

1856 CONTENTNEA BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

By

Parrott Mewborn

[Associations seated this session were: Little River Association, Kehukee, Country Line Association, Abbott's Creek Union, and White Oak.

Ministers seated were: Elders Jesse Baker, Shadrach Pate, Burwell Temple [editor of the "Primitive Baptist" paper], Joseph R. Croom, William A. Ross, A. B. Peacock, David House, Josiah Smith, Josiah Coats, Parrott Newborn, and John S. Brinson. Twenty-seven churches were represented this session.

I will add some historical perspectives before sending this out, *i.e.*: This transcriber is not an authority on the specific subject of some of this circular – the Masonic Order. As I understand, this fraternity developed out of the Knights Templar following their persecution by the Catholic Church and cohort, the King of Paris in the fourteenth century. Their existence among Baptists, or "Anabaptists," is due (as I am told) to the common persecution of them and the Lollards – those Anabaptistic followers of John Wycliffe, who were the object of the 1308 Albigenses Crusades of the infamous "Inquisition." The two groups aided each other.

In the early 1800's, the members of the "Benevolent Movement so-called," along with the "Modern Missionary Movement," were withdrawn from by those holding to the "old school of divinity." The Masonic Order and other social-religious organizations were included in this ban. The Kehukee Baptist Association in North Carolina called upon her members to withdraw from all these organizations, and those churches that continued to hold to the benevolent movement were divided off from the older order. Thus, there came into existence two "Kehukee Baptist Associations": the Missionary and the Old School. The Masons, being now identified as a *benevolent*, as well as a religious and secret society, were held in fellowship by the New School party, and the Old School party was clear of the both movements. This was in the early 1820's.

I would not have lumped the Masons and Catholics into the same category, as herein, because they were the "persecuted" as much so as were the Anabaptists. There may have been a *perceived need* in the associations to draw attention to these organizations by 1856, - if members of their churches were leaning toward accepting unbiblical auxiliaries into their churches. It is historically certain that the *spirit of progressivism*, one of the greatest threats to the preservation of the apostolic faith and order, repeatedly makes inroads into the New Testament churches, and carries many of them off into other religious and antichristian orders. We wish to note that we know nothing of the writer's exegesis of these passages in Revelation, being ourselves a Pan-millenniumist, and claim absolutely no understanding of these futuristic texts. The writer's opinion of the first and second beast is different from the views of Beebe, Dudley, and Cox. However, with apologies for any historical misinformation, I transcribe this Circular *unabridged*. Let the reader draw his own conclusions. SCP.

CIRCULAR LETTER

Beloved:

Since it is our custom to address you by the way of a Circular Letter, we feel thankful that it is as well with us as it is; although we do not boast as some other associate bodies do, of great *revivals and increase of members*, or of great colleges and fine seminaries, and of costly meeting houses, Sunday schools, Missionary boards, and

union societies, with the fine arts, crafts, popular religious works and fashions, and religious customs of the day. Yet we feel thankful that we have one religion – and we hope but one – and if it be the true religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, we feel assured that it is the best of all “religions;” and why should we want to mix or connect it with the religion of human inventions to provoke our God to jealousy? Was not Jerusalem the city of the living God? The blossom and beauty of the world? And as long as she had but one religion she was as the queen of cities; but with two, her light became darkened, and the image of jealousy was there, and that abomination of human-invented religion made its appearance in Jerusalem to provoke the living God to jealousy that He might go from His sanctuary.

The Lord by His prophet, Ezekiel, 8th ch., informs us of these things:- At the door of the inner gate was the seat of the Image of Jealousy in the entry. *“He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? Even the great abomination that the house of Israel committed here, that I should go far off from My sanctuary? But turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations.”* *“And He brought me to the door of the court, and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall.”* *“Then said He unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door!”* *“And He said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.”* *“So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon the wall round about.”* *“And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up.”*

See, beloved; this wicked secret of idolatry carried on in Jerusalem, and at the temple in different places, and in the wall, the hole of darkness; seventy men of the ancients, leaders of the people, doing that which God had plainly forbidden in His holy Law, that He might go far off from His sanctuary.

“Then said He unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery for they say, The Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth.” Is not the same doctrine now preached up, that the Lord has done His work, and they, *the preachers and the people*, are to carry on the work of evangelizing the world and bring about the *Millennium*, which has been tried before and proved a failure? And this is to be the last effort of the wicked inventions of man; for the Lord will remove them and do the great work **Himself**.

“He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do.” *“Then He brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord’s house which was towards the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.”* (Such as needle-work, or other fine arts to idolize.) How full is the world of this at this day!

