

Refuse Not Him That Speaketh

*“Then said Jesus
unto his disciples,
If any man will
come after me, let
him deny himself,
and take up his
cross, and
follow me.”*

—*Matthew 16:24*

GOD’S TYPICAL KINGDOM

or authority was formally established in the earth at Mt. Sinai through his Law Covenant with Israel. The manifestations of his power in that circumstance so frightened the people that they sought the intervention of Moses lest they be consumed by it. “All the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.”—Exod. 20:18,19

DESIRING ANOTHER KING

Had the people of Israel remained loyal to their king they would have enjoyed a privileged future of covenant blessings. However, they eventually expressed a preference for the rule of an earthly king over them, one that was more akin to those of their

idolatrous, pleasure-seeking neighbors. (I Sam. 8:5) God granted their preference: “The LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.” (I Sam 8:7) Thus began centuries of increased political, religious, and social difficulties for Israel.

Saul, son of Kish, was anointed king by the prophet Samuel. (chap. 10:1) Failing to fully implement the commandments of God, Saul and his house were cast aside. “Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.”—chap. 13:13,14

From Saul, God passed his royal mandate to David from whose lineage the Lord Jesus emerged in due time, only to be rejected as Israel’s Messiah. “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” (John 1:11) His national rejection prompted Jesus to utter Israel’s final condemnation—“Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” (Matt. 23:38) Destroyed by the Roman legions soon thereafter, Israel became scattered as a nation for over eighteen centuries.

SHAKING, LOCAL AND UNIVERSAL

The thunderous occasion recounted in Exodus, chapter 20, was limited to the environs of Mt. Sinai.

It was but a type of a future universal shaking that was prophesied by Haggai. "Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts." (Hag. 2:6,7) As the localized shaking at Mt. Sinai was preparatory to the initiation of the Law Covenant, Haggai's promised universal shaking is likewise to be preparatory to a new and different covenant than the old Law Covenant. The necessity of that change, and the means by which the old Law will be replaced by the New Covenant, is illustrated in Moses and his activities at Mt. Sinai.

TWO ASCENSIONS

Moses twice ascended unto God at Mt. Sinai on behalf of the fearful people of Israel as he mediated the Law Covenant on their behalf. At his first ascent, he received the tables of the Law upon which the covenant would rest. Inherent in the law of that covenant was the promise of life itself: "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD." (Lev. 18:5) To attain that and all other benefits of covenant relationship with God, the people of Israel pledged to keep his Law perfectly in every particular: "All that the LORD hath spoken we will do." (Exod. 19:8; 24:12) Upon descending the mountain, Moses found the people had entered into idolatrous practices in his absence. Angry, he cast down the tables, breaking both. (Exod. 32:19) Thus it was symbolically illustrated that, in

their imperfection, the people of Israel could never attain the prize of their covenant with God by keeping the letter of his Law, nor could Moses render further assistance as its mediator, he being of the same fallen nature as they were. It was manifestly necessary that one like unto, but superior to, Moses mediate a New Covenant between God and man into which the people could enter and attain life everlasting.

Ascending the mountain again, Moses received a second set of tables of the Law. (Exod. 34:1,4) As he descended with them, his face shone. "It came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. But when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him."—vss. 29-35

ANTITYPICAL MOSES FORETOLD

Moses, typically glorified at Mt. Sinai during circumstances that terrified the people of Israel, symbolized a profound truth—an antitypical Moses will be glorified at the end of the present Gospel Age when the old world order is being shaken to its foundation. All nations will seek his intercession with God in the future Millennial Age, lest they die. That an antitypical Moses would assuredly arise to whom all people would hearken was foretold by typical Moses. “The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken.” (Deut. 18:15) The Apostle Peter echoes Moses’ prediction, “A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.”—Acts 3:22,23

The Apostle Paul affirms that the antitypical Moses will be the glorified Christ, the greater Mediator of the better New Covenant to come. “Now hath he [Christ] obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.” (Heb. 8:6,7) That Christ is to be that antitypical Moses to whom all must ultimately attend is verified by the Lord Jesus himself. “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.”—John 18:37

THE CHRIST, HEAD AND BODY

Those who are ‘of the truth’ and who ‘heareth’ Christ’s voice in the present Gospel Age are his true disciples, his church. With their Lord, they will constitute ‘that prophet’ of Acts 3 in the forthcoming Millennial Age, the Christ, head and body. “He [Jesus] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.” (Col. 1:18) As the people of Israel, fearing God, desired the representation of Moses at Mt. Sinai, the people in the future Millennial Age, will likewise seek the guidance of the antitypical Moses—Christ Jesus and his church. At that time, all who subsequently submit to the tender mercies of the Christ during his kingdom will ultimately be returned to perfection, atonement, and eventual covenant relationship with God. Therein lies everlasting life and direct communion with him. All who reject those blessings offered by the antitypical Moses during that future Millennial Age will be cut off in death.

