

## “CHARIOT OF THE GODS”

(Discourse below by Wilfred McNee, an elder in Bellingham ecclesia.)

Considerable interest has been stirred up recently by a book and a T.V. program called “Chariots of the Gods.” The suggestion is made that a race of beings from another planetary system visited the earth, long ago, and by intermarrying with the creatures on earth, finally produced “homo sapiens.” The author acknowledges that his theory is pure conjecture but believes that he has enough evidence to back up his theory. He raises many questions without giving the answers. We think that the Bible provides the answers to all his questions. We think that many wonders upon the earth which are difficult to explain will all have logical and reasonable answers during the reign of Christ when the “knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.” The premise that the earth had visitors from outer space in the distant past also has a reasonable explanation, for there were such visitors who were spirit beings, not astronauts.

Gen. 1:1, 2: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void: and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” By the exercise of his mighty power, the Creator began to prepare the earth to be inhabited. We may not be able to appreciate all the various beings and agencies that He used but can be sure that there were many beings from the heavenly realms who took part in this preparatory work. Vs. 26: “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion” over all the earth. Who did God say that to? The Logos! John 1:1-3: “In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with the God and the Logos was a god. The same was in the beginning with the God. All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made.”

Gen. 1:31; 2:1, 2: “And God saw everything that he had made and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.” The inference is that this seventh day was going to see the Permission of Evil, man’s fall, redemption and restoration and that the work of this Day would be given to the Logos.

Job 38:7: “When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” It has been suggested that there may have been two “morning stars”—the Logos and Lucifer. Lucifer is spoken of in Isa. 14:12 as “son of the morning” and Ezek. 28:1-16, Lucifer is spoken of in symbol as King of Tyrus, who had been “in Eden, the garden of God” and was appointed to be “the covering cherub.” This suggests that Lucifer was to be given the care and protection of the first human pair, Adam and Eve. What a

wonderful role that was to be, and he was fully qualified to carry out this pleasant task, no doubt, under the jurisdiction of the Logos, the active agent of the Father.

Unfortunately, pride entered in and Lucifer began to think that, rather than to be just a “covering cherub,” he would rather aspire to have a “dominion” of his own, to be like the Most High. Isa. 14:12-15: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer [day star], son of the morning... for thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend unto heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to sheol, to the sides of the pit.”

One of the things that has helped us so much to answer many questions is the knowledge that God has a plan and that it is made up of many ages and dispensations. We do not have any particular information on the part that Satan played in the “world that was,” from Adam until the Flood. This mighty spirit being was no longer recognized as Lucifer son of the morning, for he had become God’s adversary. The dispensation which began after the flood and is now coming to an end, is referred to as the “heavens and the earth which are now,” and the “present evil world.” (2 Pet. 3:7; Gal. 1:4.) There is no question as to Satan’s role during this time for he is spoken of as the “god of this world.” (2 Cor. 4:4) Satan is God’s adversary and his intention is to thwart the fruition of God’s purposes. The angels that kept not their first estate were “cast down to tartaroo,” that is, they were degraded, in the sense of being deprived of their association with the holy angels and also being restricted to the earth’s environment, and no longer having access to the courts of heaven. We are inclined to think that Satan also has been thus degraded and no longer has access to holy places nor association with holy beings. This is intimated by Jesus at his first advent when he said “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.” (Luke 10:18) The account in Job 1:6 portraying the Adversary as in the presence of God and bargaining with him to test Job’s faith is simply a means of conveying certain truths to our minds by the use of figurative language. We believe that Job actually lived and experienced those difficulties of losing home, and friends and possessions and was subsequently restored to, not only his former condition of health and family but his possessions were restored double. We believe that the Lord is explaining to us, in this poetic and figurative language, the truths concerning his permission of evil—Satan’s pride, man’s fall and experience with evil and his subsequent restoration to his lost estate and harmony with his creator.

