

STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES

"The Path of the Just is as the Shining Light,
Which Shineth More and More
Unto the Perfect Day."

SERIES IV

The Battle of Armageddon

"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits...the spirits of devils, working miracles, go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

...And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue ARMAGEDDON."

Revelation 16:13-16

To the King of Kings and Lord of Lords

IN THE INTEREST OF

HIS CONSECRATED SAINTS,

WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION,

--AND OF--

"ALL THAT IN EVERY PLACE CALL UPON THE LORD,"
"THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH,"

--AND OF--

THE GROANING CREATION, TRAVAILING AND WAITING FOR THE
MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD,

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED.

"To make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God." "Wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of the times He might gather together in one all things, under Christ."

Eph. 3:4,5,9;1:8-10

Written in 1886 by Pastor Russell

The Battle of Armageddon

THE AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

THE FIRST EDITION of this Volume was published in 1897. It relates to the closing epoch of this Gospel Age, the overlapping between it and the New Dispensation--a period which brings to the world wonderful blessings, which in turn, because of unpreparedness of heart, more and more become causes of friction, discontent, trouble. If the blessings of the last 43 years were to continue at the present rate of increase, the discontent of humanity would likewise increase, and the very purpose of God in the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom and the blessing of mankind through it, would be frustrated.

For this cause, God permits the Millennial dawn to come upon the world gradually. As men are awakening from the stupor of the past, they do not consider the Lord or acknowledge His grace in connection with the blessings present and coming. We have estimated that these 43 years have brought to mankind a thousand times as much wealth as was created during the six thousand years preceding. The improved conditions of all mankind in civilized lands, the shortening of hours of labor, etc., are offset by greater knowledge and a discontent which comes therewith. This is in harmony with the Lord's declaration respecting this time. Describing our day in the prophecy of Daniel, He says: "Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased." "The wise shall understand," "And there shall be a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation." *Daniel 12:1-4,10.*

In other words, the increase of knowledge is responsible for the increase of discontent and fear which are bringing Armageddon, or the Day of Vengeance of God, upon the whole world. In the present great war, we see that the large nations have been fearful of each other's prosperity. Although all have been growing fabulously rich, all are more

D2

discontented than ever before, and more fearful that something will occur to hinder their enrichment and to turn the streams of wealth to the ports of the competitor. Their fear of each other determined that the war must come, and the present was chosen as the most favored opportunity, before the weaker became too strong. The same spirit is manifest everywhere--ingratitude for the present and the past, fearfulness for the future, and a selfishness which pays little heed to the Golden Rule. The conflict between capital and labor is along this line, and we are to expect that such things will go rapidly from bad to worse.

The debts of the warring nations are authoritatively stated to amount to fifty-five billions of dollars--a sum which, of course, can never be paid in gold; and everybody knows that there is not sufficient gold to pay the *interest* on the debts of the world. This spells bankruptcy--as soon as the war shall end and the issuing of bonds shall cease to provide money for the payment of the interest on other bonds. The nations are thus falling into the chasm of bankruptcy, but it is with them as with a human being falling, the sensations are not so bad until the falling ceases in a demoralizing concussion. Evidently the war will not stop from lack of men to shoot and be shot, but either from lack of food or from financial weakness. That it will be the latter is the author's opinion.

Already the kings, political and financial, and their advisers, are in great perplexity respecting what shall be done after the close of the war to prevent a world-wide revolution of the discontented. Twenty millions of men now under arms will need employment. Suppose that one-fourth of them are retained in the army, what will be done with the remaining three-fourths? That is the question that is puzzling many of the world's wise men. The world is getting along without them now, and also manufacturing vast quantities of military stores and ammunition. Evidently it could get along without those twenty millions of men altogether. Reckless of human life, they will be more or less of a

D3

menace in every land. The British are making preparations to induce their surplus to become farmers in Canada and Australia. Other nations are undoubtedly pursuing a similar course to the extent that they are able. But they all realize that they will have their hands full to cope with the situation.

The Bible points out that about this time the Nominal Church systems of the world will rise to great prominence again in connection with the Civil powers. We can readily see the grounds for this. All the kingdoms, financially weakened, will realize the necessity for keeping a dominating grip upon the public and preventing anything akin to Socialism and Anarchy. They will naturally look to the great religious institutions called Churches to support them, to threaten the people with future torments, and in general to help keep the Ship of State from being overturned. The churches also will be ready and glad for such an opportunity. Already, they are rolling together as a scroll--the one side, Catholic, the other, Protestant, opposed and yet connected--each side united and federated to the best of its ability.

