

The Revelation of Jesus Anointed to John

By A. S. Copley

"I saw in the night, visions, and behold One like the son of Man came with clouds of heaven and came to the ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him; and there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom."

Dan.7:13-14

PREFACE

Sometime after receiving the Holy Spirit in 1906, as they did on the day of Pentecost, I was reading another's lectures on the book of Revelation. They were not as interesting to me as formerly. They seemed dry and intellectual. Then it occurred to me that the same Holy Spirit, who inspired John to write this Revelation of Jesus, could also inspire me to understand it. Had I not received the Spirit? Was He not dwelling in me? Had He not called me to be "**a preacher and teacher**" of the Word? Indeed it was the Holy Spirit who was then speaking to my heart. A sweet, quiet persuasion possessed me that I did not need other men's cold notes to understand the book. Accordingly I began to read the book itself alone. But my Teacher and Guide knew that a knowledge of Paul's Revelation of Jesus was necessary to an understanding of this book. Hence, not until 7 years later (in 1915), when pressed in spirit and urged by some of my assembly, did we begin the definite and detailed study of this wondrous volume. Our research proved so profoundly rich, interesting, and profitable that we were constrained to put our findings into print. This we did, bringing much help to many. The 1st Edition was exhausted about 7 years later. We are continually receiving calls for our notes. Therefore, we are sending forth a 4th Edition. It has pleased the Lord to give us the privilege of delivering these lessons at different times to different audiences. Hence, this little volume is the product of prolonged and thorough study. No conclusion has been hastily reached. We have not sought for something "*new*," but for "*The Truth*."

EDITORIAL SUGGESTION: Now that the reader may understand the Book of Revelation better and enjoy it more deeply than we do, we offer several suggestions:

- First, become very familiar with the Book as a whole by repeated readings and re-readings. This is how we learned it.
- Then, a study of it with the aid of our notes will prove of great profit to you. If you do not understand them, read them again. If you cannot accept them, please do not hastily cast them into the wastebasket until you have at least given them the attention that our untiring research deserves.
- Compare our findings with the rest of the Scriptures rather than with other men's writings; then you will be unspeakably edified and refreshed.

Filled with unspeakable joy at the great goodness of God, we send forth this modest volume for the glory of Him who shall be recognized soon as "*Jehovah, The Almighty*."

The Author (1942)

REFERENCES USED IN THIS PUBLICATION

- **American Standard Version** (ASV or AV) is a version of the Bible that was released in 1901. It soon came to have other names, such as the American Revised Version, the American Standard Revision, the American Standard Revised Bible, and the American Standard Edition. By the time its copyright was renewed in 1929, it had come to be known by its present name, the American Standard Version.
- **Diaglott** is a two-language polyglot translation, of the New Testament by Benjamin Wilson, first published in 1864. It is an interlinear translation with the original Greek text and a word-for-word English translation in the left column, and a full English translation in the right column.
- **King James Version** (KJV) references are used throughout this publication unless otherwise noted.
- **Revised Version** (RV) (or English Revised Version) of the Bible is a late 19th-century British revision of the King James Version of 1611. It was the first and remains the only officially authorized and recognized revision of the King James Bible.
- **Wuest:** Kenneth Samuel Wuest (1893–1962) was a noted New Testament Greek (Κοινή) scholar of the mid-20th century...produced his own English translation of the New Testament (the Wuest Expanded Translation – abbreviated WET) based on Nestle's critical text.

Note: *Definitions of references pulled from WikipediA, The Free Encyclopedia, January 2013.*

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THE INTRODUCTION

"And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of this week he shall cause the sacrifice and the meal offering to cease; and upon a wing of abominations he shall come desolating even unto the consummation; and that which is determined shall be poured out upon the desolator." [Dan.9:27 RV]

This Book of the Revelation is the record of consummations. Its fulfillment will occupy the 7 years covered by the above verse quoted from Daniel. That period is called "*a week*" in prophetic language—or 7 years. It is known as "the last week of Daniel." That is, there were 70 weeks (490 years) severed off for Israel from Gentile Times, which began about 606 B.C. when the Jews were taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar. Of those weeks, 69 (483 years), which are considered to be counted from Nehemiah 2, reach to Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, 5 days before the Passover (see Mat.21:1-11 and Joh.12:12-13]. Zechariah 9:9 was thus fulfilled in part. Several statements in these chapters show how wonderfully typical that event was of our Lord's return to take the oversight of affairs in view of His millennial reign and of the reign itself. "The city was moved." The multitude cried, "*Hosanna to the Son of David...Hosanna in the highest*" [Mat.21:9]. His enemies exclaimed, "Behold the world is gone after Him" [Joh.12:29]. His kingly authority and power were displayed in driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple and in healing the people. The feast prepared for Jesus [Joh.12:1-3] prior to His entrance into the city, typifies the wedding in the air.

The time measurement "*from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem [Neh.2] unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks (49 years) and three score and two weeks*" (434 years, or 69 weeks [483 years] altogether). The last year of that count was exactly the year that Jesus rode in triumph into Jerusalem. Hence, he thus displayed His right to the princehood, which was really due Him to begin then if Israel had received Him as the anointed One (Messiah) and the prince. "*After the three-score and two weeks (at the end of the 69th week, or 483rd year), Messiah shall be cut off*" [Dan.9:26]. Exactly 5 days after Jesus' kingly ingress into Jerusalem, He was crucified [Joh.12:1-12].

Thus His rulership was checked. The last week (7 years) of the determined 70 weeks (490 years) was fulfilled immediately as recorded in the first chapters of the Acts of the Apostles.

Psalm 118:22-25 gives us light here. Note especially verse 24—"This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us be glad and rejoice in it." Hence, it is called, "*The Lord's Day*" [Rev.1:10], which we will examine in detail a little later. "*The Lord's Day*" begins when the Lord Jesus takes His own throne in the air. At that moment, He assumes dictatorship of affairs on earth as far as is necessary in behalf of the Jews. His princehood begins in heaven; and at the same time He exercises it in a limited sense on earth. Doubtless, this is the "*Mighty Angel*" standing on land and sea [Rev.10] (see notes on Rev.10). Between Verses 26 and 27 of Daniel 9 lie hidden this present Church

period. Of course Daniel did not see that, because it was reserved to be revealed to the Apostle Paul [Eph.3:1-6]. Jesus describes this same week in Matthew 24 and 25. He marks the middle of that week by saying, “*Ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place*” (compare Mat.24:15 with Dan.9:27). In our study of Revelation, we shall see with astonishing exactness the times and durations of the happenings of this week, or 7 years. For our information, we have access to only 66 volumes, all of which are inspired. As our Instructor, we can depend upon One only; the One who caused these things to be written. Will the reader search these volumes with us, counting wholly and only upon the Holy Spirit?

JOHN’S ANNOUNCEMENT

“A Revelation of Jesus Anointed, which God gave to Him to show to His bond-servants what things must take place shortly...”
[Rev.1:1 Greek]

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John. Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.” [Rev.1:1-2 KJV]

The definite article **THE** is not expressed in the Greek; because Brother Paul also had a revelation of Him. He says, “*It pleased God to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him as glad tidings among the nations*” [Gal.1:16-17]. That revelation to Paul was inward; this revelation to John was outward. We need the inward revelation that we may fully and clearly understand the outward. We need to know Paul’s teaching in order to grasp this book properly. Be it understood that this is not a revelation primarily **FROM** Jesus Anointed; but, it is a revelation from God **CONCERNING** Jesus Anointed. It is a discovery to us of how He is judging The Church now, and of how He shall come from heaven to judge the world and take the rulership of empires. Jesus Himself is this revelation.

Observe the perpetuated dependence of Jesus upon His Father. God gave Him this revelation. He did not learn it. His weakness (“*I can of my own self do nothing*” [Joh.5:30]) continues throughout this age; “*For though He was crucified thru weakness; yet He liveth by the power of God*” [2Co.13:4]. Dear Paul saw this truth and made it his own. Hence, he adds “*For we also are weak in him* (that is, we possess that dependent life, the life of Christ), *but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you*” [2Co.13:4]. Let us also choose this weakness, this dependent life, for we have it whether we believe it or not. Then, we shall enjoy the utmost limit of God’s wisdom and power for and through us for His glory now, and share His coming glory when He will no longer be dependent but, as the glorified anointed Man, will reign “*...King of kings and Lord of lords*” [1Ti.6:15] even as “*God Almighty*” [Rev.16:7, 14].

“*His bond-servants*” are to know the things which shall come to pass. Therefore, this uncovering of Jesus is given to Jesus Himself for Him to

show them to His servants. Who then dare arise and say that this is a mysterious book and not to be understood? Let us take our place as bond-slaves of Jesus; read, believe, and heed these things for "*it is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honor of kings is to search out a matter*" [Pro.25:2]. Now that it is revealed, let us search out the understanding of the matter for God's glory.

"*He sent and signified it by His angel.*" That is, the truths herein, in great measure, are set forth by signs and symbols. Who was that angel? It was neither Gabriel nor Michael. Bear in mind that the word **angel** simply means "*messenger.*" Sometimes it refers to men and other times to non-human spirits.

- Here, in Verse 1, the angel was a redeemed human person.
- In Revelation 17:1, he is "*one of the seven angels which had the seven bowls.*"
- In Revelation 19:10, John "*fell at his feet to worship him,*" supposing him to be Christ: but the angel said to John, "*See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-bondservant and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.*"
- You find the same truth taught in Revelation 22:6-9.
- In our further study we will find that nearly all the good angels mentioned are redeemed human beings, who have become the messengers of God. "*For unto the angels (non-human spirits) hath He not put in subjection the habitable world about to come, whereof we speak*" [Heb.2:5], but unto Jesus Christ.

