

THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST ILLUSTRATED

LETTER I

And The Signs Of The Times, Set Forth In Seven Letters, Written By Elder Samuel Trott, Pastor: Baptist Church – Welsh Tract, New Castle County, Delaware. Published For The Benefit Of Mankind, By Gilbert Beebe, Pastor: Baptist Church – New Vernon, Orange County, New York. 1832.

To the Reader.

IF the dark gloom of Priestcraft and superstition, which prepared the way for Pagan Idolatry and Papal usurpation; if the horrors of an infatuation, which has repeatedly drenched the earth with human gore, racked and tortured the dear people of God, and prostrated every liberal institution in civil government on earth; were a sufficient reason why the Watchmen in Zion should "lift up their voice like a trumpet, cry aloud and spare not" even to sound an alarm in God's holy mountain, there is no apology necessary for the appearance of this Pamphlet. If it were deception for Pagans to teach the worship of imaginary Deities, it is no less deceptive for professed Christians to teach the worship of a bankrupt God, whose resources are exhausted, or whose disposition or will transcends his power. If it were deception for the Pope of Rome to teach men that salvation could be bought and sold for money, it is equally absurd for any of the Clergy of the present day to teach that the salvation of mankind depends on moneyed institutions; as Bible, Tract, or Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, or Sabbath School Unions, or any other system of Works. If it was unlawful for the Pope to sell indulgencies, or passports through Purgatory, or pardons, or titles to Eternal life, for money; how is it less criminal for modern speculators in divinity to sell Birth rights into Religious Societies? What more is required at this day, to constitute a man orthodox than to pour forth his cash into the grand Reservoir of Priestcraft? Or what less than the name Deist, or Infidel, is stamped on the man who conscientiously withholds his support from worldly institutions, and comes forth boldly to avow the Eternal truths of the Bible? Are not the signs of the times alarming? Are not our religious rights disputed? Are not our Republican Institutions threatened, by what is called "a Christian party in politics?" Who that loves his country, or his God, can be an uninterested spectator!

It is due to the author of the following Letters, to state, that they were written by my request, and intended to comprise the substance of an address, by him delivered, before the Central New Jersey Baptist Association, and in

presence of the New Jersey Baptist State Missionary Society, convened at Herberton, N. J., Oct. 1830; and although they were not written originally by him with a design of printing them, yet upon my special request, he has consented to their publication. I therefore cordially submit them to the citizens of the United States in general, and to my Baptist brethren in particular; praying that God may attend them with his divine blessing, and make them edifying to you, as they have been to me, for a dear Redeemer's sake. Amen.

GILBERT BEEBE. 1832.

LETTER 1

Near Lambertsville, N. J. Nov. 20th 1830.

Brother Beebe: - Agreeable to your request, I will give you my views concerning the Witnesses and the Image of the Beast, as I partially stated them before the Central New Jersey Association.

You will recollect that in opposition to the motion to recommend the Missionary plans, &c. the ground I took was the rights of conscience. After stating the manifest evidence there was of our being conscientious in opposing these schemes, in that we did it at the expense of popularity, in the face of reproach, &c., I attempted to show that the Scripture Testimony justified our conscientious opposition to the schemes of men being introduced into the concerns of religion. In proof of this, I brought several passages from the Scriptures to show that in all our religious transactions, we are to acknowledge Christ as the one King of Zion, are to follow him as the Shepherd of his sheep, to hear him as our only prophet and instructor, that the apostles were commissioned to make known the regulations the King would have observed by his church, and that the order thus established by them is equally binding upon the Church in all ages; hence he tells his disciples that "when the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory," evidently implying whenever he shall thus sit, that is, during the whole period, till his second coming, - "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Matt.19:28. Also, that to follow the directions or contrivances of men was so far to turn away from Christ. As proofs that we are not to do this last on any consideration, I quoted Deut.13:1-5, Matt.24:23-26 & II Pet.1:19. I then said there was another kind of testimony which I should now produce from the Scriptures to the same point. This I remarked was the testimony of prophecy, which is as much the word of God, and as unchangeable as are the promises of the gospel.