But the Bible declares that this reign "as a queen" will be a short one, and that the fall of Babylon will be tremendous --like a great millstone cast into the sea. It will be during the power of this so-called "queen" for a little season, that the world will be under a great strain as respects any presentation of the Truth. And those found loyal to God and to principle will doubtless suffer therefor.

At the time of Babylon's fall, the mighty ones of the earth, financial and political princes and kings, will stand afar off, keeping clear of too close an affiliation with her, although they will greatly lament her destruction, realizing that it forebodes their own. Then very shortly will come the complete overthrow and destruction of the present Gentile governments, symbolically represented in the Bible as a great conflagration which will consume the whole earth--all institutions--religious, social, political, and financial.

D4

Considering that this Volume was written twenty years ago, none need be surprised to find that some of its statements, although startlingly strong, come short now of the full Truth. For instance, the wealth of the world has greatly multiplied in these twenty years. The combinations of capital

have greatly increased in capitalization, power and influence. It is estimated that during the past four years the capital of the United States has increased at the rate of ten billions a year.

In this Volume it was pointed out that although the Trusts at the time of the writing were beneficial rather than injurious, nevertheless these giants, born of avarice and built up in self-interest, would eventually become a menace, a danger to the people and their interests. We have reached that time, and many are realizing that the danger is upon us. Nothing evil may be done so long as the machinery is working well and under control; but when the moment shall come that the interests of the managers and capitalists will be in the reverse direction from the interests of their employees and the public, then look out! Remember the inspired Word--that this is to be "a Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation."

How glad we are that man's extremity in this Time of Trouble will be the Lord's opportunity! He is waiting to be gracious. He is wishing to pour out upon mankind the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom for one thousand years, for their uplift out of sin and death conditions back to the image and likeness of God. He foreknows that they must first have their lessons. He has shown this already to those who have seeing eyes, by granting more than forty years of the dawning period--which, however, instead of bringing blessings and happiness to the world, have brought more and more of discontent. The Lord will allow mankind now to go their length in carrying out their own plans and schemes. He will allow them to demonstrate the futility of all these schemes, and that nothing but Divine interposition will save them from wrecking the entire fabric

D5

of Society. Indeed, He will permit the wreck, and then reorganize humanity under Messiah; for He promises that His Kingdom shall be "the desire of all nations."

Haggai 2:7

Your servant in the Lord,

CHARLES T. RUSSELL

Brooklyn, N.Y.,
October 1, 1916

FOREWORD

THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON

*"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great Day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." **Revelation 16:12-16***

Armageddon is a Hebrew word signifying the Hill of Megiddo, or the Mount of Destruction. Megiddo occupied a very marked position on the southern edge of the Plain of Esdraelon, and commanded an important pass into the hill country. This locality was the great battleground of Palestine, on which were fought many of the famous battles of Old Testament history. There Gideon and his little band alarmed and discomfited the Midianites, who destroyed one another in their flight. (**Judges 7:19-23**) There King Saul was defeated by the Philistines. (**1 Sam. 31:1-6**) There King Josiah was slain by Pharaoh-Necho in one of the most disastrous conflicts in the history of Israel. (**2 Chron. 35:22-25**) There also King Ahab and his wife Jezebel lived, in the city of Jezreel, where Jezebel afterwards met a horrible death. **2 Kings 9:30-37**

These battles were in a sense typical. The defeat of the Midianites released the people of Israel from bondage to Midian. Thus Gideon and his band typified our Lord and the Church, who are to release mankind from their bondage to sin and death. The death of King Saul and the overthrow of his kingdom by the Philistines opened the way for

Dii

the reign of David, who typified Messiah. King Ahab typified the civil government, symbolically called the "Dragon" in the Revelation. Queen Jezebel symbolically foreshadowed the great harlot, Babylon, and as such she is mentioned by name. "Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants." **Rev. 2:20**

In the Scriptures the Lord has evidently seen fit to associate the name of this famous battlefield, Armageddon, with the great controversy between Truth and Error, right and wrong, God and Mammon, with which the Gospel Age will close and the Messianic Age be ushered in. He has purposely used highly symbolic language in the last book of the Bible, evidently with a view to hiding certain important truths until the due time for their revelation. But even in the due time, "None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." (**Dan. 12:10**) None who are out of heart harmony with God shall know; but only the wise among His people--the wise virgin class of the Master's parable. **Matt. 25:1-13**