JOHN THE BOND-SERVANT

The New Testament records 3 saints named John:

1. The 1st is **JOHN THE BAPTIST**, a cousin to Jesus and 6 months older than He as to the flesh. That John prepared the way for Jesus in Israel. He called himself "*The friend of the Bridegroom (Jesus)*" [Joh.3:29].
2. The 2nd is **JOHN MARK**, who was an attendant of Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey [Act.13]. It is he who wrote the Gospel of Mark.
3. Then, 3rd, is the **APOSTLE JOHN**, one of the 12 whom Jesus chose to travel with Him. To this one, this revelation of Jesus was signified. This John wrote the Gospel of John and the 3 Epistles of John. He was one of the 120 who were filled with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost and spoke in other tongues. I say that he was filled with the Spirit. He was well fitted to be entrusted with such a far-distant revelation of God's dear Son, on whose bosom he leaned as "*the beloved disciple.*" He had learned the Old Testament Scriptures and through them knew God in a considerable measure.

His writings and the treatment he received from a Christ-rejecting world indicate that he walked in the wisdom, joy, and power of the Holy Spirit.

Revelation 1:2 summarizes his Christian career. He “*bear record of (testified) the Word of God*”; that is, he read and expounded the Old Testament, as did every faithful messenger of his day. For over 3 years, he had heard the preaching and teaching of His Lord, here called “*The testimony of Jesus*.” To this he witnessed also. Thus, John preached Jesus Christ from the Old Testament and from his personal knowledge and fellowship with Him. John witnessed also to “*all things that he saw*,” referring particularly to the things recorded in this book. Like John, every faithful minister today reads and hears and sees, then faithfully witnesses to it all with an eye single to God’s glory.

JOHN’S PRE-BENEDICTION, REV. 1:3

“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” [Rev.1:3]

There is always much more in a Scripture citation than appears on the surface; even so here. The Holy Spirit knew that the enemy would endeavor to hinder the study of this volume. Have you not heard it again and again, “This is a sealed book; no one can understand it”? Hence, He encourages us at the very threshold to delve into it. John was blessed in receiving the Revelation and in giving it to others; therefore, John announces a special blessing to the pastor and teacher who expounds this book to his flock. There is corresponding profit to the flock that hears and heeds its contents. Why are they blessed? Because, “*the time is at hand*”; that is, the time of its fulfillment. All those saints who thus received this prophecy at any time since John wrote it, and received it as “at hand,” and saw and took their place by faith as a part of the program, will surely share in the honors and rewards awaiting the overcomers. Shall you and I not have our portion of the blessing? The blessing here mentioned means far more than simply an enjoyable understanding of the book. It means to enter into it with the whole heart, receive it as our Lord’s last love-message to us personally; expect its fulfillment and purpose by faith to perform our part in the solemn and triumphant program.

Reader, do you really believe that “*the time is at hand?*” Some people believe with the mouth only. In their works, gifts, and actions they contradict their verbal statements. Let it not be so with us. Remember, that if we read and heed as believing that the time is at hand, though we fall asleep before Christ comes, yet we will fall in victory and awake in victory when the first trumpet sounds. Hallelujah!

JOHN'S SALUTATION, REV. 1:4

"John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne. And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." [Rev.1:4-6]

The Apostle's salutation is peculiar to this book. It is the pronouncement of grace and peace from the triune God.

First, "*grace and peace from him which is and which was and which is to come*"; that is, Jehovah, who will forever keep His covenant with His people.

Second, it is "*from the seven Spirits of God which are before His throne.*" This occurs in no other salutation. This means the 7-fold executive power and wisdom of the Son of God vested in the Holy Spirit throughout the earth (compare Rev.5:6).

And, the salutation is "*from Jesus Anointed,*" as seen from 3 angles:

1. **"THE FAITHFUL WITNESS"**—While on earth, the "minister of circumcision."
2. **"FIRST BEGOTTEN FROM THE DEAD"**—what He is as Source, Head, and Pledge of the new creation.
3. **"THE PRINCE OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH"**—what He will prove to be, as the Man of destiny, to the dazzling defeat of all His foes.

Here we behold the 3 offices of the Anointed One:

1. **PROPHET**, or witness;
2. **PRIEST** (implied);
3. **KING**. How fitting and precious John's lofty exclamation of honor—"Unto Him that loved us," as Jehovah; "*and washed us from our sins in His own blood,*" as the Redeemer, "*and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father,*" as our Lord. Are you surprised that he adds, "To him be glory and dominion forever and ever (into the ages)"? Nay! We join with John in shouting one eternal **AMEN!**

JOHN'S ACCLAIM—THE KEY

"Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they which pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen!" [Rev.1:7]

This is the **KEY VERSE** as to **THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK**. It shows that its great theme is the revelation of Jesus Christ from heaven. Many events precede it, prepare for, and lead up to it; and others will follow and complement it. The “*clouds*” here mentioned are the saints, resurrected and translated beforehand, who will be revealed with Him. It agrees with Jesus’ own words in Matthew 24:30. Doubtless the “*cloud*” of Isaiah 60:8 and Hebrews 12:1 speaks of people; also the “*clouds*” of 1 Thessalonians 4:17. The “*cloud*” that received Jesus in His ascension was doubtless the resurrected Old Testament saints who came out of their graves and entered into Jerusalem the day Jesus was raised (compare Mat.27:52-53 with Heb.11:35). In Jude 1:12, false prophets are called “*clouds without water*.”

Note that in our **KEY VERSE** more than 1 cloud is mentioned. How beautifully this forecasts in 1 word and agrees with Revelation 19:5-7, where we read of at least 3 crowds (clouds): “His servants,” • “ye that fear Him,” “and His wife.” One sublime parade made up of 3 distinct companies (cohorts).

At the threshold, our key verse announces the revelation of **THE CHRIST**, or the mystery Christ—Jesus Christ and His Body, The Church, which is called “*the angels of His power*,” the saints in whom He shall be glorified [2Th.1:7-10].

Three classes on earth shall see the Lord when He is revealed:

1. “**EVERY EYE**”—All believers then on earth, for they will be looking for His return,
2. “**THEY WHICH PIERCED HIM**”—The Jewish nation, and
3. “**ALL KINDREDS OF THE EARTH SHALL WAIL**”—All people who will not have believed on Him before. John’s heart beat in full sympathy with the Lord. He did not feel badly at the wail of the wicked. He exclaimed, “*Even so, Amen!*” and the new man today is in perfect agreement with the just God in all His dealings with men, be they ever so severe. The new man knows no carnal pity for the flesh.

The sudden interruption of the next verse seems to indicate that the Lord Himself powerfully witnessed to John’s acclaim and declared of whom he was writing and what title of authority He should then bear. As if his pen were seized with another hand, he wrote, “*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending* (oh, the scope of those words), *saith the Lord, which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty*” [Rev.1:8]. Observe that what the first Person of the Godhead is called in John’s salutation [Rev.1:4] is here ascribed to the second Person, namely Jehovah. Why? Because when Jesus Anointed will be revealed from heaven with His glorified saints, then “*His name shall be called the Mighty God, the Age-lasting Father, the Prince of peace*” [Isa.9:6] (which agrees with Rev.19:13-15), but not until then.

Several other words and phrases harmonize perfectly with our **KEY VERSE**. For example,

- “*must shortly come to pass*,” “*this prophecy*” and “*the time is at hand*” [Rev.1:1-3].
- The word “*quickly*” [Rev.3:11] and the phrases “*till I come*,” “*unto the end*,” and “*as a thief*” [Rev.2:25-26; Rev.3:3], all carry the same import. Also Revelation 22.

We need to study these citations closely. Be it remembered that this revelation was given 19 centuries ago: but was it fulfilled then? Did Jesus return then? Nay! We shall see that the substantial fulfillment of this record is yet altogether future. Expositors generally dwell at length upon the 7 letters to the 7 churches and find in them a historic fulfillment of 7 periods of the history of The Church. Doubtless they serve that purpose. We need not give them any special attention in that respect; for we find in them a deeper and larger purpose. The aforementioned words and phrases demand the latter.

Great Days Ahead

Another year is ending
 And serious times are pending,
 But we are looking up to heaven.
 All things are quickly changing,
 Man's plans are disarranging,
 But calming grace to us is given.
 Our Christ is soon returning.
 The world will then be burning.
 O what a sad and dismal story.
 The Lord will then be reigning,
 And saints He now is training
 Will then be with Him in the glory.
 Our Christ the vic'try's winning—
 Millennium beginning,
 And Jews accept redemption's story.
 The wedding bells are chiming.
 All heaven and earth are rhyming,
 And all creation throbs with glory.

5 VISION VIEWPOINTS

There are 5 Vision Viewpoints—John's fingerboards. These should be considered closely by the student. The Apostle was, in his spirit, in 5 different localities and positions in the vision from which he beheld the contents of the book of Revelation. Their fulfillment is not exactly in the order in which they were given. For example, the period of the 1st vision embraces all the others; and the 6th Chapter extends from the beginning to the ending of the 7 years.

At the outset of our study, be it remembered that the first 3 chapters of Revelation cover this entire Church Age. Revelation 4 to 19 covers the 7 years of the beginning of the next age. More is written in the Bible about that period than of any other time of similar length.

"I became (or came to be) in spirit on the Lord's day and heard behind me a voice, loud as of a trumpet." [Rev.1:10 Greek]

This is by far the most important viewpoint. In the book of Revelation, this is the **KEY VERSE** as **TO THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SERIES OF VISIONS**; even as Verse 7 is the key verse, relating the purpose thereof. Therefore, let us camp here and get a clear understanding of this viewpoint.

