

WHEN JESUS PLUNDERS

BY A. S. COPLEY

PREFACE

REFERENCES USED IN THIS PUBLICATION

- **American Standard Version** (ASV or AV) is a version of the Bible that was released in 1901. It soon came to have other names, such as the American Revised Version, the American Standard Revision, the American Standard Revised Bible, and the American Standard Edition. By the time its copyright was renewed in 1929, it had come to be known by its present name, the American Standard Version.
- **Diaglott** is a two-language polyglot translation, of the New Testament by Benjamin Wilson, first published in 1864. It is an interlinear translation with the original Greek text and a word-for-word English translation in the left column, and a full English translation in the right column.
- **King James Version** (KJV) references are used throughout this publication unless otherwise noted.
- **Revised Version** (RV) (or English Revised Version) of the Bible is a late 19th-century British revision of the King James Version of 1611. It was the first and remains the only officially authorized and recognized revision of the King James Bible.
- **Wuest**: Kenneth Samuel Wuest (1893–1962) was a noted New Testament Greek (Κοινή) scholar of the mid-20th century...produced his own English translation of the New Testament (the Wuest Expanded Translation—abbreviated WET) based on Nestle's critical text.

Note: Definitions of references pulled from Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, January 2013.

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*"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be **CAUGHT UP** together with them in clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*
[1Th.4:16-17]

The words "*caught up*" in Verse 17, are translated from the original Greek word **HARPAGESOMETHA**, which in literal English means "*Shall be plundered.*" It comes from the Greek verb, **HARPAZO**, which means "*to snatch,*" or "*to plunder.*" In 1 Thessalonians 5:2, we read that Jesus is coming "*as a thief in the night.*" The above is correct. The Greek verb **HARPAZO** is translated "*take by force*" in John 6:15 and Acts 23:10. This is indeed interesting. A thief has no right to take what belongs to another; this is termed stealing. Apparently, the Lord will have no right to take us away, being citizens here. The governor of Canada or the king of England cannot take any citizen from this country without our consent. In fact, we cannot get passports out of this land to some countries especially during these war times. Therefore, when the Lord comes, He must steal us away suddenly, take us as plunder. On what ground will He do so? On this ground, that since we have believed on Jesus, "*our conversation,*" literally our citizenship, our commonwealth, "*is in heaven*" [Phi.3:20]. We are "*strangers and pilgrims*" here [1Pe.2:11]. We belong to the Lord. He created us and redeemed us. Therefore, when He is ready to translate us, He will not ask permission of the state or country in which we now sojourn.

The Church is called "*The pearl of great price.*" With this, we cannot agree, though many others hold this view. This expression is found in our Lord's 6th parable of Matthew 13. We quote:

"Again the kingdom of heaven (literally, the heavens) is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it"
[Mat.13:45-46].

The "*treasure hid in a field*" [Mat.13:44] figures Israel. "*The field is the world*" [Mat.13:38]. "*The Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure*" [Psa.135:4, Exo.19:5], "*a special people unto himself*" [Deu.7:6]. Jesus purchased the field (the world) by His death, and thus redeemed Israel. That is the meaning of the 5th parable. By that same death, He redeemed the Gentiles also, from whom God has been taking out a people for the Name of Jesus during this Grace Age [Act.15:14]. The "goodly pearls" and the "one pearl" refer evidently to the Gentiles. The merchant was seeking for pearls, and he beheld a difference between pearls and **THE PEARL**. All were good pearls, but one particular pearl was more precious than the others. Doubtless all the pearls figure all the Gentile believers during this age. They constitute The Church (body of Christ), all those who are actually born of God.

Jehovah made a distinction between His people Israel. He said to them,

"And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle."
[Eze.34:17-22]

Likewise, the Lord, the Head of The Church, distinguishes between the members of His spiritual body, even as we make a difference between the members of our physical bodies. A careful reading of statements by Jesus Christ and in Paul's epistles discovers marked differences in growth and spirituality. Consider statements like these:

- Saints shall be rewarded according to their works: "*Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour*" [1Co 3:8b] and "*Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain*" [1Co.9:24].
- "*According to your faith, be it unto you*" [Mat.9:29].

- “*Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap*” [Gal.6:7].
- “*Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things*” [Mat.25:21b].

