Revelation 1v17-20 29th February 2024

Back From the Dead

"*And when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me. Fear not! For I am the First and the Last, and the living one: and I was dead and behold I am living in the Aions of the Aions: and I have the keys of the invisible and of death. Write the things thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things that shall come to pass after these.*

"The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest at my right hand, and the seven Lightstands which are golden is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven Ecclesias: and the seven Lightstands which thou sawest are seven Ecclesias."

Translation from Eureka by Dr J Thomas

Reading from Eureka section 14 "The Amen". Brown p187 Blue p187 Red p158. I very much regret that Dr Thomas did not write much here in sequence but the themes we now seek to address come from a study of his seminal work Eureka and the way it has been analysed by Bible students over the last 160 years since it was completed.

This concluding section in the first chapter of the book highlights the basis of the divine communication. God raised Jesus from the dead as he was powerless to do so himself but had to trust that when he died that his Father would keep His promise and bring him back form the dead. In this way Jesus had faith and trust in the divine plan just as much as others have to have. He had faith because "*without faith it is impossible to please Him*" Hebrews 11v6. Jesus desperately wanted to please his God.

This section sees the end of the partitive witness of the Apostles, symbolised by John bowing down to the multitudinous Christ, and its eclipsing by the perfect and completed Word of God, with the final canon of scripture in this the last book of the Bible, as continuing evidence both to the resurrection of Christ and the

future hope of resurrection of the saints through the controlled outworking of European history, now that the Jewish state and the Temple itself had been destroyed by the "*people of the prince*" Daniel 9v26.

John represents the believers who need to be initiated into the divine mysteries of the Book unsealed, in contrast to Daniel's sealed prophecy, Daniel 8v26 & 12v9. Daniel treated of the present unacceptable state of Truth in Jewry in his days. Was inspired to write of future glories of a restored Kingdom and provided the divinely revealed details of how the intervening period would work out with particular reference to the position of the gentile powers which affected the area where the Truth resided, rather than the outworking regarding the unfaithful Jews themselves.

In a similar way to that of Daniel, the Apostle John was commanded to write. Three things were the subject of this work:

1 The things which thou hast see = visions of future glory

2 The things which are = present ecclesiastical conditions

3 The things which shall be hereafter = subsequent historical developments

Losing sight of this divinely given formula will make understanding the Apocalypse difficult. It is provided as the key break down between the way the book is structured, and Bible scholars will lose their way, as many have, when the pattern is not properly perceived.

There are seven visions of divine glory. Although heavenly there are on the earth itself.

1	Chapter 1	Opening vision of the multitudinous host
2	Chapter 4,5	The emerald (green) throne of Christ
3	Chapter 7	A great multitude
4	Chapter 10	The rainbowed angel

5 Chapter 14,15 144,000 & the sea of glass

6 Chapter 19 The militant Christ at war

7 Chapter 21,22 The Father comes amongst His children

The teachings of the Truth are unique in emphasising the actual physical presence of the Father at the period at the conclusion of the Millennial reign of Christ over the earth.

These are visions given to sustain the believers down the long centuries of persecution and oppression when some were put to death for their faith. They are interspersed among the other details of the scroll but for the motivation of the saints to encourage them to press on to receive their inheritance, just as we are told that Jesus was also motivated by hope for a better future "*for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross*" Hebrews 12v2.

"The things which are", are the details concerning the then current state of the early Body of Christ in 70CE. The seven epistles of Asia, a Roman province, which are themselves representative of the aggregate of the Body of Christ, the One Body. As stated before, the multitudinous was seen to be in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, which are the seven Ecclesias (churches). That the seven Ecclesias have a future role representing the whole body does not distract from the fact that the Epistles were written to the seven Ecclesias then extant, and that there are important messages for all the Ecclesias contained therein.

How is it, if this is the multitudinous Christ, and not the individual Jesus, that when asked this "*one like the Son of man*", the reply sounds as if it is Jesus who is talking? However, upon reflection what applies to Jesus as an individual also applies to the host.

Identifying characteristics:	Applies to Jesus	Applies to the host
I am the first and the last.	Yes	Yes
I am he that lives and was dead.	Yes	Yes
Behold I am alive for ever more	Yes	Yes
And have the keys of hell and death.	Yes	Yes

All the criteria of power of privilege, Jesus has shared with the immortalised saints, his Brethren and Sisters, who have also been in the mind of God from the very beginning but owe their place at his side, not by their own righteousness, as Christ does, but to the state of forgiveness through divine mercy. They died as individuals just as Jesus did, but not separate from sinful deeds as he was. Both will then be alive for ever more, he already now, but the host at the judgement seat. The saints will assist him in his work of rulership and judgement although of course, he is the head of the body. Hades is the Greek word translated hell in the KJV but means the unseen or invisible as Dr Thomas translated it. The multitudinous has power over the unseen because as God's children they partake of the divine nature in limited form.

This description was given by the Apostle John who knew Jesus very well having been personally in his presence for much of the three and a half years of Christ's ministry. He knew what Jesus looked like, and he could have said his name but instead, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit said, "*one **like** the Son of Man*".

Why were the seven stars in the right hand of the multitudinous described as a mystery but other elements of this description not described as such? The seven Lightstands are not a mystery in the same way, but can also be misunderstood. The word translated "*Mystery*" from the Greek means - known only to the initiated. There are only four of these mysteries in the book of Revelation but many in the rest of the New Testament.

These are:

1	The mystery of the seven stars	1v20
2	The mystery of God	10v7
3	The mystery of Babylon	17v5
4	The mystery of the woman	17v7

That the seven stars are enigmatic means that we must look more closely at the interpretation given by the Christ. The angels of the seven Ecclesias are not divine beings which preside over the welfare of each church! Revelation 3v1 says that the Angel at Sardis was “dead”. This cannot be true of a heavenly angel, being the immortal ministers of God, by definition, as immortal beings cannot die!

The answer is in understanding that angels are messengers whether they be divine or of a human agency. Humans can die and it was the agency of the eldership in plural form, not as individuals, which are being so addressed. There was no one leader or boss of each meeting. This idea is foreign to the Bible, nor were such elders free from corruption and failure. See Acts 20v17, 28-30.

That this Christ holds them in his right hand shows that they fulfil a deep responsibility to the multitudinous. Can we not even say that to forsake such responsibilities is to put themselves outside of his area of concern? They will be dropped from his grasp and fall to fend for themselves, but if faithful in their submission to his principles they will remain in the loving grasp of their Lord and master and will ultimately become part of the holder and no longer just be the held! These “mysteries” are what makes the layers and levels of scriptural exegesis illuminating!

A Voice from the Altar Russel Noonan