

WAITING ON GOD

(Message from Morton Edgar, Glasgow, Scotland. 1915 Convention Report, Supplement, starting on page 46.)

Dear Brother Jones: I feel sure that I cannot better express the present attitude of the Scottish brethren, when I say that we are earnestly *waiting upon God* for the fulfilment of His gracious promises. We had hoped, in common with all of God's saints, that the close of 1914 would have witnessed the exaltation of the church. The Lord designed that we shall wait a little longer; and although, as the apostle truly says, we "groan within ourselves" while "waiting for the adoption," we are rejoiced to know that our faithful waiting attitude will not fail of its reward.

We know that the plan of salvation shall run its appointed course according to times and seasons, which cannot be altered or hastened. The whole creation, therefore, must await God's good pleasure; but *we* who have an understanding of the Plan of the Ages, do not wait in ignorance. The children of God wait because they believe that the Lord's times are best; the children of the world wait because they must.

We recall to mind how the Lord specially rewarded some of the Ancient Worthies who, in the midst of trials and testings, faithfully waited for the fulfilment of His promises.

Noah, after building the ark, waited seven days for the flood (Gen. 7:4, 10). This final period, though short, must have been a time of great trial. Noah endured, and his faithful waiting upon God was vindicated when the waters bore up the ark, and he alone with his household were saved.

Abraham, after a long 25 years of waiting, had the joy of begetting a "son indeed," in whom centered all the promises. For the fulfilment of these promises he still waits, as do also Isaac and Jacob, his heirs. But so real did the promises appear, that these three patriarchs "died in faith," having "seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them" (Heb. 11:13).

Moses waited forty years in the wilderness for God to appoint him the savior of his brethren. He believed the Lord's promise that his people would be delivered from Egyptian bondage in the fourth generation (Gen. 15:13-16); and when forty years old he sought to be the champion of the oppressed. But at that time Moses went in his own strength, and thus failed (Ex. 2:11-15). His experiences during the succeeding forty years of waiting taught him his own nothingness; and when at last the Lord honored him, he was the meekest man in all the earth (Num. 12:3). His long wait was not in vain—he became a mighty deliverer.

David would not kill Saul, although himself anointed king of Israel. In spite of many opportunities he would not slay the Lord's anointed, but waited God's time to ascend the throne (1 Sam. 26:23). He recovered the sacred Ark lost many years before at the overthrow of Shiloh. David was a man after God's own heart.

Surely with these and many other examples we should willingly wait for the sure fulfilment of the promises the Lord has so graciously made to us. Nor do we forget the dire calamities that befell such as refused to wait upon God and His arrangements.

The Jewish nation refused to wait for the return of the Law-giver from the mount. "As for this Moses," they said, "the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him" (Ex. 32:1). And they made the golden calf in their impatience, and forsook the Lord. Because of this, God threatened to blot them out; only two of all those above 20 years of age at the time of the Exodus from Egypt, were permitted 40 years later to cross the Jordan into the promised land.

King Saul refused to wait for the return of Samuel, and contrary to the Lord's appointment forced himself to offer a sacrifice. In consequence of this his house was not permitted to continue the rule in the kingdom of Israel (1 Sam. 13:8-14).

The Nominal Church of the Gospel Age refused to wait for Christ's return, and set up a *counterfeit* Christendom. The result was the formation of the "abomination that maketh desolate" during that dreadful period universally known as the Dark Ages. The Lord stigmatized the original Apostate Church as a "harlot"; and the later Protestant denominations are spoken of as her "daughters." In the symbolical language of Cant. 2:7, the true "virgin" Church of Christ counsels the nominal churches (daughters of Jerusalem), not to stir up nor awaken *love*, that is, not to attempt to do the loving works of the Millennial reign of Christ; but to *wait* "till He please." And they are counseled in the name of the roes and hinds of the field—two swift animals which need not to be urged to fly like the wind when occasion is necessary. So *love*, and power, represented by the cherubim with outstretched wings on the mercy seat, will not require urging to fly to man's rescue, whenever the atoning blood is sprinkled upon the mercy seat the second time.

And in this we see the supreme examples of waiting; for God himself waits to be gracious; He is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (Isa. 30:18; 2 Pet. 3:9). And our Lord Jesus has patiently waited, sitting on the right hand of the majesty on high, until God makes His enemies His footstool. Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world; and He will not disturb any part of His plan, for He is a God of judgment. Blessed are all they that wait for Him.