STRONG DELUSION

At his First Advent, Christ Jesus declared, “Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. . . . So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:27, 33) The Apostle Paul forewarned that, during the Gospel Age, God would allow strong delusion to come upon all who would hypocritically profess discipleship with Christ. Paul said, “God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had

pleasure in unrighteousness.”—II Thess. 2:11,12,
Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott

Early in the Gospel Age, a clergy class arose from the ranks of the spiritually restless who had gone out of the true church. Of these, the Apostle John said, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” (I John 2:19) From such beginnings, clerical theories and practices grew and evolved into ecclesiastical hypocrisy while preaching the Gospel of Christ as its central message. They are deaf to the voice of God that calls for sacrifice through Christ. The judgments now being rendered in the earth will ultimately reveal those who have, and those who have not, succumbed to that great delusion.

MANY DELUDED

For centuries, many have been deluded by these and other errors. To administer to these, various denominational systems and powerful organizations emerged. The Apostle Paul alerts Christ’s disciples to their danger. “Remember that there will be difficult times in the last days. People will be selfish, greedy, boastful, and conceited; they will be insulting, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, and irreligious; they will be unkind, merciless, slanderers, violent, and fierce; they will hate the good; they will be treacherous, reckless, and swollen with pride; they will love pleasure rather than God; they will hold to the outward form of our religion, but reject its real power. Keep away from such people.”—II Tim. 3:1-5, *Today’s English Version*

The scriptural name given to those systems and entities is Babylon, meaning ‘confusion’. Ecclesiastical Babylon is doomed, for it has believed neither God nor his Son. It believed the lie that one can gain the crown of glory without bearing the cross of suffering. God allowed that lie so those who ‘had pleasure in unrighteousness’ would be exposed to their hypocrisy at the end of the age. “Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. . . . For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. . . . for in one hour is she made desolate.” (Rev. 18:10,17,19) The relative few who have not fallen prey to that delusion during the Gospel Age will be the church, a little flock. “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”—Luke 12:32

THE LORD’S EXHORTATION

The Lord exhorted his disciples to resist all enticements that might hinder their awareness of the approach of that day of judgment and conviction at the end of the present Gospel Age. He says, “Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”—Luke 21:34-36

Jesus knew that the manifestations of God’s power at Mt. Sinai typified the great doctrinal and social clamor that would accompany the establishment of

his antitypical kingdom at the end of this Gospel Age. He knew there would be global turmoil associated with the changes in the old world order in preparation for that kingdom of righteousness and peace.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

It was prophesied by the Lord Jesus, "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." (Luke 21:25,26) Jesus characterizes ecclesiasticism as a symbolic 'heaven' which will experience a shaking of such magnitude that it will cause fear and distress among all the nations of earth. The various powers of the ecclesiastical heaven, symbolized by the sun, moon, and stars, are now being shaken. As it did during the establishment of God's typical kingdom at Mt. Sinai, so a climate of fear now pervades the earth as it is being prepared for the establishment of Christ's kingdom. When completed, the judgments of God now occurring in the earth at the end of the present Gospel Age will have prepared mankind for the new world order of the Millennial Age under the administration of the Christ, head and body.

This is the Day of God that was also foretold by the Apostle Peter. "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”—II Pet. 3:10-14

YET ONCE MORE

The Lord’s true followers are content knowing that the world’s present turmoil is the very voice of God speaking from heaven in judgment against the old world order. Paul, alluding to Haggai 2:6 and the universal shaking promised therein, exhorts his brethren at the end of the Gospel Age to be alert to the voice that would be speaking ‘yet once more’ at that time. “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.”—Heb. 12:25-27

The apostle indicates that at the end of this Gospel Age, the righteous and the unrighteous will be

revealed by their reactions to the global shaking then occurring. The righteous will correctly perceive the upheaval as the very ‘voice’ of God declaring impending dispensational change. The unrighteousness will be deaf to that voice and will stand afar off, fearful for the change. As the Lord’s people now draw nigh unto Zion’s very gates, they embrace the changes presently being wrought in the earth in preparation for the antitypical kingdom of God, and they ‘refuse not him’ who now speaks from heaven. These are they who have not believed a lie. ■

“The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid? Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then will I be confident.

“One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.

“For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle and set me high upon a rock.

“Teach me your way, O LORD; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors. I am still confident of this; I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

“Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.”

—Psalm 27:1,3-5,11,13,14, New International Version