

## UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but this is my one aim: to forget everything that's behind, and to strain every nerve to go after what lies ahead. I press on toward the finish line, where the prize waiting for me is the upward call of God*

**IN KING JESUS.**

(Philippians 3:13-14)

#14-2014

by – Stuart H. Pouliot

November 1, 2020

### ***Rod of Iron: Scepter of Truth***

As I have written elsewhere, *truth is under siege*; however, the good news is that God is driving the lies of darkness out of the shadows into the light of day in order to ambush them with truth. So, although the day in which we live seems so contentiously evil and, frankly, quite frustrating to many of us, we must rise above the fray of the day and seek the one who is above, seated upon the throne of glory. King Jesus has already won the war, and He will very soon reveal His hand, so to speak, to the nations of the world, for *the kingdom of the world has become our Lord's and His Christ's (His Anointed Ones) and He shall reign for the ages of the ages*. With His resurrection, ascension, and glorification, as promised by His Father, Jesus, God's Son, secured the nations as His inheritance and the earth as His possession. For nearly 2,000 years now, King Jesus has ruled over the nations with a rod of iron.

Take special note that I have put His kingdom (or: reign), along with His inheritance and possession, in the present and extend it into the oncoming ages, and not solely in the future, as if His reign has not yet begun. This is important in understanding the meaning of ruling with a rod of iron.

It is probably not too far off the mark to say that many see the rod of iron as some sort of heavy-handed rule: if one does not comply with the law of the day, then that person will suffer serious consequences, much like in ancient days when stoning to death was a form of corporal punishment. After all, preachers down through the centuries have made God out to be a vengeful God who demands a pound of flesh from sinners. When someone like me counters such a notion with ***God is love***, it is not unusual for the retort to be that God is also wrathful and must live up to this reputation, even though His Son has defeated death, sin, the devil, and the world, and the Father is no longer holding the transgressions of the world against it. *God is love* is an essence of God; wrath is not. Besides, all that God the Father does is based on His essence of love, and He knows how to reach the heart of the most hardened sinner, thanks to the cross.

Now to the topic at hand. Recently, I was intrigued by the term *rod of iron* that appears four times in scripture (Psalm 2:9; Revelation 2:27; 12:5; 19:15), all of which refer to King Jesus. Psalm 2:9 and Revelation 19:15 are direct references to God's Son, the King. Revelation 2:27 refers to the conquerors in Christ who are promised to sit on His throne as He has sat down on His Father's throne (Revelation 3:21). Revelation 12:5 refers to the male child; depending on one's view, this is either a direct reference to Jesus' ascension or to the reign of the conquerors in Christ (or both).

It is the first mention of the rod of iron, where God proclaims His Son as the King, that sets the stage for who holds this scepter. Here is a compilation of several translations of this most important verse: You shall **rule** (break; shepherd) them with a **scepter** (rod) **of iron**, as a potter's vessel, do you **crush** (dash; shatter) them (like earthenware) (Psalm 2:9). The King crushes the carnal (earthy) nature.

In both Hebrew and Greek, the word from which *rod* is translated is also translated as *scepter*, *staff*, or *stick*, as well as other words. Consequently, *rod of iron* can also be translated as *scepter of iron*. The general understanding is that iron is a very tough material, unbending and rigid, so the use of the word *rod* makes

sense since it too is often seen as something rigid. However, the scepter of a king can also be seen as unbending since the king is the law of his land. Given this, to me, either term is acceptable

Regardless of which word one uses (*rod* or *scepter*), how does a king's rod/scepter relate to iron? What is unbending and rigid? In ancient days, a king's word was law and without question or challenge. This, in itself, made it rigid but does not necessarily imply something harsh and evil. A good king's word that went forth with the best interest of his subjects would be good, not bad.

Applying this thought with King Jesus' scepter of iron means His iron is a good thing for the people of His kingdom. His word is a good thing because He only speaks truth! Is not His word truth? The psalmist proclaims: *The sum of your word is truth* (Psalm 119:160), and Jesus Himself prayed to His Father: *Sanctify them in truth; your word is truth* (John 17:17). Isaiah adds to this with: *He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth and with the breath of His lips will slay the wicked* [i.e., spiritually, the carnal nature] (Isaiah 11:4). And let us not forget that Jesus, the **Word of God**, proclaimed that He is the **Truth (Reality)**. Similar connections are made with the **sword of the spirit** and the **word of God** that divides soul and spirit.

The point is that God's Son, our Lord Jesus, is the Word of God and the Truth, meaning He not only is Truth personified but His word (however it manifests) is truth. As such, His truth is inflexible, for it cannot bend to lies, nor compromise. His word is truth; and as king, His scepter stands for truth. In my search of this topic, I discovered the following.

A **rod of iron** symbolizes inflexibility. It is rigid; it cannot be bent. This rod is **the scepter of truth**. Truth cannot be bent; it cannot be changed in any way, for then it is no longer truth. When truth rules, there can be **no corruption, no bribery, no dishonesty, no compromise and no scandals**. Strict adherence to the Spirit's teaching is the norm. (*Revelation: Unveiling the Symbols* by Mary and Ernie Kroeger).

Amen. The scepter of King Jesus is truth, for it speaks of His very nature or essence.

But there is more to this. In the natural world, iron is one of the most abundant elements, comprising **35%** of the earth's elements. It is also one of the most common elements used in the manufacture of a vast array of goods for our use. Among the elements, iron (Fe), part of group **8**, has an atomic weight of **26**. In Hebrew, the word associated with the number **26** signifies an **open hand with a nail**, which commentators reckon to mean **the gospel of Christ** or **the power of salvation**. **The word of the cross is the power of God** (1 Corinthians 1:18). Also, the number **35** signifies **hope**, and **8** signifies **new creation, new beginning**. Do you get the picture? The king's rigid scepter of truth is a good thing, for it dispatches sin and death, along with all associated evil and darkness, and brings forth new creation life! And this truth has gone forth unhindered since Calvary because King Jesus is seated upon His throne.

I was going to end here, but I just discovered something fascinating. In the area of the Gulf of Guinea, the earth gives off a mysterious pulse that the scientists have not been able to explain to date. Get this: **the pulse rumbles every 26 seconds**. Is the earth proclaiming the good news of Christ?

**Blessed is the King that cometh in the name of the Lord:** peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. Some of the Pharisees from the multitude said to Him, Teacher, rebuke Your disciples. He answered, I tell you that, if these shall hold their peace, **the stones will cry out**. (Luke 19:38-40)

Let's not grieve the stones. It is time to proclaim the King and His kingdom. He is coming!