Even *material* things wait to give their harmonious testimony to the truth of the Lord's Word. The Great Pyramid in Egypt has waited for over 4,000 years to give its wonderful corroborative evidence. During all of this long period its purpose has been misunderstood. It has been set aside as merely an old tomb; whereas it is really God's "Pillar of Witness" referred to by the Prophet Isaiah (19:19, 20).

The Written Word has had to wait till the "Living Word" should come to serve up its wonderful truths to His faithful people. Daniel was told to "shut up the words and seal the book" of his prophecies till the "time of the end," for none would understand their import till knowledge had increased, and many should run to and fro (Dan. 12:4, 9). Thus Daniel's writings had to wait for nearly 2,500 years before they could give their testimony. And even the entire Old and New Testaments, the "two Witnesses," had to wait "clothed in sackcloth," or dead languages, till the completion of the 1260 symbolical days (years), which is the beginning of the period spoken of in Daniel as the "time of the end" (Rev. 11:3). They then came to "life," and were exalted to Heaven. The Bible Societies, which came into existence immediately after 1799, multiplied the Scriptures a million-fold, and gave new life to the witness of God.

Archaeological remains of ancient days have waited in the dust of the earth (in Babylonia, Egypt, etc.) until their comparatively recent discovery, to add their harmonious testimony to the truth of the Bible. Before the unearthing of these material evidences, many historical narratives in God's Word had been doubted by the scholars of the day. The child of God takes the Lord at His word, and is thus guarded against the errors arising from doubt. These archaeological witnesses vindicate the faith of God's children.

The founder of the Jewish nation, Jacob, declared that he waited for the salvation of God; and he strangely connected this hope with a prophetic utterance regarding one of his sons, Dan. We know that many of the patriarchs were prophets (Gen. 49:1); and their prophecies have had to wait for further elucidation by God, before their deep meanings could be searched out. This is especially true of the prophecy concerning Dan.

In Gen. 49:16-18 we read: "Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord."

To understand this dark saying, we must trace the history of Dan; and we also require to take a broad survey of God's Plan of Salvation. In Judges, chapter 18, we learn that the tribe of Dan apostatised from the worship of Jehovah, and practiced open idolatry. It is for this reason, undoubtedly, that Dan is omitted when honorable mention is made of the 144,000 of all the tribes of Israel who were sealed in their foreheads with the seal of the living God (Rev. 7:1-8—Manasseh, Joseph's first-born, is there substituted for Dan). The

whole manner of this tribe's apostasy evidences an unfaithful character from the first. Its people did not conquer their inheritance in the promised land, owing to lack of faith in God; for not in their own strength, but in God's strength, they could have overcome the Philistines and possessed their portion of country. The Philistines proved too strong for them, and compelled them to keep to the hills; and latterly they forsook their inheritance and emigrated north, to a country where the people feared no ill, and were not learned in the art of war. These the Danites were able to overpower; they burned Laish, and established their own city instead, which they named Dan. Thus the city of Dan became the most northern of all the cities; and as Beer-Sheba lies in the south, the saying, "From Dan to Beer-Sheba" became the common method of denoting the entire length of Palestine (Judges 20:1, etc).

Besides failing to conquer their own rightful inheritance in the land, and instead searching out an inheritance for themselves and conquering a people who hardly knew their right hand from their left, the Danites on their journey northward forcibly possessed themselves of a man's private priest and images, and established an idolatrous worship in their city of Dan. The Scriptures say that this state of affairs continued until the captivity (Judges 18:29-31). When on the death of Solomon the tribes of Israel divided into two kingdoms, we read that Jeroboam the king of the ten tribes, in order to prevent his people from going up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord, made two golden calves, one of which he set up in Bethel (a little north of Jerusalem), and the other in Dan. Jeroboam then cried to his subjects, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods. O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt"—after the example of his unfaithful ancestors in the wilderness at the time of the Exodus from Egypt. "And this thing became a sin; for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan" (See 1 Kings 12:26-30). Jeroboam evidently found Dan to be a very suitable place to set up his idol.

Bethel, where the other idol was set up, was in Ephraim's division of the land. From one standpoint it is correct to say that the city of Dan was also in Ephraim, for this tribe was the largest of all, and frequently the entire ten tribes are collectively named Ephraim. And as the particular division of land belonging to the tribe Ephraim is also called Samaria (1 Kings 13:22), then this name Samaria, as well as Ephraim, and also Israel; are used interchangeably as the name of the ten tribes (Hosea 7:1). Ephraim or Samaria are often taken to typify the apostate church of the Gospel Age (Hosea 4:17; 8:5, 6).

