

FROM BAPTIST TO ADVENTIST.

The Scriptures That Caused New Light to Shine into One Man's Heart.

BY E. J. MARSH.

(Continued from last week.)

In regard to the fulfillment of the second sign in this 20th verse of Matthew 24th.

"THE MOON SHALL NOT GIVE HER LIGHT."

I quote the following extracts:

"The night succeeding that day (May 19, 1780) was of such pitchy darkness that, in some instances, horses could not be compelled to leave the stable when wanted for service. About midnight, the clouds were dispersed, and the moon and stars appeared with unimpaird brilliancy."—Stone's History of Beverly.

Mr. Tenny, of Exeter, N. H., quoted by Mr. Gage, to the Historical Society, speaking of the dark day and dark night of May 19, 1780, says:

"The darkness of the following evening was probably as gross as has ever been observed since the Almighty first gave birth to light. I could not help conceiving at the time, that if every luminous body in the universe had been shrouded in impenetrable darkness, or struck out of existence, the darkness could not have been more complete. A sheet of white paper held within a few inches of the eye was equally invisible with the blackest velvet."

Concerning the fulfillment of the third sign in this verse,

"THE STARS SHALL FALL FROM HEAVEN."

I quote the following extracts from the eminent authors who are given credit at the foot of the quotations, as follows:

"But the most sublime phenomenon of shooting stars, of which the world has furnished any record, was witnessed throughout the United States on the morning of the 13th of November, 1833. The entire extent of this astonishing exhibition has not been precisely ascertained; but it covered no inconsiderable portion of the earth's surface. \* \* \* The first appearance was that of fire-works of the most imposing grandeur, covering the entire vault of heaven with myriads of fire-balls, resembling sky-rockets. Their coruscations were bright, gleaming, and incessant, and they fell thick as the flakes in the early snows of December. To the splendors of this celestial exhibition the most brilliant sky-rockets and fireworks of art bear less relation than the twinkling of the most tiny star to the broad glare of the sun. The whole heavens seemed in motion, and suggested to some the awful grandeur of the image employed in the Apocalypse, upon the opening of the sixth seal, when 'the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.'"—Burritt's "Geography of the Heavens," p. 163, ed. 1854.

This phenomenon seems to be a literal fulfillment of what John "beheld," (Rev. 6:13, just referred to and quoted in the above quotation), as we see from the following quotation that the falling stars emanated from a point in the constellation Leo, near a star called Gamma Leonis, and as some who saw it say that they seemed to fall in every direction from that point, just as figs naturally would fall from a tree shaken by a mighty wind.

"Those who were so fortunate as to witness the exhibition of shooting stars on the morning of November 13, 1833, probably saw the greatest display of celestial fireworks that has ever been since the creation of the

world, or at least within the annals covered by the pages of history.

"In nearly all places the meteors began to attract notice by their unusual frequency as early as eleven o'clock, and increased in number and splendor until about four o'clock, from which time they gradually declined, but were visible until lost in the light of day. The meteors did not fly at random over all parts of the sky, but appeared to emanate from a point in the constellation Leo, near a star called Gamma Leonis, in the bend of the Sickle. \* \* \*

"The extent of the shower of 1833 was such as to cover no inconsiderable part of the earth's surface, from the middle of the Atlantic on the east to the Pacific on the west; and from the north coast of South America to undefined regions among the British possessions on the north, the exhibition was visible, and everywhere presented nearly the same appearance. This is no longer to be regarded as a terrestrial but a celestial phenomenon, and shooting stars are now to be no more viewed as casual productions of the upper regions of the atmosphere, but as visitants from other worlds, or from the planetary voids."—Prof. Olmstead, of Yale College, a celebrated astronomer and meteorologist.

"No philosopher or scholar has told or recorded an event, I suppose, like that of yesterday morning. A prophet 1800 years ago foretold it exactly, if we will be at the trouble of understanding stars falling to mean falling stars; or 'hoi asteres tou ouranou epanan eis teen geen,' in the only sense in which it is possible to be literally true."—Henry Dana Ward, in "Journal of Commerce," Nov. 14, 1833.

We have an account of these tribulations and signs of Christ's second coming given in the gospels according to Mark, 13th chapter, and Luke, 21st chapter; and the parallel passages with that under consideration in Matthew 24:29, are as follows:

"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken." Mark 13:24, 25.

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." Luke 21:25, 26.

Isaiah, Ezekiel, Joel and John, in the Revelation, all prophesy concerning these same signs.

"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine." Isa. 13:9, 10.

"And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God." Ezek. 32:7, 8.

"The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: \* \* \* The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come." Joel 2:10, 31.

"The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining." Joel 3:15.

"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as

sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood: And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places." Rev. 6:12, 13, 14.