The “*goodly pearls*,” of Matthew 13, represent believers generally. They are many; the costly pearl is “*one pearl*.” It figures a particular company of believers, of one heart and one mind, undivided in spirit and aim and purpose and fellowship and hope. Paul’s longing was to “*present a chaste virgin to Christ*” [2Co.11:2-3]. But he feared that they would not qualify when he heard of the “*envying, strife, and divisions*” among them [1Co.3:3]. He added,

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” [2Co.11:3]

All the exhortations, reproofs, corrections, and instructions found in Paul’s epistles were given to enable the saints to “*grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord*” in view of being members of the Bridal Company [2Pe.3:18].

Qualifications for the bridehood are indicated by the marks of overcoming named in the letters to the 7 churches in Revelation 2 and 3, especially those to Smyrna and Philadelphia. Bridehood believers love the appearing of Jesus. They look for His coming. They purify themselves in view of it. They do not talk about a delay. They occupy in God’s perfect will until He comes. They keep the Word of Christ and do not deny His Name. Yes, they keep **the word of His patience**, because the hope of His 2nd Advent is their greatest impetus to overcoming. They walk in all the light and **run for the Prize**, which is Christ as their Bridegroom. They see the door of translation open in heaven [Rev.3:8]. They hear the Lord saying, “*Surely I come quickly*,” and answer back, “*Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus*” [Rev.22:20].

CHILDREN OF LIGHT OR DARKNESS

“But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children (literally, sons) of light and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of the darkness.” [1Th.5:4-5]

These words declare exactly who we are, if we are saved by God’s grace. They express a contrast between believers and unbelievers, saved and unsaved. But Verse 6, an exhortation, expresses a warning also. It contrasts believers with believers. Note,

“Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”

The clause, “*as do others*,” refers to other believers, not to the unsaved. Sinners are not asleep. They are **dead in trespasses and sins**.

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” [Eph 2:1]

“Wherefore he saith, Awake (arouse) thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light (shine upon thee). See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.” [Eph.5:14-15]

Ephesians 5:14 mentions both the drowsy saint and dead sinner. In Verse 15, Paul adds this also, “*See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise*” In their sleep people have queer dreams and do foolish things, though they may be wise when awake. Sleepy saints are not fools, but they act foolish. “*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God*” [Psa.14:1]. Sinners are fools and dead in sins until they repent and believe the Gospel. Drowsy believers accept the Gospel, but fail to walk in all the light it affords.

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." [1Th.5:9]

But some believers will certainly walk into the fringes of Divine Wrath in the Tribulation days. They will not be "*kept out of the hour of temptation, which shall come upon the world to try them that dwell upon the earth*" [Rev.3:10]. They are liable to be "*hurt of the second death*" [Rev.2:11], that is, suffer some things that will be inflicted upon the wicked in this life, or "*be condemned with the world*" [1Co.11:32]. The best to be hoped for such saints is, that they may be taken out of it [Rev.7:14]. The salvation to which we are appointed will keep us out of the hour of worldwide temptation that will culminate in wrath, if we heed fully the entreaties of 1 Thessalonians 5:6-8:

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."

Let us put on the breastplate of faith and love, and the hope of salvation—not the hope of salvation from sin, but salvation from the Tribulation Period.

At the first trumpet blast, Jesus, as a thief, will snatch away those of The Church who are really looking and longing for Him to come. Being sons of the day, they will be caught away before the night of tribulation. The saved folk are not all expecting Jesus to come soon. Most of them are not prepared to meet Him. After the full overcomers (figured by the living ones and elders of Revelation 4 and 5) will be taken up; doubtless, the drowsy will be awakened and get ready for a late translation (study Rev.7 with Mat.25).

As there will be an **out-resurrection** from among the dead, for which Paul ran speedily [Phi.3:11], so there will be an **out-translation** from among the living believers. Initial salvation is not a sufficient qualification for translation.

"Unto them that look for Him, shall He appear." [Heb.9:23]

If they look for Him, they will talk like and act like it. They will keep separated from the world, from the defiling influences of the physical and social and religious world. They will purify themselves, by believing the Word, by guarding the Word of His patience [1Jo.3:3, Rev.3:10]. Then, oh thrilling hope! At the glorious nuptials on high, it will be proclaimed, "*His wife hath made herself ready*" [Rev.19:7].

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