

"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." (Matthew 10:42)

"A CUP OF COLD WATER"

THE REVELATION OF JOHN

By Cpt. Gordon F. Nelson

What is the Book of Revelation? John commences his book by answering that question in the opening verse. *"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."* It will be a book on prophecy. An angel was sent from God *"who bare record of the word of God."* Revelation 1:1-2. Do you know who the "Word of God" is? This is His name!

"In the beginning was the Word (Gk. logos), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1. Whenever you read "The Word", and attest your faith that this is "The Word", and speak what your heart believes, you will be "born again".

"But what saith it? (the scriptures). The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart (you must speak it out); that is, the word of faith which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth...and with the MOUTH confession is made unto salvation." Romans 10:8-10. If you will obey what the Apostle Paul is directing you to do, you will experience your own revelation of Jesus Christ.

A revelation of Jesus Christ, is never a picture like Sallman's Head of Christ, an historical Jesus, or a "Christ after the flesh". *"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh (referring to the twelve disciples), yet now henceforth know we him no more."* 2 Corinthians 5:16.

Paul never envied any of the twelve for having known Christ "after the flesh". Paul knew who this Jesus was. *"Now I say that Jesus Christ (after the flesh) was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers."* Romans 15:8. This is not the same Jesus that the great apostle met *"and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord?"* Acts 9:3-5. What is your name? A good question to inquire of every spirit you encounter. Saul knew only the Lord could knock him off his horse and totally blind him. *"I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."* The Lord knows how to get your attention! *"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"* Acts 9:5-6. Sign of enlistment in the army of the Lord. Paul became its greatest champion, and he never met this "Christ after the flesh."

Later, writing to Galatia, he said, *"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto ANOTHER gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ (ministers of the circumcision from Jerusalem). But even if though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have*

preached unto you, let him be accursed." Galatians 1:6-8. Paul was sure of the "Christ of Revelation", but had little faith in the "Christ after the flesh" that James boasts of: *"Thou seest, brother (Paul), how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are ALL zealous of the law."* Acts 21:20.

James' theology is much like the Assemblies of God and Nazarene church of our day. In some way, grace is enhanced by the keeping of the law. The truth of the matter is that no man has ever kept the law. If man was capable of keeping the law, he wouldn't need a Savior. The argument between Arminianism and Calvinism divides the church of Jesus Christ to this day. The truth lies somewhere in the middle; neither to the extreme right or left. This is how God remains God. *"But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead)"*. Romans 10:6-7.

If Jesus were an Arminianist, or sought "justification by the law", or in some way "works" enhanced grace (that is, to bring Christ down from above) you are making Him to be a man all over again.

If Jesus endorsed the Calvinist doctrine (that is, to bring up Christ from the dead), folk would practice "lasciviousness" or "license to sin" grace. Jesus would have to die afresh for mankind.

"But what saith it (the scripture)? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the work of faith (confession), which we preach." Romans 10:8. God is trying to prevent you from playing God. But, THAT is what religion is all about. The preacher puts God in one of these boxes, "Arminianism" or "Calvinism", whether He fits or not! Sad to say, the "hireling", because he is a hireling, continues preaching the orthodoxy of the box he is ordained in. Isn't it great to just fall in love with "the Word of God" and let Him do the speaking to our hearts!

I will draw a picture of this "Christ after the flesh". *"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."* Matthew 15:24. In today's society we would call Jesus a racist. In commanding the twelve that Jesus sent forth, He said, *"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not."* Matthew 10:5. *"For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."* The Samaritan woman at the well said, *"How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?"* John 4:9. The woman wanted to know? Who are you? What is your name? What are your intentions? She really thought she was being solicited for prostitution.

Concerning the law, Jesus was unmerciful. *"Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out...if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off...Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."* Matthew 5:28-42. This picture is painted in the entire fifth chapter of Matthew, and is finalized in the last verse of this chapter; *"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."* Matthew 5:48.

Religion finds solace in this "Christ after the flesh". Jesus in reality is throwing legalism a curve; no one can be perfect as God; you are deceiving yourself. *"If we say that we have not sinned, we make him*

a liar, and his word is not in us." 1 John 1:10.

The first commandment is to love the Lord thy God with thy whole soul, mind and body. According to the law, if you break one commandment, you are guilty of all. "Christ after the flesh" justification, is "being perfect even as your heavenly Father is perfect." For this reason, "Christ after the flesh", or the four gospels, should never be a new converts first introduction to Christ. Let them first see the Apostle Paul's "Christ of Revelation", or even John's; *"I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps (breast) with a golden girdle. His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead."* Revelation 1:5-17. This is the picture of the Revelation to John. When the Apostle Paul saw Him, he was struck blind, and fell from his horse.

Jesus said, *"I am not come to destroy (the law), but to fulfill."* Matthew 5:17. Until Calvary, He had to walk among men as the Son of Man (Christ after the flesh). *"And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this MAN this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this MAN all these things?"* Matthew 13:54-56. *"He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward."* Matthew 10:41.

Jesus was always the "Son of God" from eternity. The title "Son of Man" was a title to be earned here on earth. Heaven never knew Jesus by this name until the ascension, when He ever sits at the right hand of the Father as the Son of Man, making intercession for us. He is definitely man's "High Priest" before the throne of God. In the courts of heaven He wears the title He honorably earned. But, on earth He must hide this identity. In fact He, *"charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ."* Matthew 16:20.

We confront what is probably the most misunderstood scripture in the Bible, Matthew 16:18, *"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* I know of at least three religions that use this scripture as the foundation truth of their existence; the Episcopalians, the Anglican Church of England, and the Roman Catholic Church. All of these believe their priests, by succession, go back to the Apostle Peter. This "tradition" gives these twentieth-century priests apostolic powers to "forgive sins".

With that said, let us examine the scriptures in question. What are they really saying? First of all, Jesus asked the question, *"Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?"* (your confession, by your mouth is important to salvation) *"And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter (always first to speak) answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And*

Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona (Gk. son of Jonah): for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Matthew 16:13-17.

Jesus was "flesh and blood". He had told no one He was "the Christ the Son of the living God". In the wilderness temptation Satan wanted him to forget about His title "the Son of Man". The devil kept asking Christ, *"If thou be the Son of God..."* Matthew 4:6. Everyone, including the devil, knew Jesus was the Son of God. To obtain the prize He had to become a man, and lay aside His heavenly priestly powers. As the Son of God, Jesus could have had *"twelve legions of angels"* that the Father would give him, *"but how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled?"* Matthew 26:53-54. By this action, Jesus would have made His own Father a liar in the realms of prophecy. Daniel had already declared "the things that shall be hereafter". *"His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground"*, Jesus gives in, *"nevertheless (Father) not my will, but thine, be done."* Luke 22:42-44. Jesus could have laid aside His earthly robes (the Son of Man) and instantly become the Son of God. This is what the devil wanted Christ to do; lose His cool, man!

It was upon such a confession that Peter saw "The Rock", the Christ of the Spirit of Revelation. *"I will build my church (on this confession); and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* Matthew 16:18.