When we consider our text, therefore, we are not to expect any gathering of the people literally to the Hill of Megiddo. Rather we are to look for that which is symbolized by that mountain. Many things are being called "The Battle of Armageddon"; this phrase is being used in many ways and from many standpoints. But Christians realize that this word Armageddon specially belongs to the Bible, where it is used in a spiritual sense. If, therefore, the present is an opportune time in which to consider the Battle of Armageddon from a political standpoint, it surely is the proper time to consider the term from its true religious point of view.

We all know that the book of Revelation is full of symbols. God seems to have placed this book last in the Bible with the intent of covering up great and important truths. That it contains valuable truths is the opinion of all Bible students. Yet so skillfully has God covered those truths that His people in times past have not been able fully and clearly to discern them. Bible students believe that this has been the Divine intention, not only because these truths were not due to be understood, but because God intends to

Diii

keep certain features of His Truth from the world. Mankind have always misunderstood the Divine Plan; for God in His wisdom wishes to have them misunderstand. The truths recorded in the Revelation are not for the world, nor for nominal Christians, but for the Church--the Body of Christ, the saintly ones "the Church of the First-borns which are written in Heaven." To these the knowledge will become "meat in due season." "The wise shall understand."

The Scriptures abound with allusions to Armageddon. Our Lord Jesus calls it "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." (*Matt. 24:21*) The Prophet Daniel describes it as "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time." (*Dan. 12:1*) Closely in connection with this statement Daniel declares that God's Representative, "Michael, shall stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of" Israel. The word "Michael" signifies "He who is like God"--the Godlike One. He will stand up for the salvation of God's people, for the rectification of error and wrong, for the establishment of right and truth, to bring to the world of mankind the great Kingdom of God, which has been preached from the days of Abraham.

Time for the Establishment of Messiah's Kingdom

The Revelation of St. John, being a book of symbols, will not be understood by the world. God Himself has said that only at a certain time may even the Church expect to understand. When the Prophet Daniel inquired concerning the meaning of his vision, the angel replied, "Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the Time of the End"--not the end of the world, but the end of the Age--the end of this Dispensation. "The earth abideth forever." *Eccl. 1:4*

St. Peter tells us that this Age is to end in a great conflagration--symbolical of the Time of Trouble, in which present institutions will be swallowed up. (*2 Pet. 3:8-13*) Elsewhere in the Scriptures, this terrible Time of Trouble is symbolically represented as a storm, as a whirlwind, as a fire, to consume everything. After the present order shall have passed away in the great Time of Trouble, God Himself

Div

will establish His Kingdom--the one for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in Heaven."

If, then, there is anything to indicate that we are living in the end of the Gospel Age, anything to indicate that the Virgins are trimming their lamps, we may rest assured that the time for the Wise Virgins to enter into glory is close at hand. What a blessed message is this for "all who love His appearing!"

In the same prophecy which tells that the Time of the End is the time for the wise toward God to understand, we are told that this time will be especially marked by two particular features: first, "Many shall run to and fro"; second, "Knowledge shall be increased." (*Dan. 12:4*) Today we see this prophecy fulfilled. All over the world people are running to and fro as never before. Railroads, steamboats, automobiles, electric cars--surface, subway and elevated--etc., carry mankind everywhere. General increase of knowledge characterizes our wonderful day. Every child ten years old is able to read. All over the world are books, newspapers, Bibles in every home--opportunity for knowledge such as never has been known since man was on earth.

The remarkable fulfilment of this prophecy marks our day as the time of The End, in which the present Dispensation is to be concluded and the New Dispensation is to be ushered in--the time when God's people will be able to understand the situation and to get ready for their change.

Principles, not Individuals, under Discussion

All Christian people credit the book of Revelation to our Lord, as St. John does. (*Rev. 1:1*) Therefore we are not responsible for the symbolism used in that book. There are so many ways in which one might be misunderstood, even by good Christian people, that we naturally feel a delicacy about expressing our views. As we proceed to set forth our understanding of the symbols of the Revelation, we wish to state most emphatically that we are saying nothing whatever against godly Christians anywhere, at any time, whether in any church or out of any church. We have nothing to say respecting people. We discuss PRINCIPLES, DOCTRINES, ALWAYS; individuals, NEVER! God has

Dv

not commissioned us to discuss *people*; it is ours to discuss *His Word*.