The time when Jesus “saw Satan fall from heaven” would have been during his pre-human existence, as the Logos, at the time when Lucifer manifested his rebellion by causing Adam to disobey God’s law. (Reprint page 2675-5.) The general condemnation that “The soul that sinneth it shall die” (Ezek. 18:20), would apply to Satan, although no direct penalty was stated. Perhaps there may have been even a possibility of his repentance. However, his incorrigibility was manifest by his actions against Jesus during

the first advent, and the verdict rendered when Jesus said in John 16:11, “of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.” (Condemned; *Krino*; Reprint 2759.)

Satan has continued his tactics of opposing the outworking of God’s plan by his endeavors to hinder the development of the Church. As Peter said: “Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” (1 Pet. 5:8) His tactics are many and varied, but by whatever means he uses, if he can successfully trip up one of the followers of Jesus, he has to that extent won a victory. Opposition from without may only increase the faith and determination of the Christian but the strife within may cause him to stumble.

The whole history of the Church has been one of turmoil, with doctrinal storms raging from time to time, causing the shipwreck of the faith of many. But throughout the age, there have been those, few in number, who have quietly and confidently ridden out the storms, whose anchor has held within the veil, and eventually have reached the haven of rest. We have been greatly blessed and helped to withstand the fiery darts of the adversary by a knowledge of the Truth which was not before available at any other time during the age. When our Lord returned, he aroused his people by the sounding of the Trumpet of Truth. Truth on every subject is being broadcast throughout the earth in ever increasing intensity revealing old errors and superstitions and injustices by the enlightenment of men’s minds. It must have come as a shock to the “prince of this world,” when earth’s new KING suddenly arrived in 1874 and began the work of displacing and restraining the strong man. This will culminate when Satan is personally bound and unable to influence mankind until the end of the 1000 years, when he will be destroyed. This “visitor” from space has brought nothing but trouble to mankind but it will be overruled for good.

Then there were other “visitors from space” who had a profound effect upon the human race. These were the angels who were permitted to try to help man during the period of time prior to the flood. Heb. 2:5 states that the “world to come” will not be in subjection to angels, inferring that the world that was, was in subjection to them, or under their control. Unfortunately these angels were disobedient in assuming the human form and taking to them human wives and begetting children. This hybrid race was superior to the Adamic stock and succeeded in creating a reign of evil and debauchery which was ended only by the flood. These fallen angels were then placed under restraint in the ages that followed and were “degraded” from their former estate and restricted to the earth’s proximity. This restraint was to continue unto the judgment of the great day. (Jude 6) It has been suggested that this judgment of these fallen angels is during the present time, before the Church is completely glorified. The Church in the flesh will be the particular means whereby these angels will be tested as to whether they will continue in their evil ways, or whether they will become repentant and desire to return to their former estate as

holy angels. (Reprint 4068-70.) Those who are unrepentant will be destroyed, probably soon after the glorification of the Church.

Then we have the record of other “visitors” whose visits to earth have been truly helpful, extending good will and blessing toward men. The first one we will consider is recorded in Gen. 12:1-3. Here the Lord used an angelic agency to convey to Abraham this message of hope. Then in Gen. 18:1-5; 21:1-5 is the story of three visitors who broke bread with Abraham and told him that he would be blessed with a son, Isaac. Again, an angel of the Lord appears to Abraham in his experience with Isaac. (Gen. 22:1-18) We will not attempt to enumerate the many visits by these messengers of God as they carried out his instructions but we must call your attention to a very special visitor to the earth in the person of the angel Gabriel. This archangel performed many duties throughout the ages in carrying forward the various features of God’s plan and we incline to the belief that Gabriel was next in position of honor to the Logos as inferred from Dan. 10:21.

The particular incident that we wish to call your attention to is found in Luke 1:26-33 and 2:4-14. What a grand and glorious message of hope Gabriel brought to a sin sick and weary world. Phil. 2:8-11 is a brief outline of the life of Jesus and this fulfilled the picture of Abraham offering his son Isaac in sacrifice. God gave the dearest treasure of his heart, his only begotten son, a ransom, a corresponding price for Adam. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16.