Some expositors teach that this verse means that John was in the Holy Spirit on Sunday. Such a view is not at all in keeping with the wording of the text. The definite article **THE** is not given; it does not read, "*In **THE** Spirit*" but "*In spirit.*" Neither is the article given in Revelation 21:10. Is it not an insult to the Apostle's official place and his piety to say that he was in the Holy Spirit on Sunday? He was considered a very devout saint; hence, in history, he is termed Saint John the Divine. He was in the Holy Spirit every day. He lived and labored in the power of the Spirit, for which reason he was exiled. Perhaps some preachers and teachers do not know, by experience, what is meant by being in the Spirit. Indeed, we need to be in the Spirit to understand this book, as well as all spiritual truth.

What is meant by the phrase "*The Lord's Day*"? It means the entire period of the universal dominion of Jesus Christ, that is, His millennial reign. "*The Lord's Day*" is the antithesis of "*man's day*" [1Co.4:3 Greek], which Paul terms, "*This present evil age*" [Gal.1:4 Greek]. Beginning with the crowning of Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C., God gave world dominion into the hands of men. Gentile dominion, or "*man's day*," will end when "*the Lord's Day*" begins with the crowning of Jesus Christ as "*King of kings and Lord of lords*" [Rev.19:16]. Presently, we shall see that it will embrace "*the day of the Lord*" (see the book of Joel). David, looking forward through faith's telescope, exclaimed, "*This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will be glad and rejoice in it*" [Psa.118:24]; he rejoiced in hope of the millennium.

John was transported in his spirit into the glorious time toward which all believers are looking. He was in the spirit of that day (or period). He was in an attitude of looking forward into the eternal future. Paul experienced a similar transport when he said, "*I knew a man in Christ...caught up to the third heaven...caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words*" [2Co.12:2-4]. John was not carried forward in his body, but simply in his own spirit. All the apostles were anticipating the return of Jesus Christ, and that hope was to John of the most absorbing interest (compare the apostles' query in Act.1:6). The entire content of Revelation proves this to be the meaning of Verse 10.

Revelation is called, "*The words of this prophecy*" [Rev.1:3]. The announcement "*Behold, He cometh with clouds*" [Rev.1:7], was an outburst of his being in spirit on the Lord's Day. As the Holy Spirit set Ezekiel upon his feet [Eze.2:3], so the same Holy Spirit set John in spirit on the Lord's Day. To him, it was as if

the scenes described in this book were actually coming to pass before his eyes. That is the meaning of being in spirit in the Lord's Day.

Men argue that the phrase "*the Lord's Day*" means Sunday, because the grammatical construction differs from that of the phrase "*the Day of the Lord.*" The grammatical construction of the phrase "*the Lord's supper*" is exactly the same [1Co.11:20]. Does anyone doubt that it was the supper of the Lord, the feast in memory of Christ's death for us? That construction is peculiar to the Apostle John's writings. We read of "*Abraham's seed*" in John 8:33, 37, 39. In that connection, Jesus said, "*Abraham rejoiced to see MY DAY*" [Joh.8:56]. Was that not the Lord's Day? Will anyone call "My day" Sunday? Surely no one will limit the phrase "*My day*" to our Lord's ministry on earth. We give due regard to the **FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK**, even as did the disciples. That was the first day, not only of the week, but also of a new era, which Jesus Christ introduced by His resurrection. It would have been the first day of the millennium if Israel had accepted Christ as their Messiah and King. It was the first day of Daniel's last prophetic week (7 years) [Dan.9:24]. Therefore, the first day of the week was prophetic of the Lord's Day; but the New Testament never terms Sunday, or the first day of the week, the Lord's Day.

JOHN'S ACTUAL EXPERIENCE

"And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks." [Rev.1:12]

The Apostle John was driven to the island on account of his faithfulness to God's will. Therefore, we repeat that he was in an attitude of "*looking for that blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior*" [Tiu.2:13 RV]. As a kingdom Apostle, he was looking for Jesus to come and reign. Suddenly, he found himself in that very day (time) for which he was yearning. I say that he was looking forward; for he declares, "*I heard behind me a great voice.*" Note that when the Voice had ceased, John "*turned to see the voice,*" that is, to see the person who spoke. This is marvelously significant. He turned from a forward gaze to a backward gaze. "*And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks.*"

Let me emphasize that this reversed gaze is full of deep meaning. To understand the book of Revelation, we must stand in spirit where John stood and look back. We must view each event from his viewpoint. We can see the north side of a house from the north viewpoint only. We may understand the happenings of "*the Lord's Day*" from the viewpoints of that day, and from no other. By faith, we enter into the vision which was given to the Apostle and study it from his points of view. John remarks, "*Immediately I was (became) in spirit*" or "He carried me away in spirit." With the phrase "*in spirit*" compare Revelation 4:2, 17:3 and 21:10.

People generally consider Christendom from the standpoint of being in the midst of it; but like John, we must study it from the viewpoint of the Lord's Day. John, looking back, beheld the Son of Man walking in the midst of the churches with flaming eyes and fiery feet; judging as an Examiner every member as to his conduct. The closing days were especially

emphasized to him that judgment must precede and prepare for “*the Lord’s Day*.” In the capacity of judge, our dear Lord Jesus searches believers and separates them from the power and love of the world and from the religiousness of the age. He also separates believers from believers. The 7 letters of Revelation 2 and 3 prove this to be true. Peter teaches the same things, saying, “*For the time will come that judgment must begin at the house of God*” [1Pe.4:17]. The happenings of the first 3 chapters of Revelation were seen from the first viewpoint. A 9-fold description of Christ as the Judge is found in Revelation 1:13-15. The judgment of The Church is given in Revelation 2 and 3.

“THE LORD’S DAY” EXPLAINED MORE FULLY

That period will begin with Christ taking His own throne in heaven. “*Salvation ... and the kingdom of our God*” [Rev.12:10] must obtain (prevail) in heaven before they can obtain (prevail) on the earth. John saw that “*a throne was set (being set) in heaven and one sat on the throne*” [Rev.4:2]. The Lord Jesus is that “*One*.” **THE LORD’S DAY** must begin in heaven before **THE DAY OF THE LORD** can begin on earth, because His operations on earth will proceed from heaven. The commencement of the Lord’s Day is indicated in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: “*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*” Then He will return to heaven with the saints and occupy His own throne. The Lord’s Day, in its full duration, will embrace the entire millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

That period is also termed “*the day of the Lord Jesus Christ*” [1Co.1:8 and 2Co.1:4]. The first 7 years of that period, called The Tribulation, will be an intrusion, because the nations will insist on continuing their dominions. Their refusal to accept Christ as the universal Ruler will stamp them as usurpers. Therefore, He will be compelled to fight for His right to reign. That refusal and the refusal of the Jews to accept Christ as their Messiah will occasion The Tribulation days of 7 years. The last part of those years is called **THE DAY OF THE LORD**, a frequent phrase in the Old Testament (see 2Th.2:2). That will be a brief period of retributive judgment upon the wicked. It is termed, “*The day of wrath*” [Rev.6:17, 11:18; 14:10; 15:1, 7; 16:1, and 19:15]. Joel says, “*Alas for the day! For the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it be ... A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness ... The day of the Lord is great and very terrible, and who can abide it*” [Joe.1:15 and 2:2, 11]. “*That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation*” [Zep.1:14-18]. Read these utterances and ponder. “*Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved*” [Mat.24:22].

In that short time, n the great whore (the false church) will be judged, n the battle of Armageddon will be fought, n Satan will be cast into hell, and n the 2 beasts cast into the lake of fire. All world

dominion will be brought completely under the control of Jesus Christ, as Almighty God. Precisely put, the Lord's Day falls into 3 sections. The Tribulation time (7 years) occupies the first 2 sections and the 3rd section is from the battle of Armageddon to the end of the millennium.

THE 2ND VISION VIEWPOINT [REV.4:2]

Here John is caught up to heaven in his spirit, and beholds the throne of Christ as it will be set up; the full overcomers being with Him. He observes also the announcements and executions of judgments on the earth. Mainly, this point includes Revelation 4-9; 12; and Revelation 14-16. He sees 3 distinct ranks of believers:

1. The 4 living creatures and 24 elders.
2. The countless company of Revelation 7.
3. The 144,000 [Rev.7 and 14].

THE 3RD VISION VIEWPOINT [REV.13:1]

In his spirit, the Apostle "*stood upon the sand of the sea.*" The sand figures the shifting, unsettled conditions of the nations. He beheld also the formation and career of the 7-horned World Empire.

THE 4TH VISION VIEWPOINT [REV.17:3]

John was "*carried away in spirit into the wilderness,*" which represents the world. From thence, he beheld the judgment of the harlot, the over throw of religious Babylon, as related in Revelation 17 and 18.

THE 5TH VISION VIEWPOINT [REV.21:10]

"He carried me away (in spirit) to a mountain great and high and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." [Rev.21:10]

This scene connects us with eternal things. These last 2 viewpoints strongly confirm our interpretation of Revelation 1:10, "*I became in spirit on the Lord's day.*" The article **THE** is not in the Greek in any of the 4 quotations. It does not say, "*in THE Spirit,*" but simply "*in spirit,*" exactly as our common version gives in Revelation 17:3. Revelation 1:10 and 4:2 are precisely the same: "*I became in spirit.*"

Note that in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd scenes, the Apostle stood at, or near, the commencement of the 7 years. In the last scene, he stood about 1,000 years later. Only in the 1st scene did he have the backward gaze [Rev.1:12].

The word **behold**, as an exclamation, occurs 25 times in the book of Revelation.

THE INSPIRED OUTLINE

"Write the things which thou hast seen and the things which are and the things which shall be after these things." [Rev.1:19 Greek]

"THE THINGS" John had seen are in Revelation 1:12-18. Study the 9-fold description of the Lord Jesus, the Judge of The Church.