I then turned to the prophecy concerning the reign of the Beast during forty and two months, Rev.13:1-10; to the prophecy of the church, under the similitude of a woman clothed with the sun, and being in the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God; during the period, said verse 6, to be a thousand two hundred and three score days, and verse 14, to be for a time and times and half a time, Rev. chap. 12, and to that of God's two witnesses, who shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sackcloth, Rev.11: 3. I remarked that some suppose the witnesses have already been killed, but that this could not be the case, for as the periods of the reign of the Beast, of the Church's being in the wilderness, and of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, are of equal length, they must, from the nature of things, have commenced about the same time, and consequently end about the same time; for the Church's fleeing into the wilderness, was in consequence of the persecution of the Beast, and the witnesses prophecy in sackcloth in consequence of the Church's being in the wilderness. But I would rather say, as more strictly Scriptural, that the Witnesses prophesying in sackcloth in consequence of the court that is without the temple being given to the Genthes, and the Holy City being trodden under foot by them. This amounts to the same as the other expressions used. For the term Genthes, is another name to denote the Romish Church, or the Beast, used as expressive of its having become conformed to the idolatrous Genthes, in having borrowed so many of its ceremonies from them. By the court which is without, &c. I understand formal or nominal professors; and by the Holy City being trodden under foot by the Genthes, I understand the true Church's being oppressed and persecuted by the Beast. As I remarked before the Association, it is manifest from the above consideration that the witnesses cannot as yet have been slain, because the Beast is still in power. In addition to the above considerations I would remark that the connection clearly proves the fall of the Beast, immediately after the witnesses are raised up again by the spirit of God entering into them, for, "The same hour was there a great earthquake, &c." And they will be raised just three years and a half after they are slain; that is, three days and a half prophetic time. See Rev.11:11-19.

It may not be amiss here to add a few remarks relative to the different terms used to denote the period of a thousand two hundred and sixty years. The terms used to denote the period of the Beast's reign, are forty and two months, Rev.11:2 & 13:5. Hence his continuance, and the time of his treading under foot the Holy City, are of one length, forty and two months, allowing thirty days to the month, according to the ancient method of reckoning time, make just a thousand two hundred and sixty days, the same length of time the witnesses are to prophecy in sackcloth. Dr. Gill, if I mistake not, observes with a good deal of propriety, that the reign of the Beast is measured by months, to

denote the Romish Church's being so much governed by the moon or months; the most of their ceremonies and holy days being governed by the moon, as was the case in reference to the Jews and the Heathen, from both of whom they borrowed ceremonies. The time of the Church being nourished in the wilderness, is expressed in Rev.12:14, by the terms a time, and times, and half a time; and in verse 6, it is said to be for a thousand two hundred and three score days, which shows that these different computations are of the same amount, and also that the church is to be in the wilderness, for the same period that the witnesses are to prophecy in sackcloth. Again, Daniel represents the time of the saints being given into the hands of the Beast, denoted by the little horn, by the same terms in substance. He says, a time, and times, and the dividing of time. See Dan.7: 20 - 25. By comparing this with Rev.11:2, we find also that these denote the same as forty and two months. Taking a time for a year, and times for two years, and the dividing of time, or a half a time for half a year, we have just three years and a half, which amounts to forty and two months, or a thousand two hundred and sixty days. With regard to a day, prophetic time, being taken for a year, we have an instance in Ezek.4:4-6, again in Dan.9:24-26. Seventy weeks were appointed for the coming of the Messiah, which at seven days to the week, amount to four hundred and ninety days; and the event proved it to be just four hundred and ninety years. I said nothing before the association, as to what I understood by the two witnesses, but perhaps you would like to know my opinion upon this point. Some have supposed that the two Testaments were meant by them; but the whole description of them, Rev. chapter 11, is too personal to admit of the idea, in my mind, of the Scriptures being intended. Others have supposed that by the Two, were intended the preachers of the gospel as the one, and the Church of Christ as the other. But I think that the idea of prophesying is not applicable to the Church as such, and I cannot conceive of the Church's being killed; besides the state and situation of the Church during the same period, is distinctly described in the 12th chapter. I understand by the two witnesses no other than the succession of Gospel Preachers, to them the idea of prophesying as well as bearing testimony is properly applicable. And those who have borne faithful testimony concerning the truth and order of the gospel, not going to Mother Rome, nor to any of her daughters, to learn what they should testify, have had to prophecy, or preach under very discouraging circumstances, as far as regards their reception from the most of the professed Church of Christ. The same is still the case. Hence they go mourning. It is said, vs. 4, "These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." There is in this a manifest reference to Zech.4:3,11,14. The primary design of the vision as mentioned in verses 2 & 3, was to show Zechariah, and through him Zerubbabel and Joshua,

