the Edomites nations were now together in the one (Jewish) nation after having spent much of their history fighting each other! They were all now called Jews as pointed out by Josephus in his *Antiquities of the Jews* Book 13, chapter 9, para. 1, which we quote again because it is so important:

When Hyrcanus heard of the death of Antiochus IV [Epiphanes] he presently made an expedition against the cities of Syria, hoping to find them destitute of fighting men, and of such as were able to defend them. However, it was not till the sixth month that he took Medaba, and that not without the greatest distress of his army

Hyrcanus took also Dora and Marissa, cities of Idumea, and **subdued all the Idumeans**; and permitted them to stay in that country, if they would circumcise their genitals, and make use of the laws of the Jews; and they were so desirous of living in the country of their forefathers, that they submitted to the use of circumcision and the rest of the Jewish ways of living; at which time therefore this befell them, they were **hereafter no other than Jews.**

(Emphasis added)

It is of the utmost importance to understand that from this time on, the Jewish nation now consisted of two different peoples, whom we have shown had always been enemies! However, there now arose an Edomite to prominence within this Jewish nation named Herod. After Herod marched on Jerusalem as described by Josephus in his Antiquities of the Jews, Bk. XIV, ch. xvi, the **Edomites then ruled over their enemies the Israelite Jews.**

Once this is understood, then other parts of Scripture become clear. It is possible to see the meaning of, for instance, our Lord's words in Matthew 21.43 where he warned the chief priests and the Pharisees that "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. It was only a few verses earlier in that same chapter (Matt. 21.19) that our Lord saw the fig tree with no fruit on it only leaves and He said: "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever."

Also is explained the meaning of Jeremiah 19 where the Lord orders a proclamation to be made to “the kings of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.”

Jeremiah 19.1 Thus saith the Lord, “Go and get a potter’s earthen bottle, and *take* of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests;

19.2 And go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom, which *is* by the entry of the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee.

19.3 And say, ‘Hear the word of the Lord, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold I will bring evil upon this place, the which, whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle.

19.4 Because they have forsaken Me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it to other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents;

19.10 Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee.

19.11 And shalt say unto them, ‘Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Even so will I break this people and this city, as *one* breaketh a potter’s vessel, that cannot be made whole again: and they shall bury *them* in Tophet, till *there be* no place to bury.

The bottle broken in the sight of those representing Judah cannot be made whole again. Compare this with what the potter considered in the case of THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL in the previous chapter 18.4,

18.3 Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels.

18.4 And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make *it*.

Note that the vessel was marred IN THE HAND OF THE POTTER. The potter is obviously symbolic of God and that GOD had marred the House of Israel. He did this when they went into captivity under Assyria.

18.5 Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying,

18.6 "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay *is* in the potter's hand, so *are ye* in Mine hand, O house of Israel.

So God has said, O house of Israel, "cannot I do with you as this potter?" That is, make you anew, as the potter made another vessel. Compare this with what the God said in Jeremiah 19.3 to "The kings of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

Jeremiah 19.11 . . . Even so will I break this people and this city, as *one* breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again: and they shall bury *them* in Tophet, till *there be* no place to bury.