"THE THINGS WHICH ARE" refer to this Church Age. Revelation 1:20 explains that *"the seven stars are the seven angels"*; that is, messengers. In Revelation, the word **angel** or **angels** occurs 72 times. Evidently only 5 of them are disembodied spirits; all the others are human messengers. Observe that the 12 angels figure the 12 tribes [Rev.21:12] (see also Rev.21:17). Compare Matthew 24:31 and 2 Thessalonians 1:7, where angels mean saved human beings. *"The seven candlesticks are the seven churches."* All Christendom throughout this age is pictured by the 7 churches and their angels; that is, their pastors or leaders. The goodness and badness of Christendom is described in Revelation 2 and 3.

"THE THINGS WHICH SHALL BE AFTER THESE THINGS" are laid out in the remaining 19 chapters of Revelation. They record the happenings of the age (dispensation) that follows The Church Dispensation. Note that Revelation 4:1 declares, *"I will show thee things which must be after these things"*; that is, after the things outlined in Revelation 2 and 3. Therefore, Revelation is not history from Chapter 4 on, but prophecy. The events of Revelation 4 to 22 are yet to be fulfilled.

"WRITE THE THINGS WHICH THOU SAWEST" *the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand and the seven golden candlesticks* [Rev.1:19-20]. What the Apostle saw is called *"the mystery"* because the truth of God as relates to Christendom is a secret hidden in these symbols. This agrees with Jesus' words to the disciples in Matthew 13. This present Church Period is the Kingdom of the Heavens in mystery. He said, *"I speak to them (the multitudes) in parables, because it is given unto you (His disciples) to know the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens; but to them it is not given."* The 7 parables of Matthew 13 are the Master's pen-picture of this religious age. They have a remarkable correspondence with the letters to the 7 churches, which we will study under Division 2. The Holy Spirit alone can enable us to grasp the meaning of those parables and of these symbols. How necessary then to be filled with the Spirit.

THE JUDGE DESCRIBED [REV. 1:13-16]

"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 voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.” [Rev.1:13-16]

John relates also that he saw “*in the midst of the seven candlesticks One like unto the Son of Man*” [Rev.1:13]. The voice which John heard behind him was great like a trumpet. It was so august that he dared not move until He ceased speaking. The 9-fold description that followed was so sublime that he could scarcely believe his own eyes, which informed him on looking backward that before him stood the Man with whom he had fellowship for over 3 years. Hence, he adds, “*When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead*” [Rev.1:17]. Let us look at this majestic Personage.

THE 9-FOLD DESCRIPTION

1. **“CLOTHED WITH A GARMENT DOWN TO THE FOOT.”** Every item of the ensuing description stamps it as official. During this Church Age, Jesus is in heaven, fulfilling His High Priesthood—mediating for His people before God. But here the Apostle sees Him on earth, “*walking in the midst of the seven candlesticks (the churches).*” Evidently the Lord’s clothing speaks of His official robe as High Priest. The word for **CLOTHED** (having been clothed) is the same as **ENDUED** in Luke 24:49. When the Holy Spirit came upon Him in the Jordan, He was endued with power, invested with authority from on high. That investiture was for His past prophetic office, His present priestly office, and for His future kingly office. As Jesus is interceding in heaven in our behalf; so here He is seen, with High-priestly authority, mediating before God amidst the saints on earth. His ministry here is searching, probing, and examining in view of instruction, correction, and rebuke as qualifying the saints to reign with Him during the coming age.
2. **“GIRT ABOUT THE PAPS WITH A GOLDEN GIRDLE.”** Babes in Christ need “*the pure milk of the Word that they may grow thereby*” [1Pe.2:2]. But we cannot expect to be babes always; there comes a weaning time when mothers girt up their breasts. Likewise, a judge restrains his affectionate nature. He notes closely all the evidences for and against the one being examined and gives sentence accordingly. In Revelation 15:6 we behold certain saints with “*their breasts girded with golden girdles,*” ready to pour out the 7 last plagues upon the earth—they assist the Lord Jesus in judging the world. No doubt the spiritual saints are the agencies through whom He now judges the whole of Christendom. “*Do not ye judge them that are within?*” [1Co.5:12].
3. **“HIS HEAD AND HIS HAIR WERE WHITE LIKE WOOL, AS WHITE AS SNOW.”** Daniel 7:9 records about the same things of “*the Ancient of days,*” which suggests the majesty, purity, holiness, sublimity, and eternity of Him who walks throughout The Church. As God manifest in the

flesh, Jesus is seen here in the capacity of Judge as truly as in the capacity of Savior.

4. **“AND HIS EYES WERE AS A FLAME OF FIRE.”** Every member of Jesus’ body here speaks of Him as a Judge. Nothing escapes the scathing scrutiny of His holy justice. *“I the Lord search the heart; I try the reins”* [Jer.17:10]. Nor does He look upon appearances but upon the heart [1Sa.16:7]. The Word is the instrument of this examination, *“For the word of God is quick (living), and powerful (efficient), and sharper than any (every) two-edged sword, piercing (penetrating) even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”* [Heb.4:12]. The candlestick Examiner is doing these very things by means of the preaching and teaching of the full Gospel of God’s grace and the Gospel of glory. No saint escapes this judgment, *“Neither is there any creature (created thing) that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him (laid bare before, taken by the throat and exposed) with whom we have to do (with whom is our reckoning)”* [Heb.4:13]. Thank God, we shall all be justly rewarded according to the deeds done in the body.
5. **“AND HIS FEET LIKE UNTO FINE BRASS AS IF THEY BURNED IN A FURNACE.”** Every new item describing the Judge seems to intensify the judgment. Brass always symbolizes judgment. The brazen altar, consuming the slain lamb, pointed to Calvary where our sins were judged. *“Fine brass”* witnesses of intricate judgment. Burning brass flames out scathing, unsparing judgment. This whole clause declares that the Son of God is moving by the Spirit through the Word throughout The Church judging everywhere in the minutest manner. God be praised! The same Word that consumes the dross also builds up that which remains. The Word that condemns the wrong also confirms the right, which is comforting.
6. **“AND HIS VOICE AS THE SOUND OF MANY WATERS.”** Daniel 10:6 says, *“As the voice of a multitude.”* Both of these utterances have a correspondence with Revelation 19:6, where the saints’ voice is as *“the sound of many waters.”* As stated above, full-fledged believers, being in fullest sympathy with Jesus Christ, are the present executors of the Divine Judgment of The Church. This accounts for the voice sounding so loud to John (compare Eze.1: 4, 24).
7. **“AND HE HAD IN HIS RIGHT HAND SEVEN STARS.”** Revelation 1:20 informs us that the stars are the angels, or messengers—pastors of the churches. As the 7 churches represent the entire Church during this age; so the stars represent all the Gospel ministers of the age. The word **star** suggests that this age is night, in the sense that Christ, *“the sun of righteousness,”* is absent. Paul terms it *“this present evil age”* [Gal.1:4]; evil because its characteristic feature is religious legalism. It is also *“man’s day”* [1Co.4:4]. What an honor and yet what a responsibility rests upon the servants of God. They are the leading luminaries of men today. How sad that many of them are dark lanterns and give false light. As the harbinger of the

millennial day, Jesus announces Himself to be “*the bright and morning star*” [Rev.22:16 and 2Pe.1:19]. Then He will arise as “*The sun of righteousness with healing in His wings*” [Mal.4:2]. Meanwhile, during this present time, the Lord holds and guides His true messengers, and rebukes and chastens the others. Each will be rewarded according to his works.

8. “**AND OUT OF HIS MOUTH WENT A SHARP TWO-EDGED SWORD.**” This sword is none other than the Word of God, “*piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit...*,” as cited above. That Word is judging us now; reproving, correcting, and instructing us. If we yield to its faithfulness today, we will escape its condemnation and not be ashamed at His coming. There is no getting by the fact that our continual attitude to God’s written Word will determine our present victory and joy and our eternal sphere and reward.

9. “**AND HIS COUNTENANCE WAS AS THE SUN SHINETH IN HIS STRENGTH.**” In Revelation 10:1, we read that His face was like the sun. Saul saw a light from heaven “*above the brightness of the sun*” [Act.26:13], which was the effulgence of this same glorified Man. Should we wonder at John saying, “*When I saw him I fell at his feet as dead?*” Ah, he was gazing upon a sun-clad, majestic, hoary-headed personage who had flaming eyes, brazen feet, and a thundering voice; walking, searching, roaring, revoking with authority in the midst of the candlesticks. You say, “It was only a vision.” But the facts visioned have proved to be far more real and majestic than the vision. Truly, Jesus Christ is solemnly searching, weighing, and separating His people. “*Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle,*” saith the Lord [Eze.34:17]. Else how shall the Lord, the righteous Judge, make it manifest as to who is building with wood, hay, and stubble or gold, silver, and precious stone? Who shall be found ready when the trumpet sounds? Be it understood that this judgment of The Church is absolutely necessary before the judgment of the world can begin. There must be a company of 1st Rank, full-fledged overcomers in heaven with glorified bodies to assist the Lord Jesus in judging the world. Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? “*...Know ye not that we shall judge angels?*” [1Co.6:2-3].

CONSOLATION OF THE JUDGE [REV. 1:17-18]

“And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, “Fear not: I am the First and the Last and the Living One; but I became dead, and behold I am alive into the ages of the ages, Amen; and have the keys of Hades and of death.” [Rev.1:17-18 RV]

The sight of such holy majesty and authority is too much for mankind, because of sin in the flesh, until we get our glorified bodies. Daniel had similar experiences; once he said, “*I fainted and was sick days....I was astonished at the vision.*” Later he declares, “*My comeliness was turned in me into corruption and I retained no strength*” ... “*I became dumb*” ... “*neither is there breath left in me*” [Dan.8:27 and Dan.10:8, 15-17]. But God sent comfort to him through Michael. How

rich are these words of comfort to John. One thing the Lord did, and 6 facts He stated of Himself. He is “*the First*,” not in point of time only, but especially in point of excellence. That is, He is The Chief. He is also “*the Last*.” The Greek word **ESCHATOS** means “*the farthest, the uttermost, the extreme, the remotest, the limit in every direction—the innermost, the lowermost, the uppermost, **The Last***.”