As we present our interpretations of the symbols of Revelation, we realize that the Word of God conveys a very terrible arraignment of some of the great systems of our day--some that we have long revered and esteemed, that we have thought contained many who are godly in word and in deed. Let us, therefore, clearly distinguish between *individuals* and *systems*. We say nothing against the *godly individual*, but in the interpretation of the Word of God what we have to say is merely in respect to these *systems*. Indeed we believe that the saintly people of God are left out of these symbols, probably because the saints of God, as compared with the hundreds of millions of humanity, are merely a small company, as Jesus said: "Fear not, Little Flock."

Coming to the interpretation of the symbols of **Rev. 16:13-16**, we find that there are three agencies connected with the gathering of the hosts to this Battle of Armageddon. We read that out of the mouth of the Beast, out of the mouth of the False Prophet and out of the mouth of the Dragon proceeded three unclean spirits like frogs; and that these three unclean spirits, frog-like, went forth throughout the whole world to gather the whole world into this Battle of Armageddon.

It is proper, then, for us to inquire what systems are meant by these symbolic words--the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet. After we shall discover what is meant by these terms, we shall ask what is symbolized by the frogs that came out from their mouths.

Throughout the Bible, a Beast is the symbol used to represent a government. In Daniel's prophecy the great universal empires of the earth are thus symbolized. Babylon was the Lion, Medo-Persia the Bear, Greece the Leopard, and Rome the Dragon. (**Dan. 7:1-8**) The Roman Empire still persists. Christendom is a part of that great Roman Empire which began in the days of Caesar and which, according to the Scriptures, still is in the world.

Practically all Bible exegetes agree that the Dragon of the Revelation represents the purely civil power, wherever it may be found. We do not understand this to mean that all the powers of the world are evil or of the Devil, but that

Dvi

the Dragon is the symbol which the Lord is pleased to use to represent civil power.

The Beast of **Rev. 16:13** is the same that is mentioned in **Rev. 13:2**, where it is described as resembling a leopard--spotted. Protestant interpreters of the Revelation agree that this symbol refers to the Papal system--not to the Pope, not to Catholic congregations, not to individual Catholics, but to the *system as a whole*, which has existed for centuries.

In His Word, God has been pleased to recognize the Papacy as a system, as a government. Papacy claims that the Kingdom of God, Messiah's Kingdom, was established in 799 A.D.; that it lasted a thousand years, just as the Bible declares Christ's Kingdom will last; and that it expired in 1799 A.D. They claim also that since 1799 this Kingdom of Christ (that is, the Papal system, represented in the Revelation as the Beast) has been suffering violence; and that during this time the Devil has been loosed, in fulfilment of **Rev. 20:7**.

History records that the era closing with 1799, marked by Napoleon's Egyptian campaign, sealed and defined the limit of Papal dominion over the nations. Napoleon even took the Pope prisoner to France, where he died. This humiliating experience, Roman Catholics claim, marks the time of the loosing of Satan in fulfilment of **Rev. 20:7**.

We cannot agree with our Catholic brethren's interpretation of prophecy. Our Lord was surely right when He declared that "the prince of this world is Satan," and that this is "the present evil world" or age. The reason why there is so much graft, false doctrine, delusion, ignorance, superstition everywhere is that Satan is the great being who is deceiving the world. According to the Scriptures Satan is to be bound for a thousand years, that he may deceive the nations no more. (**Rev. 20:3**) After the thousand years shall have been finished, Satan shall be loosed for a little season to test mankind. Then he will be destroyed in the Second Death, together with all who are in harmony with him.

Bible students are only now getting their eyes open to see the lengths, breadths, heights and depths of the Love of God--His wonderful provision made, first, for the Church, who are to share in the Kingdom glory; and second, for the world of mankind, who will receive the blessing of an uplift to human perfection during that thousand years. This

glorious Epoch is just approaching, instead of being in the past. So glorious will be the condition of humanity at the close of Messiah's Kingdom that nothing ever dreamed will compare with it. But the great work of God will not be perfected until every human being will have reached perfection, or will have been destroyed in the Second Death, because of refusal to come into harmony with the laws of righteousness. Then every creature in Heaven and on earth, will be heard saying, "Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne and to the Lamb, for ever and ever." *Rev. 5:13*

The Dragon, then, symbolizes the Roman power, represented by the civil power in the world. The Beast is the Papal system of government. The third symbol, the False Prophet, remains to be interpreted. This, we believe, is another name for the system elsewhere called "the Image of the Beast." (*Rev. 13:14*) According to the Scriptures, this Image is a very exact representation of the Beast. The False Prophet, or Image of the Beast, we understand to mean the Protestant Federation of Churches.