As Jesus’ followers watched him as he ascended into the heavens, two “men” in white clothes gave them a startling message, that this same Jesus would, in like manner, come again. Jesus himself gave us many signs by which we may be able to discern and to understand the signs which depict his presence by the sounding of the trumpet of Truth in this harvest time. The object of his return is to restore the human race to atonement and harmony with his creator.

“In his times [*kairos*] he shall show who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords.” (1 Tim. 6:15) It is during his Kingdom that these things will be made manifest. These “times” are the same “times” as found in Acts 3:19 where it speaks of “times of refreshing,” from the “presence of the Lord.” This term means “out from the face of Jehovah” and refers to the return of God’s favor to the world of mankind. This is in contrast with Psalm 104:29 where it says “Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled, thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.” The hiding of one’s face was a symbol of disfavor and therefore, the turning of one’s face toward another would indicate favor. We know that after his disobedience in Eden, Adam could no longer enjoy the fellowship of God nor his favor, for God had turned away his face, and condemned Adam and his children to death. This was in the beginning of the Seventh Creative Day. The return of Divine favor to the world of mankind could not take

place until the appointed time, until the return to earth of his son to commence the work of restoration.

The “times of refreshing” does not apply to the Church. It applies solely to the world of mankind. The Church, with her Lord and Head will be instrumental in bringing about these “times of refreshing.” In Peter’s sermon, he says, “Repent you therefore, and be converted.” This message has been going forth ever since the first advent and all those who have heard this message and have repented, both Jew and Gentile, have become prospective members of the body of Christ. These have had their sins covered by the robe of Christ’s righteousness, but not blotted out. This cannot take place until they take part in the first resurrection. As these finished their earthly course in death, they fell asleep until the return of their Lord in 1874.

One of his first acts of authority was to raise the sleeping saints. We believe this was in 1878. Then, as the “dead in Christ” die, after his return, they are changed in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, to be with their Lord, thus taking part in the first resurrection. All these risen saints have had their sins “blotted out” since the Lord’s second presence. And this blotting out of the sins of the Church was to take place “when” the times of refreshing were due. This word “when” could also be translated “so that.” This makes it even more emphatic, that it is absolutely essential that the blotting out of the sins of the Church class is a prerequisite in order that the time of refreshing may commence.

“I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you are children of the most high. But ye shall die like men and fall like one of the princes.” (Psalm 82:6, 7) Yes, these sons of God must all die, but not as prince Adam. No, they fall like prince Jesus, in a sacrificial death, an offering for sin in order that God’s blessings may come to the human race. Jesus’s death provided the ransom, the corresponding price, but in order to make its benefits available he had to be raised from the dead and by God’s gracious arrangements, his body members share in his resurrection and will have the blessed privilege of sharing with him in the great work of his Kingdom to raise up and bless this “groaning creation.”

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ.” (Gal. 3:16) “And if ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (V. 29.)

We remember the communications which Abraham had had with his heavenly visitors, first, that he would be instrumental in the blessing of all the families of the earth and later that he and Sarah would have a son and heir. The inspired word tells us that Jesus was the antitypical Isaac, the promised seed, who would bless all the families of the earth. Then the wonderful thought in Gal. 4:28, that “we, brethren, as Isaac was,” are the children of Abraham, that is, sons of God, because we are in Christ and therefore, as

joint-heirs we will have the privilege of sharing in the great work of blessing all the families of the earth, in fulfillment of this promise.

