

shall be darkened at his rising and the moon shall not give her light. Therefore shall I let the heavens shake and the earth shall be moved out of her place." This sublime figurative language is descriptive of the fall of the great Babylonian empire (verse 1). Similarly, Hosea, chapter x, describes the fall of Samaria: "They shall cry to the mountains, cover us, and to the hills, fall over us." The prophets abound in this mode of expression, and it always signifies the fall of some great power, God's judgment of some nation or nations. It is therefore no more conjecture to say that the passage in Revelation refers to the overthrow of the then existing Roman empire. By the concussion of the heavenly bodies is the idea conveyed that the events predicted could be effected only by God. Hence the time in which such events take place are always called the "day of the Lord" or the "coming of the Lord." Compare Matthew 24: 3, where the disciples speak of the destruction of Jerusalem as the "coming" of the Lord and the end of the era (Greek *aiton*, not world).

The two witnesses (Rev. 11,) are by way of revelation said to be "two olive trees and two candlesticks, standing before God." All these expressions become clear when compared with other parts of Scripture. In Zechariah, chap. 3, we see Joshua and Zerubabel represented as two olive trees, dropping their oil into the candlestick, setting forth how, by the Spirit of the Lord resting upon those two prophets of God, the temple should be completed without eternal help (v. 6) and against all opposition (v. 7). Two olive trees are therefore two prophets of God. Compare Doctrine and Covenants, Section 77:15. But there are also two candlesticks, which mean churches, according to Revelations 1-20, setting forth therefore the twofold work of the last dispensation, the gathering together into a church, "first the Gentiles and then the Jews." These two churches, then, and these two prophets, "stand before the Lord," an expression which always means "to serve" the Lord. The expression is applied to the priest who officiated in the Temple, and Elijah's "Thus saith the Lord, before Whose face I stand," is well known. Two churches, then, and two prophets clothed with the holy priesthood is what the passage means.

Thus all the principal symbols of the book can be traced and their meaning ascertained. Yet their right application is a work which no one can undertake without the aid of the Divine Spirit of prophecy and much minute inquiry.

Dean Woodhouse, among others, adopts the principle of interpretation of the Apocalypse, that its language and symbols, with rare exceptions, apply to the history and development of the church from the apostolic age to the end of time. It is argued that the Bible, as a whole, refers generally to the people of God, and only accidentally

to the affairs of the world. The Revelation is thought to possess the same peculiarities. This, however, is a great mistake. In the Book of Daniel we find the history of the world in outline as it were, and the history of the people of God as this people comes in contact with the world. The Apocalypse may be considered a continuation of the prophecies of Daniel, developing more fully many of the events briefly touched upon in Daniel. Besides, are not all the nations of the earth in the hands of God? Should not prophecy depict it all, as far as necessary, to a right understanding of the history of the church? Certainly. And this is exactly what is done in the Apocalypse.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

If we examine the second or prophetic part of the book, that which sets forth "the things that shall be" (Rev. 1:19), the things which were yet future at the date of the writing, we will find many events recorded with the clearness of history.

The volume in the hand of God is opened by the Lamb, and as that awful record is unrolled we read of successive judgments upon the pagan Roman empire, until during the sixth seal its "sun and its moon and stars" are darkened and its earth trembles, that is, until the whole of its ancient religion is completely crushed by Constantine the Great. (Chap. 6.)

Then follow (chap. 7) preparations for the preservation of the everlasting Gospel, that it should not be lost during the following long period of thick darkness, but be ready at the time appointed by God to be sounded unto all the earth. (Compare Doctrine and Covenants, Sec. 77:10-11.) How instructive to contemplate that centuries ago, when the apostolical church was on the eve of her departure, those servants of God were sealed who in this dispensation should "be ordained to bring as many as will come to the church of the first born." (Doctrine and Covenants, Sec. 77:11.)

In nature around us, when the cold snow storms sweep over the fields, we see how the rich verdure fades, the flowers drop their heads and die. And yet they live. The life-giving power is still extant and active, and the first rays of the sun will call the life forth again in all its former glory and beauty. The work of devastation in the cold autumn is only, so to speak, the first preparatory step to a newly-awakened life in spring. So here, when the church of God was apparently about to leave the earth, preparations were already completed for her re-appearance at the end of time, in more than her first glory.

After this the judgments are poured out upon the Roman power now in name Christian, but really idolatrous as before. The remarkable invasions of the Goths, the Vandals, the Huns, the Saracens and the Turks follow, but "the rest of men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, (that is,

dead "Saints") and idols of gold, and silver, and of brass, and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk. Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts." (Rev. 9, 20-21.) Anyone who will consider the Christian world today will, I think, find this statement of the prophet literally true. No wars, no calamities of any kind have been able to cleanse the "Christian" world—with Rome at its head—from their idolatry and abominable sins.

THE LITTLE BOOK.

Particularly remarkable is the vision in which the restoration of the Gospel through Joseph Smith is set forth. This vision falls under the sixth trumpet, that is, while the Turkish empire (described chapter 9: 15-19) still holds its seat in Europe, thus giving an approximate date to this joyful event.

John saw a mighty angel, or messenger, come down from heaven. In his hand he holds a *little book*, open. He sets one foot on the earth and one on the sea, thus showing that the *whole earth* was concerned in the message. His voice was as strong as that of a roaring lion, indicating that he should be heard everywhere. When he had spoken, seven thunders, the usual concomitants of the presence of God, were heard, and the contents of the message were these: "That there should be time no longer, but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound the mystery of God (that is, the work of bringing the gentiles into the covenant, Eph. 2, chap. 3: 3-6) should be finished, as He has declared to His servants, the prophets." (Rev. 10: 5-7.) The angel who delivered this message is the prophet Elias (Doc. and Cov. 77: 14), and the little book the contents of which we have just read is the mission given to John to once more "prophecy before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." (Rev. x: 11), which mission commenced when he, together with Peter and James, were sent to confirm the apostleship on the special messengers of God to this generation. (Doc. and Cov. Sec. vii: 12-13).

Could anything be clearer? We have here a statement as plain as prophetic language can well make it, that a time should come when John should again appear as a messenger to men; that the message should be contained in a little book; that the contents of this book should be a declaration that the winding up of the times of the Gentiles "was at hand;" and that all this should take place before the four princes from the regions of the Euphrates (Rev. ix: 14); that is, before the Turks had left their capital seat in Europe. What event during the whole of the sixth trumpet answers all these characteristics? There is one, and one only—the event of Joseph Smith appearing as a messenger of God to open the closing scenes of this dispensation.

After this vision the events are crowded. In chapter xi we see the