Jesus Christ is not the first Adam only (for he was before Adam); but He is the Chief Adam, the first Adam having been a figure only [Rom.5:14]. He is the Chief Adam from every viewpoint. He is also the last from every viewpoint. He knows the deepest fellowship with the Father and with the saints—**THE INNERMOST**. He earned the highest glory—**THE UTTERMOST**. His is the circumference of all—**THE OUTERMOST**. What unspeakable comfort, that He who stands in the midst, so majestic, holy and terrible, is He who became dead for our sins and is alive to all eternity.

Finally, He has unlimited authority and power over the grave and the lower regions. In due time, He will deliver His elect from the former and purify the latter from demons and the wicked dead and cast them into the lake of fire. The Lord showed His authority and power over the grave and the lower regions when He was raised from the dead. “*And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of their graves after His resurrection and went into the Holy City and appeared unto many*” [Mat.27:52-53]. It is also written that “*when He ascended up on high, he led captivity captive*” [Eph.4:8-11] (see also Rom.10:7 and 1Pe.3:18-19). Doubtless, when Jesus arose and ascended, He robbed “*Abraham’s bosom*” [Luk.16:22], the receptacle of redeemed spirits from the beginning until Christ came, of all those spirits therein imprisoned, and took them to heaven with Him. “*The prisoners of hope*” [Zec.9:12] were then released.

Therefore, since Jesus ascended to heaven, those who die as believers go immediately to heaven. This is Paul’s meaning in expressing “*a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better*” [Phi.1:23]. In 2 Corinthians 4:8, the same Apostle states a similar fact, “*We are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.*” To be with Christ now in heaven without a body is far better; hence, far more desirable than to be here in this fragile body and absent from the Lord.

THE DAY BREAKS

We soon shall stand with Christ at break of day,
When rays of sunlight first shall gild the clouds:
And all the mists of night are swept away
With all the fears that night enshrouds.
The low’ring clouds that fain would linger on,
With chilling blasts that seek to hurt and freeze,
Shall all give place and flee away at dawn;
And we will marvel that they cease.
While thru the air shall float the glad new song
Of ransomed souls that rise to meet the Day,
When God Himself shall righten ev’ry wrong:
And He shall wipe all tears away.

THE JUDGE OFFICIATING [REV.2 AND 3]

"For the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. I can of mine own self do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." [Joh.5:22-23, 30]

While Jesus was on earth, He judged (discerned) as to who believed and to what extent they received His teaching. He does the same today. The 7 letters to the 7 churches are a perfect photograph of all Christendom, snatched by the precise, moving camera of our Lord's High Priestly scrutiny, "*walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks*," as Judge. The description of Him in Revelation 1 and the constant language of these letters prove this very interesting fact.

MANNER OF ADDRESS

TO WHOM ADDRESSED?

"Unto the angel of the church." Every letter begins the same way—addressed to the angel. By the angel is meant the pastor, or shepherd, of that particular congregation. The word **angel** simply means "*messenger*." As Christ is the Head of the entire Church, so each pastor, as representing Christ, is head of his congregation.

Therefore, there is a grave responsibility upon pastors to preach the Word and be examples to the flock—God expects this because He appoints them, then keeps and guides them, and enables them to perform His will. Jesus holds them in His right hand of authority. They can trust and obey Him, then roll the responsibility back on Him. Pastors should not be "careless," nor "careful" (filled with unbelieving anxiety) but "carefree." The assembly also is responsible to receive the God-sent message and the loving care of the shepherd and to stand with him in faith and prayer and service. A true pastor does not lord it over God's heritage; nor does the assembly resent the truth.

EXACT NAME GIVEN?

The exact name addressed is not the name of the church, but of the town in which the church gathered; for example, "*The church in Ephesus*." Five of the letters have this style. Smyrna and Laodicea, read thus, "*The church of the Smyrneans*" and "*the church of the Laodiceans*." In the latter style of address, the real spiritual condition of each church is more decidedly expressed than in the former. The suffering, bruised life of the one and the light, indifferent, religious disposition of the other are set forth in Smyrna and Laodicea. These two also express the extreme opposite conditions in Christendom.

BY WHOM ADDRESSED?

“These things saith He...” In Revelation 1, we saw that God gave this revelation concerning the Son to the Son. Now the Son informs John what to write to the sons. As Judge, in each letter certain items of His description are necessitated by the character of that particular church. For example, in the first letter it is *‘He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.’*

In Paul’s epistle to this same Ephesian church, we read of seven **1’s**: **“ONE** body, and **ONE** Spirit, even as ye are called in **ONE** hope of your calling; **ONE** Lord, **ONE** faith, **ONE** baptism, **ONE** God and Father of all” [Eph.4:4-6].

God made provision for the whole Church to be one throughout this age. The church in Ephesus was typical of this provision; and she was professedly what her name indicates, a heavenly people (**Ephesus** means *“city of the moon”*). All the messengers are one in God’s purpose, *“laborers together with God”* [1Co.3:9]. All God’s people are one. Hence, at the doorway of this letter, the Lord is seen holding all the ministers of this age in His hand and walking in the midst of all Christendom during the age. In the 2nd letter, His address is comforting; but in the 3rd His address is threatening.

THROUGH WHOM ADDRESSED?

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” This is exactly the exhortation that closes each epistle. The exception is that in the first 3 a promise to the overcomer follows. The Holy Spirit is the present proficient agent of examination employing the Word as the sufficient instrument. John and all who give forth the truth in the power of the Spirit are the efficient messengers of God to The Church today. All true ministers judge the flesh in themselves first, then in others, and count with God. Solemn searching facts. Mark it well, every letter is to all the churches as comfort for the faithful, correction for the erring, and warning for the incorrigible. The phrase *“the churches”* does not contradict the oneness of Christ’s people mentioned above; for the whole Church, and all of them together, constitute the one church. The phrase *“the churches”* does not mean primarily the various denominations of today, but those individual congregations located in different cities. Denominationalism and sectarianism are unscriptural. These break the unity and oneness of The Church. Nowhere in the Word do we read that certain congregations together constitute **A CHURCH** or **A DENOMINATION**. No provision was ever made for “isms” or “schisms” in the Body [1Co.1:10 and 1Co.12:25]. But, dispensationally those assemblies typify denominational conditions of today; this we will see clearly later. How fitting, therefore, the exhortation, *“He that hath an ear, let him hear.”* In Revelation, great stress is placed upon the ear. The earring was the chief jewel given to Rebekah [Gen.24:22]. In Revelation 1:3, special blessing is assured to them that hear and heed this prophecy. Less and less will men have ears to hear as the end of the age

approaches. If the Holy Spirit can really get both our ears, oh, what He will show us of God's grace.

THE FIRST WORDS OF ADDRESSES

"I know thy works." This is the searching salutation to every church. The Judge does not speak at random. He is fully informed of the good, better, and best and of the bad, worse, and worst from the highest loyalty of the most abandoned saint to the deepest depths of Satan in the wickedest professor. Oh, how secure are all believers before such a Magistrate, both as to their destiny and reward—He judgeth righteous judgment. We are safe and happy when we are on good terms with the Judge. Nor can He be bribed. This Discerner finds everybody at home. Most people are occupied with works instead of Jesus. They are looking for and hoping to see great works. Then they want to be judged by their works and commended for them. Verily, they shall have their reward. The dear Lord Jesus sees into the character of men's labors, and discovers also the prime and progressing motives thereof. Oh, the disappointment that awaits the mass of religious workers, high and low. Let us be sure to build using *"gold and silver and precious stone"* only [1Co.3:12].

COMPARISONS AND CONTRASTS

We will become familiar with these 7 letters by reading them through many times and by studying them from different angles. They are truly much in little and many-sided. They contain far more truth than has been conceded generally.

1ST: Note some fascinating comparisons. The judge finds cause in 5 of the churches for reproof and correction. But they never profited by the reproof. They repented not. The effects of the early church leaving her first love, as recorded in the 1st letter, is seen in 4 of the others in departing from the truth and in allowing and imbibing error; finally ending in formality and lukewarmness. All the churches are approached in the same language, *"I know thy works."* The last exhortation is the same to all, *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches."* Thus, great prominence is given to a listening ear. If we put our ears up to God's will and let Him bore them through with the awl of truth [Deu.15:17], we will learn the deep secrets of the Lord. At the very threshold, blessings are promised to those who read and heed the words of this book [Rev.1:3]. The 2nd and 6th churches named, Smyrna and Philadelphia, have some encouraging things in common. They are not at all blamed; but they are especially comforted. They have the same foe to withstand, *"them who say they are Jews and are not; but are the synagogue of Satan."* In both of them, we read of crowns. These two churches are doubtless on the same plane in their loyalty to Christ.

2ND: Note some interesting contrasts. In the first epistle is found the most striking and important one. Over against the labor and patience and intolerance and discipline of false apostles, and forbearance and

endurance and hatred of Nicolaitanism, and all this for Christ's sake—over against all this is placed the fearful charge, "*Thou hast left thy first love.*" That was the root-cause of all the succeeding failures and faults in all Christendom. We will examine this closely in our study of the letter to Ephesus. The promises and rewards are different, depending upon the heart attitude of the individual to God's will. Special rewards are vouchsafed to Smyrna and Philadelphia. The evil influences of false teachers and wrong doctrine are pointed out particularly in the 3RD and 4TH letters. Oh, how we need to cleave to and emphasize the doctrine of the Lord, which is a unity. Ephesus hates the deeds of the Nicolaitanes; but in Pergamos Nicolaitanism is taught as a doctrine by some (and another teaching introduced); and in Thyatira, false doctrine is taught by The Church herself. Finally, Laodicea is self-satisfied, pleasure-seeking, blind, naked, deceived, contented, and at last spued out of God's mouth.