The Image of the Beast

In order to see why the Protestant Federation of Churches should be symbolized as the Image of the Beast and as the False Prophet, we must examine other symbolical Scriptures. In *Rev. 17:5*, our attention is called to a great "mystery." The word "harlot" in Scriptural symbolism does not mean an immoral person. It refers to the Church, which was to be the Kingdom of God, but which lost her virginity and became united to an earthly husband, instead of her Heavenly Husband. To what earthly husband did the Church unite? To the Roman Empire. In the minds of Luther and other reformers there was no doubt that there was a close union between the Church and the world. The Church for a time claimed to be waiting for Christ to set up His Kingdom. Finally she said, "I will not wait until the Second Coming of Christ, I will unite with the Roman Empire."

All know the result. The Roman Catholic Church was exalted, and reigned as a queen for centuries. This union of Church and State is represented in a famous picture found

in Italy. On a throne the Pope and the Emperor sit side by side. On one side are cardinals, bishops, the lower clergy and the laity, in order of rank. On the other side are generals, lieutenants, soldiers, etc., down to the common people. Thus the union of Church and State was recognized.

On the basis of this union all earthly governments are called Christian; for they claim unity as part and parcel with the Church. History tells us that for centuries the Church appointed the earthly kings. Whosoever the Pope desired was crowned. In proof of the supremacy of the Church a story is told in regard to Emperor Henry IV of Germany, who had incurred the Papal displeasure and who as a punishment was compelled to stand for three days without the castle gates of Canossa, barefooted, and clad only in the haircloth shirt of a penitent, exposed to the inclemency of mid-winter. Then he was forced to crawl on hands and knees into the presence of the Pontiff, whose silk stocking was removed in order that the emperor might kiss the Pope's great toe, in fulfilment of *Psa. 2:12*, "Kiss the Son, O ye kings of the earth."

To our understanding this is a mistaken application of Scripture. "The Son" is not the Pope. The "holy hill" is the Kingdom of God. His agency is symbolized as the holy Mount Zion. The great Messiah will completely overthrow all the things of the present time, and will establish the Kingdom of Righteousness and Truth, which will uplift mankind out of sin and degradation.

Roman Catholics believe that the Pope is the vicegerent of Christ, reigning in His stead. They believe that the present is the time when Satan is loosed to deceive the nations; that very shortly the Church will again get full power in the world; and that as a result every one who does not obey them will be destroyed. This interpretation points us to *Revelation 13th and 20th Chapters*. Protestants do not appreciate the situation. Doubtless all thinking people have noticed that overtures for union come from Protestantism, but never from Catholicism.

The question now arises, Why should the Scriptures picture Protestantism as an Image of the Beast? When and how did this come about? From the time of the Reformation, Protestants had been striving individually to get out

Dix

of the darkness of the past and thus had formulated many creeds and had organized many denominations. But about the middle of the last century the leaders began to see that if every one continued to study the Bible individually the time would come when each one would have an individual creed. To prevent what seemed to them a loss of power, they planned a union of Protestants in a system called the Evangelical Alliance.

The Evangelical Alliance, an organization of the different Protestant denominations, was formed in 1846 for the very purpose of doing in their own way the same thing that Catholicism would do in its own way. Seeing the great power that Roman Catholics would exercise because of a united system, Protestants said, "We are divided. We have no power. We will organize." Then and there, according to the Scriptures, they made an Image of the Beast.

The Bible says, however, that before the Image can do any particular harm it must receive life from the two-horned Beast. (*Rev. 13:15*) This two-horned Beast with horns like a lamb, but a voice like a dragon, we believe represents the Church of England, which is not a party to the Evangelical Alliance. The Church of England makes the claim which the Church of Rome makes--that she is the true Church; that all others are wrong; that she has the original apostolic succession; and that no one is commissioned to preach unless he has had divine, apostolic hands laid upon him. This has been the contention of the Church of England for centuries, and constitutes the difference between that Church and all other Protestant denominations.

