

THE TESTAMENT OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

The First Book

The testament, or words which our Lord, when He rose from the dead, spake to the holy Apostles, and which were written in eight books by Clement of Rome, the disciple of Peter.

Introduction

It came to pass, after our Lord rose from the dead, and appeared unto us, and was handled by Thomas and Matthew and John, and we were persuaded that our Master was truly risen from the dead, that falling on our faces we blessed the Father of the new world, God, Who hath saved us by Jesus Christ our Lord; and being held in very great fear, we waited prostrate as babes which speak not.

But Jesus our Lord, putting His hand on each one of us separately, lifted us up, saying, "Why hath your heart thus fallen, and are ye stricken with great astonishment? Know ye not that He who sent Me can do glorious things for the salvation of them that have from the heart believed on Him? Stand not then as men astonished, and staring neither be slothful, but as the children of light ask of My Father which is in heaven the Spirit of counsel and might, and He will fill you with the Holy Ghost and grant you to be with Me for ever."

Chapter 1

And we returned answer, saying, "Lord, what is the Holy Ghost, and what is His power, whom Thou badest us to ask for?"

And our Lord said unto us, "Verily I say unto you that ye shall not be the children of the light except by the Holy Ghost."

And we returned answer to Him, and said, "O our Lord, give us this Spirit."

And immediately Jesus breathed on us. And after we had received the Holy Ghost, He said unto us, "Verily I say unto you, that ye who have been made disciples unto the kingdom of heaven, and who have believed in Me with undoubting heart, and have cleaved unto Me, shall be with Me; and all those who through you know and do the will of My Father, who keep My words and know My sufferings, shall be made holy, and shall dwell in the habitations of My Father, and shall be delivered from the evil days that are about to come; and I will be with them, shewing them My ways in which they shall live."

Chapter 2

And Peter and John answered and said unto Him: "Tell us, O our Lord, the signs of the end, and all the deeds which shall then be done by them who live in this world, so that we also may make them known to them who believe in Thy Name in all the nations, that those generations may observe them and live."

But Jesus answered and said: "Did I not, before I suffered for those that dwell on the earth, tell you some things about the end?"

We answered and said, "Yea, O our Lord; but now we desire to know the deeds which are the signs of the end of this world, if our Lord hath judged that this is fitting for us to know—for us, and for those who shall hear."

Chapter 3

And Jesus answered and said: "In the time when I was in the world, I spoke unto you before I should be glorified, of signs that the end is near, thus: that there shall be on earth famines and pestilences, tumults, and commotions, risings of nations against nations, and those

other things whereof I have told you. But I commanded you to watch and pray. And now hear, ye children of the light; for My Father who hath sent Me to His inheritance hath predetermined in His foreknowledge, that in the last days, out of the latest generation, there should be vessels of grace holy, and honoured, and elect. Wherefore I make known unto you exactly what are the things which are about to be, and when he shall arise, that Son of Perdition, the Enemy, the Adversary, and what he is like."

Chapter 4

"There shall, then, be signs when the kingdom is approaching such as these. After the famines and pestilences and tumults among the nations, then there shall rule, and rise to power, princes who love money, who hate the truth, who kill their brethren, liars, haters of the faithful, proud, lovers of gold, allied by relationship but not allied in counsel, for they wish each to destroy the life of his fellow. But there shall be in their hosts great affliction, and flight, and bloodshed."

Chapter 5

"But there shall arise also in the West a king of foreign race, a prince of great craft, godless, a homicide, a deceiver, a lover of gold, great at devices, a hater of the faithful, a persecutor; and he shall bear rule also over barbarous nations, and shall shed much blood. At that time silver shall be despised and gold be honoured; and in every city and every country there shall be spoiling and robbery, and there shall be spilling of blood."

Chapter 6

"Then there shall be signs in heaven. A bow shall be seen, and a horn, and lights; and noises out of season, and sounds and ragings of the sea and a roaring of the earth."

Chapter 7

"But on the earth shall be signs; the birth of dragons from mankind, and likewise also of wild beasts; and young women newly wedded shall bring forth babes who speak perfectly and announce the last times, and pray to be put to death. And their looks shall be the looks of men far advanced in years; they shall be grey-headed when they are born. Also women shall bear babes with four feet: some shall bear spirits only, and some shall bear their progeny with unclean spirits. Others there shall be who practise divination in the womb, and shall speak with familiar spirits; and there shall be many other horrible signs."

Chapter 8

"But in the assemblies, and nations, and churches, there shall be many tumults, for there shall arise evil shepherds, unjust, slothful, avaricious, lovers of pleasures, lovers of gains, lovers of money, talkative, boastful, haughty, gluttonous, perverse, rash, given to delights, vainglorious, opposing the ways of the Gospel and fleeing from the strait gate, removing from themselves every humiliation and not sorrowing for My humiliation, rejecting all the words of truth, and despising all the ways of piety, and not mourning for their sins."

"Therefore there shall be shed abroad among the nations unbelief, hatred of the brotherhood, wickedness, bitterness, slothfulness, envy, hatred, strife, theft, oppression, drunkenness, debauchery, lasciviousness, licentiousness, fornication, and all such works as are contrary to the commandments of life. For from many, mourning and gentleness shall flee away, and peace and meekness, and poverty and piety, and tears, because the shepherds heard these things, and did not do them, and moreover did not shew My commandments, seeing that they themselves are examples of wickedness in the nation."

