

Joseph Hoag's Vision

A. T. Jones

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Editor's note: I found this article while going through Jones' periodical collection. It is most interesting, and I'd never read it before, so I publish it here for others to ponder also.

THE vision of Joseph Hoag is familiar to many of the older people of this generation; but to the younger it is not so well known. It should be familiar to all: and in order that this may be so, it should be often reprinted, and explained to the young.



This vision was given in 1803. All but the last point of it is history now. And in view of current events, this last point bids fair soon to become history. Following is the record, as written by him:

In the year 1803, in the eighth or ninth month, I was working one day alone in the field, and observed that the sun shone clear, but a mist eclipsed its brightness. As I reflected upon the singularity of the event, my mind was struck into a silence the most solemn I ever remember to have witnessed; for all my faculties were low and unusually brought into deep silence. I said to myself, "What can this mean?" I do not recollect ever before to have been sensible of such a feeling. And I heard a voice from heaven say:

"This which you see, which dims the brightness of the sun, is a sign of the present and coming times. I took the forefathers of this country from a land of oppression, and planted them here among the people of the forest. I sustained them, and while they were humble, I blessed them and fed them, and they became proud and lifted up, and have forgotten me who nourished them, and protected them in the wilderness, and are running into every abomination and evil practice of which the old countries are guilty, and have taken quietude from the land, and have suffered

a dividing spirit to come among them. Lift up your eyes and behold!”

And I saw them dividing in a great heat. The division began in the church on the points of doctrine. It commenced in the Presbyterian Society, and went through the various religious denominations; and in its progress its effects were the same: those that dissented went off with high heads and taunting language, and those who kept to their original sentiments appeared exercised and sorrowful.

And when the dividing spirit entered the Society of Friends, it raged in as high a degree as in any I had before discovered; as before, those who kept to their ancient privileges retired by themselves. It next appeared in the lodges of the Freemasons, where it broke out in appearance like a volcano, inasmuch as it set the country in an uproar for a length of time. Then it entered politics, through the United States, and it did not stop until it produced a civil war, and an abundance of human blood was shed in the course of the combat. The Southern States lost their power; and slavery was annihilated from their borders.

Then a monarchical power arose, took the government of the States, established a national religion, and made all societies tributary to support its expenses. I saw them take property from the Friends to a large amount. I was amazed at beholding all this, and I heard a voice from heaven proclaim:

“This power shall not always stand; but with it I will chastise my church until they return to the faith of their forefathers. You see what is coming upon your native land, for their iniquities, and the blood of Africa, the remembrance of which is come up before me.”

This vision was sent for many days. I had no idea of writing it for many years, until it became such a burden that for my own relief I have written it.

- *Joseph Hoag*

Joseph Hoag was a minister of the Society of Friends. His home was Charlotte, Vt. He died Nov. 2, 1846, in the eighty-fourth year of his age. The vision was first printed in the *Boston Journal* about

1855. Upon investigation, Elder J. S. White, of East Boston, reported thus:

I find that the original, written by Mr. Hoag, is in the family of Mr. Thomas Grover, of East Mansfield, Mass. Mr. Grover belongs to the society called Friends, and is one of their preachers. This is the exact copy written off by the daughter of Mr. Grover, and given to Deacon J. Miller, of Sheldonville (Wrentham), Mass.