RELATION OF THE 7 CHURCHES

The Lord sovereignly made this revelation of His Son known to these particular 7 churches, which He chose for this purpose; and they represent all Christendom during this Church Age. They have a dispensational relationship. Everyone stands for a certain period of church history. Ephesus introduces the age and covers about the first 300 years. Smyrna figures all full overcomers who die during this age. Pergamos reaches down to about the 16th century, where Thyatira and Sardis begin. Philadelphia and Laodicea stand for diverging features of the present time. In harmony herewith, these churches are related to one another as to their religious characters and worth. When Ephesus, as a body refuses to repent, the candlestick, the really spiritual saints, is removed and they become "*the church of Smyrnians,*" representatively. What remains of the Ephesian church constitutes the church in Pergamos, in the same sense. Degeneration increases; for evil doctrine allowed is sure to prevail. Again, the church fails to repent at the Judge's command. Hence, the more spiritual ones, the overcomers in this grade, are separated by the Divine Hand and are known as the church in **Sardis**, which means "*escaping,*" or "*prince of joy.*" What remains of Pergamos constitutes the church in Thyatira representatively. Thyatira answers to Catholicism and Sardis answers to Protestantism. In spite of the worldly Pergamos condition, the lordly Thyatira condition, and the empty Laodicean condition Philadelphia stands blameless above them. Smyrna and Philadelphia are on the same plane and stand forth as full overcomers, Smyrna representing all believers during this age who fall asleep in Jesus in full victory and will share in the out-resurrection; and Philadelphia representing those who will live until Jesus sounds the trumpet—they will be the first to be translated. Thus, there are 3 grades (ranks) of believers outlined in these 7 letters to the churches.

STUDY OF THE LETTERS

1. EPHEBUS

Ephesus means, "*city of the moon.*" She represents the saints who are seated in the heavenlies in Christ; hence, all her members should have been the highest type of believers. Be it remembered that our beloved Brother Paul established this church. He visited it several times. He spent over 3 years there teaching them and building them up in the faith. It was there that "*God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul,*" delivering the sick and demon-possessed by means of handkerchiefs and aprons which had touched his flesh. There, "*mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed*" [Eph.19:20], which is typical of the final triumph of Paul's message in these closing days. It was to the elders of the Ephesian church that Paul said, "*...I kept back nothing that was profitable, but have showed you and have taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying ... repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ ... I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God*" [Act.20:20-21, 27].

It is also a solemn fact that to the Ephesian church, the Apostle Paul wrote the deepest doctrinal and practical truths regarding believers of this age. A thorough knowledge of that letter will aid greatly in understanding the book of Revelation. Observe their spiritual status when he wrote, "*I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love unto all the saints*" [Eph.1:5]. Faith in Jesus produces love for the saints. Faith in all the counsel of God, which those saints had received, must awaken in them a love for other saints to learn the same wondrous truths. For this praise-worthy church, Paul offers 2 very essential prayers:

- The 1st prayer is 3-fold [Eph.1:7-19].
- The 2nd prayer is 7-fold [Eph.3:16-19].

It will pay the reader to study those petitions.

"These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." [Rev.2:1]

The whole Church was meant to be Ephesian in experience. She should have grown up into Christ in all things [Eph.4:15]. The provision for it was complete and adequate. The word **holdeth** (Greek: **KRATON**) means "*hath power, dominion, control.*" All Christ's ministers are in His right hand of authority and there is no lack to any of them who yield to His control. Furthermore, He is present continually, walking around in the midst; noting all that is praise-worthy or blame-worthy and every sorrow and joy. Alas! Many do not grow, but remain infants in grace and fleshly until death. Many have imbibed error in belief and practice. These are indicated in John's 3 epistles of reproof.

"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are

not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." [Rev.2:2-4]

John records 9 items of commendation in favor of the church in Ephesus. These 9 can be grouped into 3: **⌘PATIENT LABOR**, **• PATIENT ENDURANCE**, and **⌘INTOLERANCE OF EVIL**. How sad that the Lord had to record a *"nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first (preeminent) love."* Remember, that it was for her faith and love that Paul commends this Ephesian church. John says nothing of their faith; but he deplores their loss of love. Doubtless, the phrase *"first love"* here means much more than simply the love they had for Jesus when they were first saved. The original meaning is not first in point-of-time only, but chiefly in point-of-value (importance). *"First"* means *"preeminent."* In 1 Timothy 1:15-16 it is translated **CHIEF** and **FIRST**. Saul was the **PREEMINENT** sinner; hence, God showed forth His **PREEMINENT** (**FIRST**) mercy in saving him.

Now, when we see that God's chief (preeminent) purpose in redemption was to build a Bride for His dear Son, we get the clue to the signification of *"first love."* As a church, they had laid hold of this glorious truth and were running to be partakers of the Bridehood of Christ. Not only did they love Jesus as Savior and His appearing as King, they also loved Him as the coming Bridegroom. Their love for Jesus as their coming Bridegroom was the **PREEMINENT LOVE** from which they fell. Mark it well—but for Verses 4-5 where could we find a more model church? Nevertheless, no matter what other super-excellent qualities a congregation may have, if they have **LEFT THE PREEMINENT LOVE** for their Lord; if to be in the Bridehood of Christ is not their absorbing aim and burning desire, He is deeply grieved. They miss God's best and they never reach the highest place.

A FULL-GROWN MAN

In answering Paul's 2 prayers, recorded in Ephesians 1 and 3, God causes those saints to *"grow up into him in all things" ...Yes!...(unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ), which is the head, even Christ."* Therefore, no longer may they be infants *"tossed to and fro (driven), and carried about with every wind of doctrine (teaching), by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive (with the view of the systematizing of the error)" [Eph.4:13-15].* Finally, out of this fully developed man, the whole Body of Christ (The Church), God builds *"a glorious church" [Eph.5:27]* which corresponds grandly with the rib taken out of Adam's side, of which Eve was builded and became his wife...a help meet for him [Gen.2]. All full-grown saints accept the truth of their death, burial, and resurrection with Christ and their being seated with Him in the heavenlies. He only is their life, and, of course, the Christ-life takes form and grows up to full maturity in them. Thus, they become full overcomers. Hallelujah! All believers are in Christ, but not all believers have Christ in them in this practical sense; else why the prayer, *"that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" [Eph.3:17].*

EXHORTATION AND THREAT

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first (preeminent) works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." [Rev.2:5]

What is meant by "*first works*?" Preeminent love produces preeminent works, even "*good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*" [Eph.2:10]. In 1 Thessalonians 1:3, we are informed of "*a work of faith and labor of love*," which are particular traits of the Ephesian saints. No one can leave his first love without also falling from such high-grade works. The candlestick symbolizes light, "*Ye are the light of the world*" [Mat.5:14] and "*For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord*" [Eph.5:8]. Hence, pastors are called **STARS**, which give light during this night of the absence of Christ the "*Sun of righteousness*"—the Light of the world. The removal of Ephesus' candlestick shows that not all of her members left their first love and first works. The faithful ones indeed were the candlestick (light-bearers). They were removed from the Ephesian church because she repented not. Dispensationally, Smyrna answers to those full-overcomers of Ephesus; that is, the candlestick was removed to Smyrna, figuratively speaking. The church of the Smyrnians was faithful unto death. The church in Philadelphia, also in the same order as the former, will be faithful into translation. All down this Church Age, God has been removing individual overcomers from failing congregations. Their love waxed hotter, seeing God's goodness more and more. They became Smyrna people, called so because of their bitterness of soul at the decline of their brethren; and the bitterness was aggravated by persecutions from their brethren.

2. SMYRNA

"And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." [Rev.2:8-10]

Smyrna signifies "*myrrh*," which was the first ingredient of the holy anointing oil in the tabernacle service [Exo.30:23]. It was one of 3 gifts brought to the child Jesus by the wise men. Myrrh was an exquisite perfume and a sacred disinfectant [SSg.3:6 and Joh.19:39]. It figures the contriteness and brokenness of spirit which flows from a life that is tried and bruised. Smyrna saints are full-overcomers.

They "*are unto God a sweet savor (on account) of Christ*" [2Co.2:15]; and through the Holy Spirit, they disinfect and purify the whole church. Be it remembered that the Judge finds no fault with the Smyrnians or with the Philadelphians. These 2 churches are on the same plane, as shown by the points of similarity and contrast.

Study the significant facts about Him who speaks the words herein written in Verse 8.

How comforting is Verse 9. He knows our sufferings. But note the 4 words in parenthesis, "*but thou art rich.*" The tribulation and poverty are very apparent. Her true riches—rich in love and faith and alms-deeds—are hidden. They are indeed in a parenthesis. The life of Smyrna believers is concealed. So also are their conflicts and victories, their training and growth, their sorrows and joys, "*unknown*" (to men), *and yet well known*" to God [2Co.6:9].

The tribulation and poverty are further expressed by the phrase "*ye shall have tribulation ten days*" which means that saints in this class experience the fullest measure of trial. With Paul, they suffer "*the loss of all things*" to win Christ [Phi.3:8]. "*If we suffer, we shall also reign (jointly) with Him*" [2Ti.2:12]. The depth of our tribulation here determines the height of our coming glory. If our tribulation and poverty now numbers 10, that is to the uttermost, our glory will be higher-most and uttermost.