“Then said He unto me, Hast thou seen this, O Son of man? Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these.” *“And He brought me into the inner*

court of the Lord's house, and , behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east."

Are not such things now in the world, and worse? Do not men professing the Christian religion go into their lodges and secret places and there bow before man, called "Worshipful Master," or most worshipful master, and by other such like names? And there take a solemn oath or oaths and obligations, which are positively forbidden by our Lord and Master, and the danger of it plainly told in the Holy Bible? [*"Be ye not called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And called no man father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ"* - Matt. 23:8-10.]

"Then He said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O Son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? For they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke Me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose." "Therefore will I also deal in fury: Mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in Mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them."

Here, beloved, see why this people were carried away into Babylon and remain for so many years, and Jerusalem made desolate, and though they cry with a loud voice, yet the living God, the God of all grace, would not hear them. Now if the living God, the God of all grace, dealt thus with a *chosen people*, - a vine of His own planting, what may others expect but to find Him without change – a God of justice!

See the word of the Lord against the prince of Tyrus, - 28th ch:- *"The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord: Because thy heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the sea; yet thou art a man and not God, though thou set thy heart as the heart of God; Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee: With thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasuries; By thy great wisdom and by thy traffic has thou increased thy riches, and thy heart is lifted up because of thy riches: Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Because thou hast set thy heart as the heart of God; Behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness. They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas. Wilt thou yet say before – him that slayeth thee, I am God? But thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of Him that slayeth thee. Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God."*

See, beloved, the danger of a man sitting himself up as a God, though he be wiser

than Daniel, as wise as the prince of Tyrus in all his wisdom, beauty, and riches: yet he is no God, but must come down and die the deaths of them that die in the seas, the deaths of the uncircumcised. See the danger of idolatry, if it be to idolize ones self – however great he may be, the word of the Lord has gone out against it and will accomplish whereunto it is sent; and no god or idolator or idolatress can stand before Him in judgment.

Beloved, though you have the supplies of the common blessings of life taken from you by the craft of wicked men, as has been done in Kansas, and the sword bathed in your blood or have to go through the water and fire, as some that have gone before us, yet have no god but the Living God, who is able to save your souls alive; see the word of the Lord by His prophet Daniel, which is now fulfilling, - 11 ch.: *“And the king shall do according to his will: and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honor the god of forces, and a god whom his fathers know not shall he honor with gold and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strongholds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory, and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.”*

Have not these things been fulfilling for the last twelve hundred and fifty years? And has not the Pope thus exalted himself, as above described, claiming to be the head of the church, making himself as God, sitting in the temple of God, and divided the world for gain? [The Line of Demarcation referred to here, between Spain and Portugal of the new world of the Americas- SCP]. And has not the Protestant church also risen in like power, connecting Church and State, or “Church” and national power, dividing the land for gain, made merchandise of the people, and shed the blood of God’s dear children? And are they not striving for power and carrying on the wicked craft at this very time in different parts of the world – also in these United States? Opposed Congress, disregarded the Constitution, causing disunion [note: 1857 was the time of the separating of the Northern and Southern States just prior to the cession of the Confederate States of America- SCP.], and the shedding of the blood of the innocent? But in every place it is shown that this wickedness is to be brought down, and as he is now doing some of his last work, we have reason to believe that his time is drawing near. His end we shall show when we have noted a few other passages concerning this idol god, who is under the influence of the dragon, and causes those that are under his power to worship both himself and the dragon or the beast, as it is called.

In several other places and this, is not only carried on by the Pope and his clergy, but also by the Protestant beast in his priests-craft to the destruction of human souls, making merchandise of the people and ruining governments, as he is trying to do in the United States at this time, deceiving thousands, binding them in secret craft with signs, grips,

and pass-words, as is shown in the Holy Word.- See Revelation 13th ch., 1st to the 10th verses; - describes the first beast, which is believed to be a description of the Pope and his “church,” or the Pope and his “church” is believed to have come up to the description here given, as well as Daniel’s *fourth* beast. And by Daniel the two beasts are described in connection as they are in other places in the Holy Bible, as in this 13th chapter of Revelation. The last part of which we will take some notice, as it is now fulfilling and that in these United States, and shown to be very dangerous, not only to the government but to human souls; and if possible, worse and more dangerous than the first beast, which is shown in the Holy Word. And as we desire that these things may be understood and guarded against, we wish to write a part of the verses and trace it in some other chapters; as there is a distinction made in some of the passages by which we may know which beast is alluded to, though they be connected (see in the eighth, last verse of this 13th chapter, wherein is described the second beast).