One of the promises to the Church class, as overcomers, is found in Rev. 2:27, 28: “And he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star.” Earlier we found that Lucifer was one of the morning stars and aspired to being like the Most High. In contrast, we saw how the Logos, followed a course of humility and obedience and was subsequently highly exalted to the Father’s own right hand, and is now referred to as the “bright and morning star.” (Rev. 22:16.) Similarly, the followers of Jesus, walking in his footsteps of humility and obedience will be honored by receiving “the morning star.” This could possibly refer to an exaltation of office in the work of reigning over the world during the time of Christ’s kingdom; or, as suggested in Moffatt’s translation, the Overcomers will be “granted to see the morning star.” This would suggest that the Church, as the bride will see her Beloved. As in 1 John 3:2: “We know not what we shall be, but we shall see him as he is.”

We have talked about the gods; now we will look at some chariots. There are many chariots spoken of in the Bible but we will take up the subject from the standpoint of only two different pictures. One of these is found in 2 Kings 2:11: “And it came to pass as they went on, and talked, that behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire and parted them both asunder, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.” It is suggested in Vol. II, page 254 that the chariot and horses of fire may picture the spiritual exaltation of the Church, caught up in great power and glory.

In Matt. 17 we are told of the vision in which Jesus was transfigured before his disciples. This was actually a vision portraying the glories of the Kingdom centered in Jesus. Moses represented the Ancient Worthies as representing the earthly phase of the Kingdom, and Elijah pictured the glorified church, in the heavenly phase of the Kingdom. After the vision, the disciples asked Jesus concerning Elijah, that it was said of him that he would come and Jesus said that “Elijah would truly come and restore all things.” This would have reference to the fact that Elijah was with Jesus in the vision, picturing the Church in glory. In order to understand the picture better we must go back to the time when Elijah was a prophet in Israel, at a time when the people were worshipping idols, particularly Baal. By Elijah’s preaching, the worship of Baal was discontinued and Israel returned to the worship of the true God.

At the First Advent, John the Baptist did a work of reform in Israel which should have resulted in Israel as a nation accepting Jesus as the Messiah. However, as Elijah’s success was actually only temporary, so John the Baptist had only limited success in his ministry. There were comparatively only a few who actually came into Christ. Jesus referred to John’s work in Matt. 11:14 as being an Elijah work. The prophet Malachi had

spoken of a time when there was to be a great work of conversion in Israel else a great time of trouble would come upon them as a result. As suggested, neither Elijah nor John the Baptist were successful though their work could have brought this about.

The Church in the flesh is doing a work in preaching the Gospel which, if it were accepted by everyone, would result in the inauguration of the Kingdom without a time of trouble. Just as in the previously mentioned works so, this phase of the Elijah work will also be unsuccessful. As Jesus said, however, Elijah would truly come and restore all things, therefore he must have been referring to the time when the Church would be glorified, that is, with Christ in glory and empowered to bless the world of mankind and restore them to human perfection in the Kingdom. As Elijah was taken up by a whirlwind, so the earthly career of the Church is being ended during a troublous time, which will soon, we think, reach its climax when the last one has gone beyond the veil. When this picture of the Chariot of the gods is complete, then the Heavenly phase of earth's new government will have been completed.

The second picture of Chariots that we wish to consider is found in Zech. 6. This chapter portrays the Plan of God as covering the period of time between the First dominion, lost by Adam, and the Second dominion of earth, restored to man by The Christ. Between these two copper mountains, came forth four chariots with horses. Horses represent doctrines and the chariots would represent organizations or arrangements that would carry along, or develop those drawn by those doctrines. The black horses picture the doctrines which have developed the Church class which go forth to the north country, seat of Divine government. The White, picture the Great Company, who are spirit begotten and who go after the Church into the heavenly phase of the Kingdom. The grisled, or grey, picture the world of mankind who inherit the earthly phase of the Kingdom. The red, or bay horses picture the Ancient Worthies who go to and fro throughout the earth, acting as the visible rulers in the Kingdom, but who may not have a permanent home on the earth, but may receive spiritual reward at the end of the Kingdom. The restoration of the earthly dominion is very graphically portrayed here and we emphasize that it is related to the work of Joshua, the high priest, and his work of rebuilding the temple. In other words, the building of the antitypical temple by the antitypical Joshua was necessary before God's blessings could go forth to restore and bless his earthly creation.