Present comfort, "*fear none of these things.*" Future prospect, "*the crown of life*" and no "*hurt of the second death.*"

Smyrna stands for all full-overcomers through this age who fall asleep in Jesus. They will be resurrected when the Philadelphia saints are translated and together ascend to heaven with glorified bodies as the 1st Rank. We shall see them in Revelation 4-5, sitting on thrones, wearing crowns of gold, in the midst of the supreme throne and round about the throne, full of eyes before and behind—the eternal cherubim of glory. They triumphantly exclaim, day and night, "*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is and is to come*" [Rev.4:8].

3. PERGAMOS

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." [Rev.2:12-16]

Pergamos means "*much married*" from **GAMOS**, meaning "*wedding or marriage,*" and **PER**, meaning "*through.*" This church became ensnared by the sumptuous, learned city in which it was located and became worldly. Figuratively, the Pergamites were those of Ephesus who did not go on in full victory like the Smyrnians. Dispensationally, it dates from about 325 A.D. when Constantine began to befriend the Christians. Bitter persecution ceased. Church and state became wedded. What was

already intruding its nose, like a camel, into Ephesus now made its way through the door. False doctrine that could not be tolerated at first later became part of the creed. All this because Ephesus left her “*first* (preeminent) *love*.” Beware! Any wonder that the Judge addresses Himself to this congregation as **HE WHICH HATH THE SHARP SWORD WITH 2 EDGES?** He endeavors to separate her from the world into which she fell. Pergamos saints are seated in the heavenlies; but that church dwelt as upon earth, even where Satan dwelleth. This is never said of the full-overcomers whose citizenship is in heaven.

Antipas means “*against all*.” Everyone who is loyal to Christ is against all that is not of and for God; and all such suffer for it. “*Thou holdest fast my name*”; just as an unfaithful wife continues to bear her husband’s name but flirts with other men. “*Hast not denied my faith*.” With her lips she honors her husband; but in her demeanor, she contradicts her testimony. She is not whole-hearted. Oh, how many Christians are Pergamite in character today; and the number is increasing.

A SERIOUS COMPLAINT

“*But I have a few things against thee.*” Here are recorded 4 serious errors: 2 of doctrine and 2 of practice.

- “*Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, which caused Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols and to commit fornication.*” 2 Peter 2:15 informs us that “*Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness.*” Jude warns us against selfish shepherds who run “*greedily after the error of Balaam for reward*” [Jud.1:11]. Then in Numbers 22-25, we learn fully of this enchanter. God took advantage of his attempt to curse Israel, to please Balac, and compelled him to utter 4 marvelous prophecies. His error of prophesying for wages has become one of the greatest snares of Christendom. It stands squarely against Ephesian teaching and practice. No man can be a full-overcomer while selling the Gospel, whether it be spoken or written. And no one knows the subtle wile of the devil in this particular until he absolutely swings out to tell the whole story by voice and pen “*without money and without price*” [Isa.50:1]. All the arguments that men produce in favor of this error are only so many expressions of unbelief or ignorance of the clear teaching of the whole Scripture. The Catholic hierarchy is the fullest expression of Balaamism (serving for hire). This spirit of a hireling ministry prevails in Protestantism also. Many of God’s true servants are caught in this snare because they do not see “*the simplicity that is in Christ*” [2Co.11:3].
- But for Revelation 2:4, we would not know that Balaam seduced Israel into idolatry. He failed to curse Israel. Of course he failed to obtain the great reward and high honor which Balac promised him, and had to return “*to his own place*” [Num.24:25]; but, he could not lose sight of that glittering gold and sparkling crown of honor. He concocted a scheme that was effectual. He induced Balac to invite

Israel to the sacrifice of their gods; *“and the people did eat and bow down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel”* [Num.25:2-3]. God slew them for their idolatry. Reader, do you mark the close relation between eating things sacrificed to idols and committing fornication? Do you believe that this is going on among Christians today? If not, why is this charge found in Revelation 2:14? Why the detailed instruction in 1 Corinthians 5 and 10? Why the cautions in Galatians 5 and Ephesians 5? These references are not to be limited to physical idolatry and adultery only; they have a far deeper spiritual application. Some men spurn these things in the natural, even boasting that though they are married, yet they do not live as husbands; others, for example the Pope and all Catholic ministers, do not marry. But, they dare to assume a headship that is not theirs at all, a lordship over God’s heritage; virtually making The Bride of Christ their bride. The saints who follow them, bow down to them, and who acknowledge their carnal headship are guilty of spiritual adultery. The Holy Spirit makes it equivalent to worshipping idols. Paul wrote, *“Wherefore, dearly beloved, flee from idolatry”* [1Co.10:14]; and John wrote *“Little children, keep yourselves from idols”* [1Jo.5:21]. Oh Beloved, let us recognize only one Head; worship only Him, and stand for the Truth whatever the cost.

- **NICOLAITANISM**, *“So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.”* This doctrine is akin to Balaamism. It paved the way for it. The deeds of Nicolaitanism were already lurking around the Ephesian church, for the candlestick Examiner said; *“This thou hast, that thou hatest the works of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate”* [Rev.2:6]. In Pergamos, it is not only their deeds or works, but also their doctrine. They are not only lurking but the church is tolerating the teaching.

What is the meaning of Nicolaitanism? **Nico** is from the Greek ΝΙΚΑΩ which means *“to conquer, to prevail, to overcome.”* Would you think it? This is the very word that is repeatedly rendered **OVERCOMETH** in these chapters. It is the same word translated **PREVAILED** in Revelation 5:5: *“The Lion ... hath prevailed to open the book.”* **Laos**, the other part of this word, means *“people.”* Therefore, **Nicolaitanism** means *“ruler, or overcomer of the people.”* Now you see the origin of the common ecclesiastical words, **CLERGY** and **LAITY**.

Jesus Christ was no clergyman. He was a servant. He did not lord it *“over God’s heritage”* [1Pe.5:3]. He died for The Church that He might sanctify it. We be brethren, not masters and slaves. We being many members are one body [1Co.12:20]. Each individual saint is to be a **Nico** (*“overcomer”*), not over another saint whom he pleases to call **Laos**, but over the world. Yes, the full overcomers also overcome this man-rule which invites Balaam to come and preach for hire; and which, of course, ends in sacrificing to idols and committing spiritual fornication. Pergamites *“are puffed up, and have not*

rather mourned, that he which hath done this deed might be taken away from among you" [1Co.5:2]. The Spirit of Christ is not **nico-las (laos)**, overcomer of other believers, but **nico-pass**, overcomer over all things which are opposed to Christ.

- Do you wonder at the sharp threat of the Searcher of hearts? *"Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth."* First, the shepherd of the flock must repent of his toleration of evil doctrine; then some of his sheep will also repent. Such repentance will of course cause separation. These become overcomers, though of a lower rank than those of Smyrna and Philadelphia, and they receive also a lesser reward. This we shall see when we study the theme of rewards based on overcoming.

4. THYATIRA

"I know thy works, and love, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last (of thy works) to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols." [Rev.2:19-20]

As those of Ephesus, who were not full overcomers, are seen next in Pergamos, so those of Pergamos, who are not full overcomers in that rank, are seen next in Thyatira representatively. A comparison of the 2 letters is proof sufficient of this fact. There are overcomers here also, but their rewards are, of course less, than those of the Pergamites.

Thyatira means "*sacrifice of labour*." She is the fullest expression of self-effort, a hot bed of legality. The commendations seem to be very flattering, but the contrasting blame shows that Thyatira's charity and ministry, etc., are not wholesome, because they are not walking in the Spirit. The striking point of likeness between this church and the Pergamos church is that they both "*eat things sacrificed to idols and commit fornication*." The points of contrast are many and show her sad degenerated state. In Thyatira there are not only those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, but The Church itself, represented by Jezebel, actually teaches these idolatrous practices. Nicolaitanism has become so interwoven with the life of this church that neither its deeds nor doctrines are even mentioned. It is terribly sad when God no longer reproves His people for their wrongs.

Who is Jezebel? Again, we must revert to the Old Testament. Jezebel was the daughter of Eth-baal, a king of the Zidonians. Ahab, king of Israel, married her, and went and served Baal and worshipped him [1Ki.16:31]. That heathen woman is known as the wickedest of women. One meaning of **Jezebel's** name is "*isle of the dunghill*," which harmonizes with her deserved destiny: "*The carcass of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field*." She slew the Lord's prophets. She stirred up her discouraged husband into murderous hate. Jehu exclaimed to her son, "*The whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are many*" [2Ki.9:37, 22].

Consider that there were about 500 years between Balaam's seducing Israel into idolatry and the wicked career of Ahab and Jezebel, and yet...see the similarity. The root was the same; the fruit was far worse. Accordingly, we find the same facts concerning these churches. In Pergamos the doctrine of Balaam is held; in Thyatira the wife of Balaam, so to speak, is the teacher, daring to call herself a prophetess.

The Dispensational setting of Thyatira no doubt figures the Roman Catholic denomination. Her abundant works, her charity ("sisters of charity") etc., suggest this. "*That woman Jezebel*," is the one mentioned in Matthew 13:33, "*The kingdom of heaven is like unto a leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened.*" The leaven is the evil doctrine of salvation by works and the evil practice of friendship with the world. The woman is the denomination herself, a self-styled prophetess. She has leavened all of Christendom with her evil teaching and practice. Her daughters, the state churches, and her granddaughters, the lesser denominations and organizations, all teach and practice some things akin to Catholicism. What else is the meaning of reverend, infant baptism, church spires, combinations, circumscriptions, and multiplied unreasonable, unscriptural doctrines and practices? Our only individual congregational safety is to keep to "*the simplicity that is in Christ*" [2Co.11:3]. By these marked resemblances of religious bodies to Catholicism we readily discover who the daughters are.