So much, then, for the apostate character of the tribe of Dan. Now, we know that the Lord overruled all things connected with His typical people of Israel, in order that they might foreshadow the antitypical realities of the Gospel and Millennial Ages. The Apostate Danites prefigured a similar unfaithful and treacherous class in the Gospel Age, who, forsaking the Lord, set up idols in their hearts. Of this class Judas Iscariot was the forerunner. Judas, however, was but a tool in the hands of Satan, who is the great

adversary and betrayer of the Lord, the *real* Danite and “serpent by the way” (see John 13:26, 27). And just as the tribe of Dan forsook their first inheritance and seized an inheritance in the north, so Satan had said in his heart that he would ascend and sit in the “sides of the north,” and that he would be “like the Most High” (Isa. 14:13, 14).

In the symbols of the Scriptures, the four cardinal points of the compass are associated with certain definite conditions. Thus we read in Psalm 75:6, 7, “For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge; He putteth down one, and setteth up another.” By inference, God and the place of power are understood to reside in the north. Hence Satan’s ambition to sit in the sides of the north and be like the Most High, that he might wield the scepter of power. It is remarkable, too, that during the time of the building of the Great Pyramid (which edifice corroborates the Plan of the Ages), the north star was *Alpha Draconis*, the principal star in the “Dragon” constellation, a mythological representation of Satan. And this star at that time shone right down the Descending Passage of the Pyramid. When we recall that this Passage symbolically represents the “Present Evil World,” and that Satan is Scripturally called the “God of this world,” we can see an appropriate significance in this arrangement. We do not suppose that such coincidences are haphazard; we believe them expressly supervised by God to strengthen the faith of His people. Satan, that “Dragon” and “old Serpent” (Rev. 20:1), is the god of a *dying* world; and this fact is portrayed in the Lord’s “Stone Witness” by the *Dragon star* shining into the Entrance Passage, which descends at a steep angle down to the subterranean chamber or pit, symbolical of destruction.

A “horse,” when spoken of in a symbolical sense, represents an orderly plan or arrangement, progressing along an appointed path. Thus the Lord’s “horse,” of which Jesus was the “Rider,” is the Plan of Salvation—See Isa. 31:3, where we read: “Now, the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit”—in other words, the plans and schemes of the world are not of the spirit of God; and woe to them who rely upon such “horses.”

When Satan, the great Judas and Danite, waylaid and treacherously bit the heel of the Lord’s “horse” so that the rider, Jesus, fell backward and was killed, he evidently thought he had upset the Plan of God, and had forever slain the Prince of Life. But Jacob declared prophetically in the name of all Israelites indeed: “I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord” (Gen. 49:18). That which Satan considered to be a masterstroke, when he entered into the receptive heart of Judas and caused him to betray the Lord, was in reality his own undoing; for we read that Jesus became flesh for the suffering of death, that “through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:9, 14). Thus, the death of Jesus means the salvation of the world, and the destruction of Satan.

Just as the founder of the tribes of Israel foretold what would befall them in the last days, so the lawgiver of the nation, Moses, uttered additional prophecies in connection with each tribe. The prophecy of Moses regarding Dan gives us further elucidation as to the typical part played by this tribe in the Lord's Plan.

In Deut. 33:22, we read: "And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp; he shall leap from Bashan." On glancing at a map of Palestine, it will be seen that Bashan is a mountainous district in the north, on the east side of the Jordan; and that the city of Dan is situated on the northwestern edge of this district. Bashan is thus identified with the idolatrous tribe of Dan.

Not only has the Lord caused the nation of Israel, and all the nations round about to typify and illustrate various features of His glorious Plan of Salvation, but even every mountain and valley in and around the land of Palestine, every sea and river, the plains, deserts, cities, animals, trees, herbs, etc., are used by Him to symbolize or represent some detail in that wonderful Plan. Thus we find that the mountain of Bashan represents the kingdom of Antichrist, the stronghold of the Danite or Judas class. This thought is borne out in Psalm 68:15, 16. In the Authorized Version, this passage reads: "The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan; an high hill as the hill of Bashan. Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it forever."

