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"Here is the Patience of the Saints: Here are they that keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith of Jesus." Rev. 14 :12

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"HISTORICAL NECESSITY OF THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE." (Page 418) – Concluded

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JAMES I. came to the English throne in 1603. He had been raised a Puritan and therefore that party supposed they would be greatly favoured by him as king. Accordingly, before he reached London, they presented to him a petition signed by eight hundred and twenty five ministers from various countries, desiring a redress of ecclesiastical "abuses," and asking for a conference. On January 14,15 and 16, 1604, the king summoned to Hampton Court the Archbishop of Canterbury, eight bishops, five deans, and two doctors of the Church of England, "who were to oppose all innovation." To meet these he called four members of the Puritan party. James, to avenge himself for the humiliations that had been put upon him by the Puritans in Scotland when he was a boy, sided with the Episcopalians, and became the chief talker in the conference of the three days. This so pleased the bishops that one of them, (Bancroft, of the divine right contest before mentioned) fell upon his knees with his eyes raised to James, and cried out, "I protest my heart melteth for joy that Almighty God, of his singular mercy, has given us such a king as since Christ's time hath not been." And the Archbishop (Whitgift) was so transported with joy as to declare that "undoubtedly his majesty spoke by the special assistance of God's Spirit." Whether these men were exactly in the right in speaking thus may doubtless be questioned; but there was one grand result of this Conference: James ordered a new translation of the Scriptures, by which we have our present "King James's" version. When his delegates returned from Dort, and reported what had been done, James gave the Puritans another snub, by expressing in strong terms his dislike, and declared that the position of Arminius on the divine decrees was preferable to that of Calvin.

After James came Charles I., a rigid Episcopalian, and therefore a bitter opponent of all dissenters, Puritans as well as others, and through Land carried things with a high hand. He finally pushed civil matters so far that he brought upon his kingdom the civil war, and by that, through Cromwell, the complete ascendancy of the Puritans. When affairs had grown somewhat quiet after the close of the civil war, there were peace-loving men in England who wished to heal the divisions between the Episcopalians and the Puritans; but about all the recognition they received was to be called Atheists, Deists, Socinians, and to cap the climax a new epithet was invented, *Latituctinarians*.

After the Commonwealth, came Charles II., who reduced everything again to the jurisdiction of bishops. After him came James II., who tried to bring the kingdom under the papal rule. This danger, of course, led all to make common cause against it, till finally to save the kingdom to Protestantism, William of Orange, with his wife Mary, daughter of James II., was invited to come over from Holland and take the kingdom and reign. In 1688 they came; James ran away to France, and the Kingdom was settled upon William and Mary jointly, and pledged to a Protestant succession forever. But as soon as James was out of the kingdom, and the bishops were required to take the oath of allegiance to the new king, many of them discovered all at once that James was king by "divine right," and that it was treason to swear allegiance to any other while he lived. It mattered not though he had, like the coward that he was, basely run away in disguise; no matter though he, in his flight, had thrown the great seal of

the kingdom into the Thames, and by thus throwing away "that mystic symbol of legal government " had left the realm a prey to every unlawful element;—no matter for all this and more, they refused to take the oath of allegiance to one of the best rulers that England ever saw. This caused a division and endless discussion within the Episcopalian Church. Those who refused to take the oath were denominated *Non jurors* and *High Church*; those who took the oath were called *Low Church*. This controversy lasted through the century, till James, William, and Mary all were dead, and Anne succeeded.

In 1650 another tumult arose in England. The Quakers began their preaching, and excited great commotion and fearful persecution, till in 1680 William Penn obtained a grant of a portion of land in America, to which his brethren might go and be secure.

In the eighteenth century, both in England and on the continent, infidelity caused the principal proportion of controversy. Under the leadership of Voltaire and the patronage of Frederick the Great, it grew stronger and stronger, until it finally culminated in the barbarities of the French Revolution, that so shocked the world. In England, however, there were some notable controversies on other subjects. In the early part of the century, William Whiston (the translator of Josephus) revived the Trinitarian controversy, by boldly announcing himself as an Arian. He was followed soon, by Samuel Clark, a prelate of the English Church. But that which caused the greatest commotion of the whole century in religious circles was started in 1788 by John Wesley's preaching of conversion, and a "present, free, and full salvation" by the "witness of the Holy Spirit." Wesley was a member of the established Church of England, and his "doctrines offended the clergy." "The churches were shut against him," and he had to preach in the open air. But "immense crowds" flocked to hear him. In 1740 the clergy, not content with excluding the preachers of these doctrines from their pulpits, "repelled them and their converts from the Lord's Supper." Being thus cut off from all fellowship or recognition by the orthodox, there was no course open but to establish communion amongst themselves, to have their own meeting-houses, and for the preachers to administer the sacrament themselves. The trials, perplexities, and persecutions of the early Methodists are too well known to require any further mention in this place; though it might not be out of place for us to express the wish that the Methodists now would call to mind the former days, when unpopular doctrine is brought to their notice.