that notwithstanding their meekness and the opposition they met with, the temple should be built; and it thus would be manifested that the Lord's hand was in it. With still more propriety may it be said of the gospel church; the antitype of that temple in the building of it up, that it is "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of hosts." How is this manifested? In that it has pleased the Lord to do it, instrumentally, by the foolishness of preaching; and as Paul says II Cor.4: 7. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." The station of the two olive trees, or as they are called, verse 12, olive branches, in the vision, and type, fitly illustrate the relative situation of Gospel ministers in the antitype. In the vision they are represented as standing [verse 2,] on the two sides of the bowl that is on the top of the candlestick, and in ver.11, as standing by the two sides, the right and left of the candlestick. In the vision there is but one candlestick, but having seven lamps; in the case of the witnesses two candlesticks are mentioned. This difference is suited to the different state of things under the different dispensations. In the type, the Jewish Church-state, it was but one, it had no branches; yet in the vision the candlestick though one, had its seven branches, being figurative of the Gospel Church in all her fulness of branches. In Rev.11: 4, the view is adapted to the actual state of things under the gospel, the several branches of the gospel church being actually independent churches. Hence as many candlesticks, in this case, are spoken of as olive trees, or witnesses, not to show that every preacher must have a distinct church, but that every gospel preacher stands by the side of, or in relation to a gospel church, in all his ministrations, being sent forth and constantly sustained by the fellowship of the church, as the lamp or candle is sustained by the candlestick. And as in the vision the olive trees stood on the sides of the bowl at the top of the candlestick, so real gospel ministers stand connected in their ministry with Christ the

head of the Church, and He being the Grand Treasurer of all the gifts and grace of the church, they receive from him their ministerial gifts suited to their stations, and depend on him from time to time to fill their earthen vessels with the golden oil of gospel grace, or treasure; and which, as they receive it, they, like the olive branches, constantly empty out of themselves, for communicating light, that is, comfort and instruction to the saints, the priests of God. How different this from going to Theological Schools to get furnished for the ministry, and from standing accountable to Mission Boards, for the manner of fulfilling their ministry, and depending on them for being supported? The witnesses also empty the oil through the golden pipes of

christian experience; that is, instead of lecturing upon the doctrines of the gospel, they preach the gospel in its relation to christian experience and practice.

But why are the witnesses limited to the number two? I answer because that by the Jewish law, two, and not less than two witnesses, were sufficient to establish any important fact; see Deut.17:6. So in this case, there is a sufficient number of faithful gospel preachers, and but a sufficiency to corroborate each others testimony. Hence they are said to be two, and only two.

The next things in order, will be to notice the remarks I made relative to the place and time of the witnesses being slain. But as my sheet is sufficiently filled, I will defer this to another opportunity.

I subscribe myself your brother in the trials of the gospel.

SAMUEL TROTT.