

## THE ANCIENT OF DAYS PREPARING THE WAY FOR CHRIST

A vision is recorded in Daniel 7, in which a character called the Ancient of Days is described and his work outlined. Daniel says:

I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set and the books were opened. . . I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him." —Daniel 7:9, 13.

From this description we can see that the Ancient of Days is an important person having much to do with the preparation for the second coming of Christ.

The question, Who is he? has interested many. Some say it is God the Father who comes ahead to prepare a people for his Son. But the Scriptures assure us that the reverse is true: Christ is to come first to prepare a people for his Father and not until the end of the thousand years reign shall the Father grace the world with his presence (1 Corinthians 15:14-28; Revelation 21:1-4.)

Others believe that Adam is the Ancient of Days. This opinion arose from certain additions that were made to a revelation on the sacrament, given to Joseph Smith September 4, 1830. The revelation was published as chapter 28 in the Book of Commandments in 1833; but in 1834 a committee of elders added to it about thirty-nine lines. In this added portion Adam is called "the Ancient of Days." The revelation was published with the added portion in the Doctrine and Covenants of 1835, and is now section 26 of Reorganization's Doctrine and Covenants. **This certainly is not evidence.**

Where in the Scriptures is there anything to support the thought that either God the Father or Adam would perform the work that Daniel saw the Ancient of Days doing? Echo answers. Where?

"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secrets unto his servants the prophets."—Amos 3:7.

Who, then, is the Ancient of Days? If the word of God does not tell us we must remain in the dark concerning it. The writer believes that the word of God does very plainly show that the Ancient of Days is none other than John the Baptist; and I ask your patient consideration of my reasons for so believing.

Frequently we have to determine who a character in prophecy is by the work he does and the mission he fills. This is true of Jesus and of many others. How else could the angel of Revelation 14;6 be identified? He restores the gospel after the great apostasy of "a thousand two hundred and three score days," or 1,260 years; therefore we know him to be John the Baptist because Jesus said he would be the one who would **restore all things.**

Daniel, in his vision of the Ancient of Days with its interpretation by an angel describes his person and his work. This is the only place in the Scriptures in which this character appears under the name, "the Ancient of Days."

In the Welsh translation this name is rendered, "The Ancient one who does not get old," a splendid description of a resurrected being: one possessed of eternal youth.

But someone will say that the description of the Ancient of Days does not agree with that of John the Baptist as given in the Messages. We think it corresponds quite as well as do the different accounts of the appearance of Jesus after his resurrection: Mary mistook him for the gardener, the two disciples for an ordinary stranger, and his apostles did not recognize him as he stood by the sea preparing their dinner. Had he come to them as he appeared to John in Revelation 1:13-16 there could have been no misunderstanding. John says:

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 with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs 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 countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

This description of the Christ is so like that of the Ancient of Days that some have thought it was Christ himself whom Daniel saw. They forget that the righteous are to be resurrected in the likeness of their Savior. David said, "I shall be

satisfied when I awake in thy likeness"; John declared, "We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him"; and Paul wrote, "We look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."

What wonder then that other resurrected beings appear like Christ when seen in the marvelous glory in which Daniel saw the Ancient of Days? Resurrected beings do not always appear in the same degree of glory; hence the difference in their appearance at different times.

Jesus died at the age of thirty-three years, and no doubt his hair was its natural color. At least it would be its natural color when he rose from the dead, but under the great glory in which John saw him it appeared "white as wool," "white as snow." So with the Ancient of Days. The natural color of his hair would not be discernible under the brilliancy of the glory surrounding him.

Daniel wrote only "the sum of the matters" shown to him, hence, in the angel's interpretation some things about the Ancient of Days are given which are not told in the vision. He says concerning "the Little Horn" which brought upon the world the great apostasy of the church: "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; **until** the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, **and the time came** that the saints possessed the kingdom."—Daniel 7:22.

From prophecy and history we learn that the Little Horn arose 570 A. D., and this verse tells us that it would prevail against the saints until the coming of the Ancient of Days. Therefore, if we can find when the "prevailing" of the Little Horn was to end we will know positively when the Ancient of Days was to make his appearance.

Verse 26 tells us:

And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time, and times, and the dividing of time." This is a period of 1,260 years. (See the "Little Horn").

How plain it is! The Little Horn was to prevail over the saints until the Ancient of Days came and that would be a

period of 1,260 years. The church was taken captive by the Little Horn in 570 A. D. and a term of 1,260 years captivity was pronounced upon her. At the end of this period the Ancient of Days was to come and she would be set free. This brings us to the Great Restoration of 1829-1830.