In 1747 the Baptists, or Anabaptists, as they were also called, were brought into particular notice again, by Mr. Whiston's openly joining their communion. The controversy on the immortality of the soul was again revived by Dr. Priestly's asserting the unconsciousness of the dead.

In the nineteenth century, the first prominent movement was in relation to the second coming of Christ. In 1827 it began in England, and in 1833 in this country [America] by William Miller. This, however, was not so much a controversy as a *warning voice*; and it soon spread to all nations.

Now, reader, please recall the subjects in this course of controversy, and see whether the following extracts from Mosheim do not state the facts in the case:-

"None of the famous Lutheran doctors attempted to give a regular system of *morality*." – *Church History*, 16th century, sec.3, part 2, chap. I, paragraph 17.

"*The science of morals* ... was for a long time neglected among the Lutherans ... Hence it happened that those who applied themselves to the business of resolving what are called cases of conscience, were holden in high esteem, and their tribunals were much frequented." – *Id*, 17th cent, sec.2, part 2, chap.I, paragraph 19.

Mosheim gives at the same time a very good reason for this defect. He says: "Had not the number of adversaries with whom the Lutheran doctors had to contend given them perpetual employment in the field of controversy, and robbed them of that precious leisure which they might have consecrated to the advancement of real piety and virtue, they would certainly have been free from the defects now mentioned ... All the divines of this century [the

sixteenth] were educated in the school of controversy, and so trained up to spiritual war that an eminent theologian, and a bold and vehement disputant, were considered as synonymous terms. It could scarcely indeed be otherwise, in an age when foreign quarrels and intestine divisions of a religious nature threw all the countries of Europe into a state of agitation, and obliged the doctors of the contending churches to be perpetually in action, or at least in a posture of defense."—*Id.*

"It must be acknowledged that, during the greater part of this century [the seventeenth], neither the discourses of the pulpit nor the instructions of the schools were adapted to promote among the people just ideas of religion, or to give them a competent knowledge of the doctrines and precepts of the gospel. The eloquence of the pulpit, as some ludicrously and too justly represent it, was reduced in many places to the noisy art of bawling (during a certain space of time measured by a sand-glass) upon various points of theology, which the orators understood very imperfectly, and which the people did not understand at all. . . . The ministers of the gospel had their heads full of sonorous and empty words of trivial distinctions and metaphysical subtleties, and very illy furnished with that kind of knowledge which is adapted to touch the heart, and to reform the life."--*Id.*, 17th cent., sec. 2, part 2, chap. 1, paragraph 13.

"The progress of morality among the Reformed [Calvinists] was obstructed by the very same means that retarded its improvement among the Lutherans. It was neglected amidst the tumult of controversy; and while every pen was drawn to maintain certain systems of doctrine, few were employed in cultivating or promoting that noblest of all sciences, which has virtue, life, and manners for its objects."—*Id.*, cent. 16, sec. 2, part 2, chap. 2, paragraph 37.

The point in these quotations is illustrated in the necessity for the work of the Pietists, and is emphasized in the prohibition that was pronounced against that work.

There is another reason for the lack of the development of the genuine principles of morality. As shown above, in the very nature of the case, every leader in any reform was compelled to devote his whole attention to the discussion of the points which he was advancing. But the next great trouble was, that when the leader died, *the followers utterly refused to take a single advance step*. On this Mosheim says: "The doctrine of the Lutheran church remained entire during this [the seventeenth] century; its fundamental principles received no alteration, nor *could any doctor* of that who should have presumed to renounce or invalidate any of those theological points which are contained in the symbolical books of the Lutherans, *have met with toleration and indulgence*."—*Id.*, 17th cent., sect. 2, part 2, chap. 1, paragraph 16. Again: "The method . . . observed by Calvin . . . was for it followed, out of respect for his example, by almost all the divines of his communion, who looked upon him as their model and their guide." *Id.*, 16th cent., sec. 3, part 2, chap. 2, paragraph 37.