Although the Evangelical Alliance was organized in 1846, it has not been able to accomplish its purpose, because it did not know how to operate. The denominations in the Alliance were united only in name, and hence have worked against each other. Denominations outside of the Alliance were declared to be unauthorized; and they, in turn, challenged the Evangelical Churches to show where they got authority to preach. As a result the Image had no power to act; it was trodden upon; and to get vitality--life--it would need apostolic succession; it must have something as a basis for operation.

The Scriptures indicate that the Church of England will

Dx

become intimate with the Evangelical Alliance and will give it apostolic authority to preach. Because of this union the Alliance will be able to say, "We have apostolic authority to preach. Let no one speak unless he has our sanction."

This action on their part is described in **Rev. 13:17**. None will be allowed to buy or sell spiritual things in the spiritual market unless he has either the mark of the Beast or the mark of the Image.

In **Rev. 16:13** we find mention of the False Prophet, another representation of the Image--the vitalized product of the Evangelical Alliance, which has taken the form of Church Federation, and has today a great deal of vitality. Whether we can expect it to have more remains to be seen. The Scriptures clearly indicate that the Image of the Beast is to get so great power that it will do the same thing that the Roman Catholic Church did in the past; and that the two systems, Catholic and Protestant, will rule the civilized world with a high hand through the civil power--the Dragon.

"Three Unclean Spirits Like Frogs"

The Scriptures tell us that this result is to be brought about by the utterances of the combined power of Church and State. "Three unclean spirits like frogs came out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the False Prophet." In this passage, the spirit is a doctrine--an unclean doctrine--a false doctrine. Each of these systems will utter the same things, and these utterances will have the effect of gathering the kingdoms of earth together to the great Battle of Armageddon.

The symbolism of Scripture, rightly understood, is very forceful, and there is always a close resemblance between the symbol itself and the thing symbolized. When the holy Spirit uses a frog to represent certain doctrines or teachings, we may be sure that the application will fit well. While a frog is a small creature, yet it puffs itself up until it almost bursts with the effort to be somebody. A frog has a very wise look, even though it does not know very much. Then a frog *croaks* whenever it utters a sound.

The three most prominent characteristics of a frog, then, are pomposity, an air of superior wisdom and knowledge, and a continual croaking. Applying these characteristics to

Dxi

the picture given in the Divine Word, we learn that from the civil power, from the Catholic Church and from the Federation of Protestant Churches will go forth the same teachings. The spirit of all will be boastful; an air of superior knowledge and wisdom will be assumed; all will foretell dire results to follow any failure to obey their counsels. However conflicting the creeds, the differences will be ignored in the general proposition that nothing ancient must be disturbed, or investigated, or repudiated.

The Divine authority of the Church, and the Divine right of kings, aside from the Church, will not be allowed to conflict; for both will be indorsed. Any persons or teachings in conflict with these boastful, unscriptural claims will be branded as everything vile, at the mouths of the frogs, croaking from pulpits and platforms, and through the religious and secular press. The nobler sentiments of some will be strangled by the philosophy of the same evil spirit which spoke through Caiaphas, the high priest, respecting our Lord Jesus. As Caiaphas declared it expedient to commit a crime in violation of justice, both human and Divine, to be rid of Jesus and His teachings, so this frog-like spirit will approve of any and every violation of principle necessary to self-protection.

Every true Christian is ashamed to look back upon the pages of history and see what terrible deeds were done in the name of God and justice, and in the name of our Lord Jesus. We are not to think for a moment that these frog spirits, or doctrines, are all bad, but rather that they are doctrines of bombast and pomposity, representing themselves to be very wise and great, and having the backing of centuries. Out of the mouth of the Dragon comes the doctrine of the Divine right of Kings: "Do not look back of the curtain of history to see where the kings got that right. Accept the doctrine; for if you do not, and if men look into the matter, there will be a terrible revolution and everything will go down!"

The Beast and the False Prophet have similar croakings. The Catholic Church says, "Do not look behind! Do not question anything about the Church!" Protestantism says, also, "We are great, we are wise, we know a great deal. Keep quiet! No one will then know that you know nothing." All say (croaking), "We tell you that if you say anything against

present arrangements, terrible things will come to pass."