Every Bible student knows that the hill in which the Lord, figuratively, desires to dwell, is the hill of Zion (see Psalm 132:13, 14). The Psalmist is therefore contrasting Bashan with Zion. This thought is more evident in Leeser's translation, or better still in the Variorum Bible. We could render the passage thus: "The hill of God [is it] the hill of Bashan? [No.] A hill of many peaks is the hill of Bashan. Why are ye so envious, ye hill of many peaks? This [small, unpretentious hill of Zion] is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it forever."

During the Gospel Age the great Antichrist system would fain have called itself the kingdom of God; and even as the imposing and many-peaked hill of Bashan looked askance at little Mount Zion, and envied its position of favor with the Lord, so the proud Antichrist with which all the high ones (many "peaks") of earth identify themselves, has envied, while despising and persecuting, the little Zion class, the little flock, to whom it is the Heavenly Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom.

Our Lord Jesus, when encouraging His followers not to fear, for it pleased the Father that the Kingdom should be theirs, counselled them to be "like men that wait for their Lord, when He will return" (Luke 12:32, 36). The Apostate church refused to wait, and it claims to have already set up Christ's Kingdom, calling the kingdoms of this world "Christendom."

Did Dan “leap from Bashan”? Yes, in the person of Judas, he leaped upon our Lord Jesus as a hungry lion upon its prey; for even at that early time Antichrist had its small beginning (1 John 4:3). Our Lord called Judas the “son of perdition,” which is also the name applied by the Apostle Paul to the “man of sin,” *i.e.* the Antichrist (John 17:12; 2 Thess. 2:3, 7). During the whole of the Gospel Age the Danite or Judas class have been “leaping” from the Bashan system upon the body-members of Christ.

David, prophetically in the name of Jesus, as well as in the name of Jesus’ footstep followers (in a secondary sense), speaks of this persecuting class as “Bulls of Bashan.” See Psalm 22:12, 13 (margin): “Many bulls have compassed me; strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They opened their mouths against me as a ravening and a roaring lion” (notice the first verse of this Psalm). The mountainous country of Bashan was famous for its breed of cattle (Deut. 32:14); and its bulls were taken as types throughout the Old Testament of cruel and loud-mouthed oppressors (see Amos 4:1). During the height of its power in the Papal Millennium, the heads of the Counterfeit kingdom of Christ oppressed the “little flock” with his “bulls of excommunication.” Why did the Papacy call these notices of ostracism “bulls?” Is it not because such decrees were backed up with so much fierce and irresistible power (even kings trembled at them), that they could be truly likened to the great strength of a bull’s head set with terrible horns? We believe that this may be the explanation; for Papacy makes much use of graphic language.

But “Bashan” is rejected; and “Zion” is still waiting for the Kingdom. Doubtless our dear Heavenly Father desires to develop in us during this final period, an earnest longing to see Him and His beloved Son. Such longing may be accentuated by trials. Psa. 42:1-3 bears out this thought: “As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?”

The full force of this similitude is rather obscured in the Authorized Version. To appreciate the Psalmist’s thought we must remember that for a continuous six or seven months of the year rain never falls in Palestine. With very few exceptions the rivers and streams dry up, and then the only water supplies are the springs and wells, and cisterns hewn in the rock (Jer. 2:13)

Wherever a good and constant spring exists, a village is generally to be found. Sometimes the water must be conducted from the spring’s source to the houses, and in such cases a covered-in aqueduct may be used. Holes are pierced at intervals through the cover of the aqueduct, to prevent bursting from the accumulation of air. There appears good reason to believe that it was an aqueduct like this to which the Psalmist referred and that the text should read, “As the hart panteth over the aqueduct.” etc. The hart knows

that the water is there, for it can both hear and smell it through the air-holes in the cover. The animal pants after the life-giving water, but is unable to quench its thirst. We can well imagine the distress of the poor hunted creature as it stands over the closed-in waterway in the midst of that dry and thirsty land!

In a similar manner, we who are in this earthly tabernacle do groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from Heaven; for we know that when we are like Christ, we shall appear before Him and see Him as He is. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. We have heard of the patience of Job; it was not for his own sake so much as ours that Job declared "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come" (Job. 14:14). "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord" (Lam. 3:26).

And now dear brother, I must close. The foregoing message is the one I would like to have given personally to the dear friends at the various conventions in America. It appears to me to be an appropriate one at this particular time; for we have need of patience, that after having done the will of God, we should receive the promise. Soon our waiting will be over; and then what joy it will be to hear the poor groaning world shout, "Lo, this is our Lord; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him and we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Isa. 25:8, 9).

Your loving brother in the Lord's service.