But to whom was the work of the Restoration committed? Jesus says: "Elias truly shall first come and restore all things." (Matthew 17:11.) And speaking of John the Baptist he said: "And if ye will receive it, This is the Elias which was for to come." (Matthew 11:14.) But what of the fulfillment? It was John the Baptist who came to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on May 15, 1829, and began his great work of restoring all things by conferring ministerial authority upon them, and through this authority performing the ordinances of the gospel among men, "saints" again appeared upon the earth and the great apostasy was broken. Daniel 7:22 says this would happen when the Ancient of Days came. It happened when John the Baptist came; therefore he must be the Ancient of Days.

The Bible and the Messages show the work of John the Baptist to be threefold:

1. He is to restore: he shall "restore all things." (Matthew 17:11.) He came as the Restorer in 1829.

2. He is to cleanse and purify: "He is like refiner's fire: and like fuller's soap: . . . and he shall purify the sons of Levi." (Malachi 3:2, 3.) "The cleaning time has come." (Message 18:3.) He came as the Cleanser in 1829.

3. He is to "make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:17.)

This part of his work is still largely in the future.

Daniel saw a heavenly being seated on a throne preparing a people and a condition for the second coming of Christ. "Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." The power of God was manifested like "the fiery flame" and "a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him." Therefore the people standing before him must have been marvelously developed spiritually to endure such wondrous glory. Isaiah asks: "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings." Evidently these people standing before the Ancient of days had reached that degree of righteousness that enabled them to

dwell with everlasting burnings, and it fitted them to dwell with Christ when he came with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of days and to those who were with him. Indeed, so perfect was the preparation that even the books were opened and the Judgment was set.

Someone has to be sent from heaven to make this preparation, for no earthly being could measure up to the description given of the Ancient of days.

Does the Scripture tell us who it is that is to make ready a people for Christ? It certainly does:

The Angel Gabriel said to Zacharias concerning the child, John, whose birth he came to announce: "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, . . . **to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.**" (Luke 1:17.)

Therefore, when we read of a people who are made ready for his coming, and we see a heavenly being among them as the leading spirit in that preparation, it should be easy for us to determine who that person is, especially when the Messenger says: "I will come from time to time to instruct you in the work of the Lord; for great shall be the work that shall **be done to prepare a people, and a nation to meet Christ when he comes.**"

"I am the Messenger to prepare the way. I am the Messenger of the Lord to direct in building the temple, and I **shall be with Christ when he shall come to his temple.**"

This should be enough to convince anyone that the Ancient of days is none other than John the Baptist doing his work as the **Restorer** and as the **Preparer**, preparing a people for Christ's second coming.

He is known by various names in the Bible, but his work is the same and he is recognized by his work.

John calls him, "An Angel." (Revelation 14:6.)

Jesus calls him, "Elias." (Matthew 17:11.)

The Disciples call him, "John the Baptist." (Matthew 17:13.)

Malachi calls him, "Elijah." (Malachi 4:5, 6.)

The Lord calls him, "My Messenger." (Malachi 3:1.)

We call him, "The Messenger."

Daniel calls him, "The Ancient of days." (Daniel 7:9, 13, 22.)

Zecharia calls him "The BRANCH." (Zech. 6:12-15.)

Dear Reader, would you like to be with that people who stand before the Ancient of days receiving such marvelous preparation for the coming of Christ?

They are the ones who believe the angel, John, has come, and they are willing to follow his instructions that they may be prepared to meet the Saviour when he comes, for he will come to the Ancient of days who will have a people prepared to receive him.

Do you think it is worth while to find out if that people are already being gathered out?

Jesus tells us many will come in that day expecting admittance and will not receive it. Can any of us afford to take such risks?

## THE TEMPLE

We have seen that the Ancient of days (John the Baptist) is to be seated upon a throne preparing God's people for the coming of Christ.

Zechariah also saw a man whom the Lord calls, "my servant the BRANCH", seated on a throne directing the building of the temple. And this just before the coming of Christ, for the Lord says: in the next two verses,

I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In *that day* saith the Lord of hosts, *shal ye call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree,*" a millennial condition. —Zechariah 3:9-10.

Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, *and he shall build the temple of the Lord:* even he shall build the temple of the Lord; *and he shall bear the glory,* and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a *priest* upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. . . . And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord. —Zechariah 6:12-15.

Christ is to suddenly come to his temple, therefore the temple must be built before he comes, and the party building it will do so in preparation for his coming.

Daniel saw the Ancient of days sitting on a throne in glory preparing a people for Christ's coming, and Zechariah saw "The BRANCH" sitting on a throne in glory preparing the temple for his coming.