We have mentioned that God rested on the 7th Day. The first of these copper mountains, or kingdoms, or dominions, existed at the beginning of this 7th creative Day. The second copper mountain, or dominion will be the restored and perfected estate, at the end of this 7th creative Day. You will note that the colors of the horses and chariots are listed twice. In verses 2 and 3 they are listed as Red, Black, White and Grisled or Grey. We believe that this gives the actual order in which these classes were developed in point of time. The Red fittingly pictures the Ancient Worthies who were developed during the time

prior to the Gospel Age. These were justified by faith to friendship with God. They were the “Faith Heroes” of past ages. The Red Heifer of Tabernacle Shadows pictures this same class. The Black portrays the Beloved’s bride, who said in Cant. 1:5, 6, “I am black but comely.” She was developed next in order during the Gospel Age. The White represents well the Great Company, for they also had on white robes, the righteousness of Christ, and were spirit begotten. However, through carelessness they allowed spots and wrinkles to stay upon their robes and were forced to have their robes cleansed through tribulation, so that instead of a crown of life, they receive palms, denoting their victory.

Verses 6 and 7 show the order of reward to these classes. First, the black go forth to the North country. The North pictures the direction of Divine things and the seat of Divine government. Just as when the Mount of Olives in Zech. 14 was divided, forming a valley of blessing between the North and South parts, represents the spiritual phase and the earthly phase of the Kingdom.

Also we read where Lucifer aspired to sit upon the sides of the North. He desired to exercise rulership and wanted to usurp the Divine authority and government. The heavenly Groom with his Bride will have attained this Divine rulership over the earth, not by rebellion but by obedience in carrying out the wishes of our all-wise Sovereign of the Universe. After the Church is glorified, the Great Company will be completed and be privileged to dwell in the heavenly realms, not upon the throne, but before the throne, and happily employed in the great work of restoring the earth. Lastly, will be rewarded the world of mankind, who will, by the end of the Kingdom, all have become Israelites indeed, children of The Christ. Then, restored to perfection, they will be able to stand before Justice, being perfect and able to receive the restored dominion. The Red going to and fro throughout the earth seems to infer a tabernacling condition, that is, as though the earth was not their permanent home, but they were waiting for a permanent portion.

Emphasizing the importance of the Black horses and chariot, the 8th verse says, “Behold these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country.” The Septuagint renders this—hath “appeased my wrath.” This reminds us of Heb. 9:22-24; “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”

Verses 26-28: “But now once in the end of the age hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men [the High Priest] once to die [typically in the animal slain] but after this the judgment [then the High Priest reappeared from the Tabernacle to bless the people]. So, Christ was once offered to bear the sins of

many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin [without a sin offering] unto salvation.”

Truly it will be a great salvation, and the whole creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.

There are many gods—mighty ones, and how happy we are that we have come to know the great God, our Father and have come to know his Son, our Lord Jesus. To him be all the praise and honor. We are happy in the knowledge that through his kingdom, mankind and mankind’s home will be restored. And wonder of wonders, he has called “us” to share with him in his kingdom work. It is interesting to note that Jesus and his Church can be called gods, mighty ones, and, as far as the Church is concerned, it must be conveyed by its chariot into the Father’s presence and then, as it were, their Chariot will make a return trip. Zechariah’s prophecy emphasizes the great work of rebuilding the temple by Joshua the High Priest, which pictured Jesus preparing his church, the temple of the living God. We believe this prophecy has very graphically portrayed the development and work of this Church class.

When this picture of this Chariot of the gods, with the Black horses is completed in the full sense, then will be brought to pass the Scripture in Isa. 66:1 and 60:13: “The heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool—and I will make the place of my feet glorious.”—“Thus saith the Lord.”