As the limits of a Circular Letter does not admit of our views on each of these verses at length, we must content ourselves at present by noticing a few particulars which we hope, beloved, you will think of being as the views of men, and not as the pure Word of God. But we give such as we have, hoping you will try them by the Holy Book. 11th verse: “*Beast coming up out of the earth.*” Our views:- Such as brutish men void of the Christian religion, embodying themselves together in *human-inventioned* religions. “*Two horns-*” Twofold power to rule Church and State, or Governments. “*Like a lamb,*” professing to be innocent. “*Spake as a dragon,*” As Satan, to deceive and to draw after him into ruin.

12th. v: “*And he exercised all the power of the first beast before him.*” If Popery be the first beast, this second beast exerciseth all the power of Popery. “*And causeth the earth and them which dwell therein, to worship the first beast.*” Worship Popery or the same spirit. “*Whose deadly wound was headed.*” Bringing together the religious power that was separated from the church of Rome and from the Popish power, and uniting them in Protestantism with the secret orders.

13th, v: “*And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of man.*” Such as ministers professing to be ministers of the Gospel, brought down into the secret orders and lodges in the sight of men. (See the seventy and twenty-five, - and eighth chapter of Ezekiel, though they were not of this beast.)

11TH v.: “*And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles; which he had power to do in the sight of the beast.*” By ministers and other wise and able men going into these things – it tends to deceive others that have gone in, and cause them to remain and be contented, and cause some to go in that might not. “*Saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make one image to the beast, which had*

the wound by a sword and did live.” An image to the first beast alike power to prophesy. One has his Holy Father to confess to, the other has his Worshipful Master to bow down to, and the other such like names to submit to. There is but **one Holy Father**, - He is God. There is but **one Worshipful Master**, that is, Jesus Christ. He that sitteth as a “Holy Father,” or acts as such, is a god, which is an idol god, whether it be Pope, Bishop, or Priest: and they that bow down to any such in confession of sins, in hope of having them forgiven, are idolaters; and he that sets or acts as a Worshipful Master, sets or acts as a god, which is an idol god. And they that go before any such by whatever name they may be called, and takes oaths or obligations, binding themselves in such “*religious*,” idolatrous bodies, are joined to idolatry or Anti-Christianity. For proof, see the 8th and 28th chapters of Ezekiel, - Daniel 7th and 11th chapters, 2nd Thess. 2nd chapter, - and Matt. xxiii. 8, 9, 10, 11.

“And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast.” Law-power to the Worshipful Master, and such like officers of the second beast. *“That the image of the beast should both speak,”* (command, act,) *“And cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be killed.”* – Submit, to worship the rulers in power of the second beast, if not, should be killed. See the danger of worshipping this image!- See 14th chapter Rev. – Such is the danger described.

We will write out a few versus:

9th. v. *“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark on his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture in the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever, and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.”*

16th v. 13th. chap. *“Mark in their right hand or in their forehead.”* A sign by which they know one another – such as signs, grips, and pass-words. 17th. v. *“And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”* First, might buy or sell the craft; second, be deprived by their law-power of the temporal blessings, forcing them to submit to the powers of the beast, as in the case of Kansas. Notice this beast, and the image, in some other passages where you find the image annexed; it shows it to be the second beast, which is worse, or a degree worse in idolatry, than the first; for those, under the influence of the first, worshipping two things, the beast and the dragon. But those under the influence of the second worshipped three things: the image, the beast, and the dragon.

We will refer to a few more passages, where you can see some notice of the danger of being in with this second beat.

15th chapter and 2nd v.: *“And I saw as it were, a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.”*- 16th chapter and second v., *“And the first went and poured out his vial upon the earth, and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.”* 19th chapter, and 19th v. *“And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image; these both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.”* 20th chapter, and 10th v. *“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”*

Beloved, you see in these last mentioned verses, is described or shown the second beast, and how he is to be brought down, and the place of his confinement.

13th chapter and 18th v. *“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; - for it is the number of a man, and his number is **six hundred three-score and six.**”*

These things are wisely set forth. It requires understanding of these deep mysteries to know what is meant. *“Number of the beast”* – the number of a man – the same beast – man of sin – son of perdition – first and second beasts joined in one with the image by the secret orders. The Popish church is connected with the Protestants, making one great church with its many divisions, or one great vine with its many branches: *“vine of the earth.”* Human-invented religion – *“six hundred three-score and six.”* We believe there will be that many degrees or signs of its secrets. See 2nd Thess. 2nd ch., Rev. 14th chap, 19th v. We could refer to many other passages, such as Dan. ii., Dan. vii, 11, Dan. xii., and Ezekiel and others, but the limits of a circular will not admit it.

Keep out of these dangers, beloved, and if any of the Lord’s people have gone into these dangers, let them hear His word and obey Him.-

“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people; that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”