Luke's account describes more vividly than the others the present condition of the nations and individuals. "Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." What language could better describe the present condition of the nations and individuals composing them. It cannot be denied that there is, at this present time, especially among thinking men, a feeling—as though by instinct, or call it, if you please, the Spirit of God which is in man—amounting almost to a certainty, independently of the written word of God, that there are soon "fearful things coming on the earth," and this is what causes that "distress of nations, with perplexity." The extensive preparations for, and the construction of, war ships and general armament of the nations, is enough to arouse the suspicions of thinking men that fearful things are about to happen, in spite of the proposition of the Czar of Russia for a conference of the nations to enter into an alliance of perpetual peace (which conference has just closed, after a session of about two months, without accomplishing the desired object), especially since this suggestion comes from the nation which is best prepared for war, so far, at least, as her standing army is concerned.

Just as soon as there is made any kind of a compact or treaty between the nations, looking to a permanent "peace and safety," then we may "know perfectly that the day of the Lord" is at hand, "for when they shall say, peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh" and the end of the world.

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." 1 Thes. 5:2, 3.

Now as to the time when these signs should occur. They were to occur "immediately after the tribulation of those days." What were those tribulations spoken of, and when did they close? When we find that out, we have the time when these signs may be expected to begin to appear, as they were to commence "immediately after the tribulation of those days." These tribulations, undoubtedly, are the persecutions of the Christians by the Roman Catholic Church during the time of its supremacy. As to the time of the duration of these persecutions, notice the portion in small capitals in the following quotations:

"And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand UNTIL A TIME AND TIMES AND THE DIVIDING OF TIME." Dan. 7:25.

By comparing Rev. 12:6, 14: "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there A THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND THREEScore DAYS. \* \* \* And to the woman were given two wings of

a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." and Rev. 13:5.

"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue FORTY AND TWO MONTHS."

with Dan. 7:25, just quoted, and following the rule heretofore stated of reckoning symbolic or prophetic time a day for a year, we find that this "time and times and the dividing of time" is equal to 1260 years, being the length of the time during which "he shall wear out the saints of the Most High," and the "times and laws" were to "be given into his hand."

Here I quote from "His Glorious Appearing," by James White, pages 39 and 40, showing from history the beginning and close of this 1260 years of papal supremacy:

"This period (1260 years) is to cover the supremacy of the papacy. The beginning of it will be the point of the establishment of the power of the papacy. This was the year 538 A. D. Justinian, emperor of Rome, with his capital at Constantinople, espoused the cause of the bishop of Rome; and in 533 A. D. issued a decree which constituted that prelate head of all the churches. But the Arian Ostrogoths had possession of Rome, and it was not until they had been rooted up that the city was accessible to the bishop. This was accomplished in 538, by Belisarius, Justinian's celebrated general. For a concise and clear account of this occurrence we refer the reader to the "Two Republics," by A. T. Jones, pp. 551-553.

Commencing the 1260 years A. D. 538, they reach to A. D. 1798, when Berthier, a French general, took possession of Rome. The pope was made a prisoner and carried with violence away from his palace and out of Italy. The papacy was stripped of its civil power. Here ended the days of tribulation spoken of by our Lord, which were—shortened for the elect's sake. Matt. 24, verse 22: "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

"The papacy was clothed with civil power to punish heretics; which it held for 1260 years, and had not the period of the tribulation of the elect in the providence of God been shortened, the martyrdom of the church would have continued to 1798, in which event, no flesh of the elect would have been saved. But the Reformation under Martin Luther, and those associated with this great reformer, modified this tribulation, and continued to restrain the rage and power of the papacy, until the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773, since which time, there has been no general persecution waged against the church."

So that we see the "tribulation of those days"—the 1260 years of papal persecution of the church—was "shortened for the elect's sake" and ended in the year 1773, and immediately after this, or "in those days, after that tribulation," as Mark

puts it, in 1780, came this sign of the darkening of the sun and the moon, and in 1833, the falling of the stars, concerning which we have quoted extracts from the writings of those living at that time, and there is now only one more sign—the shaking of the "powers of the heavens"—before the appearing of the "sign of the Son of man in heaven." Verily, we are in the very last days of this world's existence, and Jesus shall soon come "in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Dear reader, are you ready to meet him with joy? If not, in the name of Jesus, my Master, and as His ambassador, I entreat you to get ready, FOR

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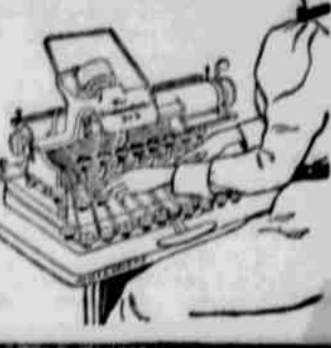
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