Political parties are figuring in this. All declare, "If any change should come, it will mean terrible disaster!" Some have the backbone and some have the civil power behind them, but unitedly they croak to the people that if any change is made, it will mean ruin to the present order. In the language of our day, "Stand pat!" is the order in Church and in State; but the people are being moved by fear. It is this croaking of the Beast, the Dragon and the False Prophet that will arouse the kings of earth and gather them together to the Armageddon Battle and destruction.

The ecclesiastical kings and princes, with their retinue of clergy and faithful adherents, will be gathered in solid phalanx--Protestant and Catholic. The political kings and princes, senators, and all in high places, with their henchmen and retainers, will follow in line on the same side. The financial kings and merchant princes, and all whom they can influence by the most gigantic power ever yet exercised in the world, will join the same side, according to this prophecy. They do not realize, however, that they are coming to Armageddon; yet strange to say, this is a part of their very cry, "Come together to Armageddon!"

Speaking of our day, our Lord declared, "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 21:26*) The kings of Europe know not what to do. All sectarianism is being shaken. Many people of God are in perplexity.

The croaking of the frog spirits, or doctrines, will gather the kings and princes, financial, political, religious and industrial into one great army. The spirit of fear, inspired by the croaking, will scourge the passions of otherwise good and reasonable men to fury--desperation. In their blind following of these evil spirits, evil doctrines, they will be ready to sacrifice life and everything on what they mistakenly suppose is the altar of Justice, Truth and Righteousness under a Divine arrangement.

Many noble people in this great army will assume an attitude quite contrary to their preference. For a time the wheels of liberty and progress will be turned backward, and mediaeval restraints will be considered necessary for self-preservation

Dxiii

--for the maintenance of the present order of things and for the prevention of the new order which God has decreed, the due time for which is at hand. Even those who may be God's people do not stop to consider whether it is His will that things should continue as they have been for the past six thousand years. The Bible says that such is not God's will, but that there is to be a great overturning, that a new order is coming in.

For a brief time, as we understand the Scriptures, these combined forces of Armageddon will triumph. Free speech, free mails, and other liberties which have come to be the very breath of the masses in our day, will be ruthlessly shut off on the plea of *necessity*, the glory of God, the commands of the Church, etc. The safety-valve will be sat upon, and thus will cease to annoy earth's kings with the sound of escaping steam; and all will seem to be serene--until the great social explosion described in the Revelation as an *earthquake* will take place. In symbolic language an earthquake signifies social revolution, and the Scriptural declaration is that none like it ever before occurred. (*Rev. 16:18,19*) See our Lord's reference to it in *Matt. 24:21*.

The Lord's Great Army

At this juncture, the Scriptures show, Divine Power will step forward, and God will gather the marshaled hosts to Armageddon--to the Mount of Destruction. (*Rev. 16:16*) The very thing which they sought to avert by their union, federation, etc., will be the very thing that they will hasten. Other Scriptures tell us that God will be represented by Messiah, and that He will be on the side of the masses. "At that time shall Michael [the Godlike One--Messiah] stand up." (*Dan. 12:1*) He will assume authority. He will take possession of His Kingdom in a manner little looked for by many of those who erroneously have been claiming to be His Kingdom, and authorized by Him to reign in His name and in His stead.

Our Lord Jesus declared, "His servants ye are unto whom ye render service." Some may be rendering service to Satan and to error, who claim to be rendering service to God and to righteousness; and some may serve ignorantly, as did Saul of Tarsus, who "verily thought that he did God

Dxiv

service" in persecuting the Church. The same principle holds true reversely. As an earthly king does not hold himself responsible for the moral character of each soldier who fights his battles, so the Lord does not vouch for the moral character of all who enlist and fight on His side of any question. His servants they are to whom they render service, whatever the motive or object prompting.

The same principle will apply in the coming Battle of Armageddon. God's side of that battle will be the people's side; and that very nondescript host, the people, will be pitted at the beginning of the battle. Anarchists, Socialists, and hot-headed radicals of every school of reason and unreason, will be in the forefront of that battle. He who has any knowledge of army life knows that a great army is composed of all classes.