This has been true in almost every instance. Therefore, as there has been in the course of the Reformation no definite reform on the principles of morality, I lay down the proposition that, "If ever there is to be a clearly defined reformation upon the pure principles of morality, those principles must be the one leading subject, above all others, set forth in such reform. Will any one deny that the necessity for such a reform is as great as for any one of the steps that have been taken from the days of Luther to this day? I do not say that absolutely none of the principles of morality have been believed in, nor practiced; for with the wide dissemination of the Scriptures consequent upon the Reformation, it were impossible but that some rays of light should be discerned in that direction. But what I say is that, until the present, morality *as a system* has never had a place in the Reformation. What, then, must be the characteristic of such a reform when it shall come? I answer. As the ten commandments compose the moral law of God, and are the sum of all duty toward God or man (Eccl. 12 : 13), when such reform shall have presented itself to the world, it must bear high and prominent upon its crest those same ten commandments, demanding obedience thereto as the supreme effort of moral obligation. Now the third angel's message does just that thing. Therefore by thus tracing the Reformation through its course of controversy, we prove, to a demonstration, the *historical necessity of the third angel's message*.

Moreover, the truth of God is as much an exact science as any of those that are called the exact sciences. Therefore no true reform can deny, or be made independent of, any principle of true reform that may have gone before. Consequently, when this reform upon the principles of morality shall have come, it will deny the truth and efficacy of no single step in the progress of the Reformation. With Luther, it will hold justification by faith; With Zwingli, it will hold the Lord's supper as a memorial of "the Lord's death, till he come;" with the genuine Anabaptist, it will hold that we are buried by baptism into the Lord's death; with Arminius, it will hold that the grace of God is free to all men; with Wesley, it will hold the genuine conversion of the soul, and the witness of the Holy Spirit; with the Puritan, it will hold simplicity of worship; with William Miller, it will hold, "Behold I come quickly," saith the Lord; with the general grand result of the Reformation as a whole, it will hold the most perfect toleration of religious belief, and the inestimable boon of freedom of thought and liberty of discussion. Now in holding all these truths, they may be summed up in the one expression, that it will hold "the faith of Jesus." So when this Reformation shall have presented itself to the world, equally with the ten commandments it must bear just as high and just as prominent "the faith of Jesus;" and combined, its insignia will read, "The Commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus." Now the third angel's message does just that thing. Therefore by this course of controversy, we prove to a demonstration the logical necessity of the third angel's message.

Again: the very aim of the principles of the Reformation is the law of God. Take justification by faith: what is the aim of that but "that the *righteousness of the law* might be fulfilled in us? Rom. 8:4. Take sanctification by the Holy Spirit: what is the aim of that but "unto obedience"? 1 Pet. 1:2; Rom. 8:7-9. Sooner or later, then, these aims must be met, and the principle of obedience to the law of God must be inculcated, which of necessity must be a reform in morality. So, then, it would appear that there is a *theo*-logical necessity for the third angel's message. The work of Christ also demands that the law of God be held up before all people, by which they must compare their lives; for the place and work of Christ in heaven are in the most holy place, blotting out the sins of his people from Abel onward. And that requires a comparison of their lives with the law of God. Now, if that be the work of Christ in heaven, what can his work logically be on earth but, through his ambassadors, comparing the lives of the people of earth with the law of God? So, therefore, the third angel's message supplies this demand when, following the angel who had gone before, crying, "*The hour of His Judgment is come*" (Rev. 14:7), he says with a loud voice, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12.

Several times in the course of controversy, the Sabbath of the Lord, as the basis of the acknowledgment of the sovereign rights of God and the claims of his holy law, has presented itself for recognition; but it was beaten back,- beaten back, yet not to stay. No; these appearances of the Sabbath on the sea of controversy should rather be considered (to borrow De Quincey's splendid figure), as "one of those ambitious billows which sometimes run far ahead of their fellows in a tide steadily gaining ground, but which inevitably recede in the next moment, marking only the strength of that tendency which sooner or later is destined to fill the whole capacity of the shore."

And now once more the glorious Sabbath of the Lord has appeared, not to be beaten back, not to recede even to gather greater strength, but rolling in with all the impulse of a mighty tide, irresistible, soon "to fill the whole capacity of the shore" indeed. And we who see it should realize, *must* realize, that it is the one only tide in our affairs which, taken at the flood, will lead on, not to fortune, but to ETERNAL SALVATION.