"But the time shall come when some of them will deny Me, and will stir up confusions in the earth, and put their trust in a corruptible king. But they who in My Name endure unto the end shall be saved. Then they shall ordain commandments for men, commandments unlike the

book of commandments in which the Father is well pleased; and My elect and My holy ones shall be rejected by them, and called among them, as it were, the polluted. Yet these are the upright ones, pure, sad, merciful, quiet, kind, always knowing Him who is among them at all times, and they shall be called mad for My sake, who have saved them."

"It shall come to pass also in those days that My Father shall gather together out of that generation the pure ones, even the pure and faithful souls, those to whom I will appear, and with whom I will make My habitation, and I will send to them the understanding of knowledge and of truth, and the understanding of holiness, and they shall not cease praising and giving thanks to their God, My Father who sent Me; and they shall speak the truth at all times, and they shall teach others whose spirit they have tried and have found that they are upright and worthy, as for the kingdom, and shall instruct them in knowledge and strength and prudence. And those who suffer persecution because they live in piety shall receive the reward of their praise."

"And it shall be in those times that all the kingdoms shall be disturbed, and all the world also shall see affliction and want; and all this world shall be reputed as nothing; and all its possessions shall be destroyed by many destroyers, and there shall be great scarcity of crops, and the winter shall be very severe; and the princes shall be few in number and small, who have rule over gold and over silver, and are rich in all those things which are in this world; and the children of this world shall hold their storerooms and barns, and shall have rule over the markets of buying and selling. Many shall be afflicted, and on that account shall call upon their God that they may be delivered. Blessed are they who are not alive at that time; and blessed they also who shall be alive indeed, but shall endure. For when these things shall come to pass, then soon she that travaileth is near to bring forth, for the time is fulfilled."

Chapter 9

"Then shall come the Son of Perdition, the Adversary, who boasteth and exalteth himself, working many signs and miracles, that he may deceive the whole earth, and overcome the innocent, My holy ones. Blessed are they who endure in those days. But woe to those who are deceived."

Chapter 10

"But Syria shall be plundered, and shall weep for her sons. Cilicia shall lift up her neck until He who judgeth her shall appear. The daughter of Babylon shall arise from the throne of her glory, that she may drink that wine which is mixed for her. Cappadocia, Lycia, Lycaonia shall bow down the back, for many multitudes shall be depraved by the corruption of their wickednesses. And then shall be opened the camps of the barbarians, for many chariots shall go forth so as to cover the face of the earth. In all Armenia, and in Pontus, and in Bithynia, the young men shall fall by the sword, and the sons and the daughters shall be captives. The sons and the daughters of Lycaonia shall be mingled in their blood. Pisidia which boasteth, and trusteth in her riches, shall be overthrown even to the ground. The sword shall pass through Phoenicia, because their inhabitants are children of corruption."

"Judaea shall clothe herself with lamentation, and shall be made ready for the day of destruction, because of her uncleanness. Then shall she gather together the abomination of desolation. The East shall be opened by him; also the ways shall be opened by him. Sword and flame are in his hands: he burneth with anger and fiery indignation. This is the armour of the judgment of the corruption of them that are born in the earth; the extermination of the faithful, the way of bloodshed; for his way is in error and his power is to blaspheme, and his hand for deception, his right hand in misery, and his left hand in darkness."

Chapter 11

"And these are the signs of him: his head is as a fiery flame: his right eye shot with blood, his left eye blue-black, and he hath two pupils. His eyelashes are white; and his lower lip is large; but his right thigh slender; his feet broad; his great toe is bruised and flat. This is the sickle of desolation."

Chapter 12

"Therefore I say unto you, ye children of the light, that the time is at hand, and the harvest is ripe that sinners should be harvested in judgment. And to many the Judge shall arise as one who is kind, and shall impute to them their own works. But when He shall be at hand, a sign shall be given to the elect, who keep the law of My Father."

Chapter 13

"Then those who fear My words, and do them in truth and with a faithful mind, shall watch and pray without ceasing, reckoning continual supplication as a work, in nothing wandering or going about in this world, and in nothing anxious, but with an austere soul and a mind that doubteth not, daily taking on them the cross, to do the will of My Father which is in heaven, with a meek heart. For He who is anxious about them that trust in the truth, and careth for them, is the Lord; and He sendeth to them those things which are right and fitting—those things which He knoweth, and by the hands of them whom He knoweth."

Chapter 14

"I have told you these things, therefore, that wherever ye go, ye may test the souls that are holy, and tell them those things which are fitting and right, and those things which are about to be, and all those things which, before I was glorified, I gave you in commandment, so that believing them they may truly live. From henceforth shall be the beginning of travail, and the mystery of destruction."

"Turning therefore to the Church, setting right, duly ordering, and arranging, and doing all things in uprightness and holiness, speak to every man as is helpful to him, so that your Father which is in heaven may be glorified. Be ye wise, that ye may persuade those who are in captivity to error, and those who are sunk in ignorance, that coming to the knowledge of God, and living piously and purely, they may praise My Father and your God."