The masses will be restless under their restraints, but will be conscious of their weakness as compared with the kings and princes, financial, social, religious and political, who will then hold sway. The majority of the poor and the middle class prefer peace at almost any price. The masses have no sympathy with anarchy. They realize truly that the worst form of government is better than none. The masses will seek relief through the ballot and the peaceful readjustment of earth's affairs for the elimination of evil, for the placing of monopolies and utilities and the supplies of nature in the hands of the people for the public good. The crisis will be reached when the hitherto upholders of the law shall become violators of the law and resisters of the will of the majority as expressed by the ballot. Fear for the future will goad the well-meaning masses to desperation, and anarchy will result when Socialism fails.

The Lord's saints are not to be in this battle at all. God's consecrated people, longing at heart for Messiah's Kingdom and the glorious Year of Jubilee and Restitution which it will inaugurate, will patiently abide the Lord's time, and wait uncomplainingly for it. Their lamps trimmed and burning, they will not be in darkness respecting the momentous events of the impending battle; but they will be of good courage, knowing the outcome portrayed in the "more sure word of prophecy," to which they have done well to "take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the Day dawn." **2 Pet. 1:19**

Dxv

The question now arises, Why did not God send His Kingdom sooner? Why is Armageddon necessary? We answer that God has His own times and seasons, and that He has appointed the Great Seventh Thousand-Year Day for the reign of Christ. Divine Wisdom has withheld until our day the great knowledge and skill which is breeding at the same time millionaires and discontents. Had God lifted the veil of ignorance a thousand years sooner, the world would have lined up for Armageddon a thousand years sooner. God did not bring these things before the present time because His Plan has various parts, all of which are converging at the same time. In kindness God veiled the eyes of mankind until the gathering to Armageddon would immediately precede Messiah's taking to Himself His great power and beginning His reign. *Rev. 11:17,18*

The attitude of the people of God should be that of great thankfulness to the Giver of every good. They should make provision for the great storm that is coming and keep very quiet, not unduly interested in the side of either rich or poor. We know in advance that the Lord is on the side of the people. He it is that will fight the Armageddon Battle, and His agency will be that peculiar army--all classes. When this great "earthquake" of social revolution comes, it will not be a mere handful of anarchists, but an uprising of the people to throw off the great power that is strangling them. Selfishness is at the bottom of the whole matter.

Not Yet, but Soon

For forty years the Armageddon forces have been mustering for both sides of the conflict. Strikes, lockouts and riots, great and small, have been merely incidental skirmishes as the belligerents cross each other's paths. Court and army scandals in Europe, insurance, trust and court scandals in America, have shaken public confidence. Dynamite plots, charged by turns on employees and on employers, have tended to make each distrustful of the other. Bitter and angry feelings on both sides are more and more manifested. The lines of battle are daily becoming more distinctly marked. Nevertheless Armageddon cannot yet be fought.

Gentile Times have still two years to run. The Image of the Beast must yet receive life--power. It must be transformed

Dxvi

from a mere mechanism to a living force. Protestant Federation realizes that its organization will continue to be futile unless it receives vitalization--unless its clergy directly or indirectly shall be recognized as possessed of apostolic ordination and authority to teach. This, the prophecy indicates, will come from the two-horned Beast, which we believe symbolically represents the Church of England. High-handed activities of Protestantism and Catholicism, operating in conjunction for the suppression of human liberties, await this vivifying of the Image. This may come soon, but Armageddon cannot precede it, but must follow--perhaps a year after, according to our view of the Prophetic Word.

Still another thing intervenes. Although the Jews are gradually flowing into Palestine, gradually obtaining control of the land of Canaan, and although reports say that already nineteen millionaires are there, nevertheless, prophecy requires an evidently larger number of wealthy Hebrews to be there before the Armageddon crisis be reached. Indeed, we understand that "Jacob's trouble" in the Holy Land will come at the very close of Armageddon. Then Messiah's Kingdom will begin to be manifested. Thenceforth Israel in the Land of Promise will gradually rise from the ashes of the past to the grandeur of prophecy. Through its Divinely appointed princes, Messiah's Kingdom, all-powerful, but invisible, will begin to roll away the curse and to lift up mankind, and to give beauty for ashes.

I can see His coming judgments, as they circle all the earth,
The signs and groanings promised, to precede a second birth;
I read His righteous sentence, in the crumbling thrones of earth;
Our King is marching on.

The seventh trump is sounding, and our King knows no defeat,
He will sift out the hearts of men before His judgment seat.
Oh! be swift, my soul, to welcome Him; be jubilant, my feet;
Our King is marching on.