But what is the other meaning of Jezebel? It is an astonishing eye opener. It should shock our spiritual modesty from ever again having any confidence in the flesh [Phi.3:3]. **Jezebel** means "*without cohabitation.*" She pretended to be a mother without having a husband. She herself was her only husband. Is this not Rome? Yes, she has works, and the last more than the first, but they are not works of faith, but works of flesh. They are not labors of love, but labor of law most stringent. Yes, she has faith, but it is faith in her own works, doctrine, and clergymen. She glories in her wealth and numbers. Her children are legion, but they are not born of the Spirit. Christ as Head does not receive the glory of being her Husband. Her children are simply the offspring of self-effort. This, the Holy Spirit terms as "*whoredom and witchcraft*" [2Ki.9:22]. This Jezebel is labeled in great letters, "**MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH**" [Rev.17:5]. Oh the pain of the great heart of the Shepherd of grace. How few are free from this whorish habit of attempting to get people saved by works, or by mixing works with faith. Not one denomination, scarcely one congregation, and what one Christian worker is wholly free from salvation by works, or continual acceptance with Christ by works? Who stands unflinchingly for absolute grace? Who? Unlike the 3 former churches, Thyatira continues down to the end of this age. Those who overcome in this rank, "*keep my (God's) works unto the end.*" They constitute the lowest class of overcomers. Lot is a type of this kind of believer.

5. SARDIS

"These things saith He that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." O [Rev.3:1-3]

The description of the Judge is somewhat similar to that in the 1st letter. However, there is 1 important item of difference. In the 1st letter, Jesus *"holds the seven stars"*; here He only *"hath"* them. Formerly He controlled them; but from the Sardian time on, He was not granted absolute sway in Christendom. As the Holy Spirit is not dominated by Christ, but cooperates with Him, likewise many ministers pretend a similar attitude toward Him. Men refuse to give the Lord the authority in teaching and control that His Headship demands. Good it were if they did really cooperate with Him; then the Spirit would operate through them.

Sardis means *"escaping"* or *"that which remains,"* or *"prince of joy."* From Ephesus on there has been a sad degeneration. The Pergamos church was the result of Ephesus refusing to repent. Once begun, degeneration becomes more degenerate. Let no one think that he can decline from walking in the light and not fall into greater error. Likewise, Pergamos as a church refused to repent of her toleration; hence, she became known as Thyatira in figure. Those who repented became Sardis. They escaped with what little truth and life remained. As compared with prevailing conditions, they had great victory; therefore, Sardis was then the *"prince of joy."*

Dispensationally, Sardis stands for Protestantism. She escaped from the deplorable Thyatiran conditions which ruined Pergamos. To understand this letter fully, we need to bear in mind that it describes Protestantism from its beginning to the end of this age. Catholicism has had no revivals and knows nothing of real life or spiritual power. Protestantism started in a flame of revival—out of dead works into justification by faith, under Luther about 1500 A.D. Revivals have been the order ever since. But the real abiding life and power which Protestantism has professed have not held on their way. A reputation better than the actual condition has prevailed in Christendom. *"A name that thou livest and art dead,"* sad to say, has followed immediately nearly every local and general revival. The various items of complaint against Sardis are pitiful. Only one lone commendation: *"A few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments."*

A 5-fold exhortation is called forth by her condition: "Be watchful; • strengthen the things which remain; • remember; • hold fast; • repent." But, behold the warning: *"If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."* This corresponds with the words of Jesus in Matthew 24:42-51 and with Paul's words in 1 Thessalonians 5:4. Those who do not repent of the degenerate

conditions in Christendom and watch, will not escape The Tribulation period but will remain on earth. They will end in Laodicea, where they will have one more opportunity to repent. Therefore, there are only 2 classes of people in Sardis: Those who are really saved (*"a few names"*) and the great number who have a reputation (profession) of being Christians. This explains Verse 5 that puzzles so many saints.

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." [Rev.3:5]

"I will not blot out his name." He who has life (the new birth), whatever his reputation, his name cannot be blotted out. He who has only a name and a profession of life, however great, will be overtaken as by a thief in the night. He will be visited by the terrible calamities of the end time. The Lord will come upon him in judgment. Thus, it will be proven that he had a reputation and a profession only, and that his name was never written in the Lamb's book of life. As stated before, the overcomers in Pergamos constitute the Sardian Company. Hence, all those who have fallen asleep in Jesus in the Pergamite order of overcomers and those who will be translated from Sardis will be seen in heaven as the innumerable company of Revelation 7. They constitute the greater part of the Body of Christ.

6. PHILADELPHIA

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth and shutteth and no man openeth. I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." [Rev.3:7-8]

The points of similarity and contrast between Smyrna and this church are indeed interesting. There is no blame against either. A crown awaits the faithfulness of each. The same legalists, which say they are Jews and are not, are troubling both; but to the Philadelphians he says, *"I will make them to come and worship before thy feet and to know that I have loved thee"* [Rev.3:9].

Both are notified of trial and suffering, but of particular blessings accruing from them. **Philadelphia** means *"brotherly love."* Philadelphia and Smyrna believers are the only real brotherhood in the world. They *"love one another with a pure heart fervently"* [1Pe.1:22]. Now these 2 churches are one and the same company. The Smyrnaites suffer with Christ; they may be cast into prison and may die cruel deaths because of their loyalty to Jesus. Indeed they die daily, are in jeopardy every hour. Nevertheless they are full overcomers. They are more than conquerors. If they die, they will come up in the 1st Rank resurrection, even *"the resurrection out from among the dead"* [Phi.3:11]. The Philadelphians are those of the last days who will not die, but live as full overcomers, *"whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless,"* until the first trumpet sounds [1Th.5:23].

Observe the character of the Judge here: "*These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth.*" The key of David means the authority to reign on earth as well as in heaven (see Isa.22:22, which is here quoted). With this authority, Jesus opens a door in heaven that the full overcomers may enter in; for they shall reign conjointly with Christ after they have likewise with Him judged Christendom, the world, and angels [1Co.6:2-4]. They entered the open door of privilege on earth, accepting all the truth and walking in all the light, constantly looking for more, and engaged in the Divinely Ordained Good Works. The promised ground for entrance into this open door is thus expressed "*for thou hast a little strength and hast kept my word and hast not denied my name.*" "*A little strength*" is a great compliment to this church. It is not said that the other churches had any strength. The expressive phrase in this connection is "*the word of my patience*" [Rev.3:10]; that is, as the Lord has patiently waited until the Father wills His return, and bade us to wait steadfastly and look for His advent, so they do. They live as if they really believe that He will return.

Mark you, to keep "*the WORD of my patience ... behold I come quickly*" [Rev.3:10-11] is far different from "*keepeth my WORKS unto the end,*" or "*till I come*" [Rev.2:25-26]. The first (Philadelphian saints) He will "*keep out of the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth*"; but the other (Thyatiran saints) will pass through the hour "*unto the end.*"

What is the "*the word of my patience*"? Answer: That eventful hour will begin with the week of 7 years. It will be world-wide. In Revelation 7:14, it is called the **GREAT TRIBULATION**. It will end with the casting of the beast and false prophet into the lake of fire, and Satan into the pit of the abyss (hell). "*The Great Tribulation*" of Matthew 24:21 will be the severer part of that hour of temptation. It will begin in the middle of those 7 years and pertains chiefly to Israel being confined to Palestine particularly. It is termed "*a time of trouble*" and "*the abomination that maketh desolate*" [Dan.12:1, 11]. That will be God's final chastisement of the nation Israel; "*judgment must begin at the house of God*" [1Pe.4:17].

7. LAODICEA

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." [Rev.3:14-16]

Observe the fullness and appropriateness of the title of the Judge in this letter. It agrees with Revelation 1:11, "*the first and the last.*" And, He has been "*the Witness, faithful and true*" for these 1900 years. The Church is absolutely without excuse. Jesus Christ has done His part to the uttermost. He died and arose "*the firstborn* (first-begotten) *from the dead*" [Col.1:18]; the beginning of a new creation. He ascended on high, "*to make intercession*" for us [Heb.7:25]. Jesus sent another Comforter to guide us into all the truth and shew us things to come [Joh.14:16, Joh.16:13]. And lastly, "*He*

gave some apostles and some prophets and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering, for the building up of the body of Christ [Eph.4:11-12].

The Holy Spirit has spoken through these 7 letters. Every condition has been fully described, every encouragement given, every warning pronounced, every prospect held forth to induce believers to press forward for the highest prize. There has been absolutely no lack. And yet, what is the final decision of the candlestick Examiner? "*Lukewarm.*" The Greek verb *CHILIO*, from which this word **lukewarm** is derived, means "*to become warm, or soft, to melt, to luxuriate, to revel*"; "*lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God*" [2Ti.3:4].

The word **Laodicea** means, "*just people.*" Yes, that is what The Church is in name, and what she should be in fact; but God declares her "*neither cold nor hot.*" **Laodicea** also means "*rights of the people.*" Democracy has been the political boast of this country (the United States). Other countries have adopted her policy—a government by the people and for the people. This spirit of religious democracy is getting a foothold in Christendom. Insubordination, lawlessness, unteachableness crop up everywhere. Under the plea of personal rights, every man does that which is right in his own eyes [Jdg.21:25].

Laodicea revels softly in her luxurious works and supposed wealth and self-sufficiency, but Jehovah pronounces her "*wretched, and pitiable, and poor, and blind, and naked*" [Rev.3:17]. She does not know her true condition. There is not one word of commendation concerning this church. The inevitable sentence is most solemnly expressive: "*I will spew thee out of my mouth.*" Reader do you understand that statement? We taste water by taking it into the mouth only. If it is lukewarm, it nauseates and is instantly expelled from the mouth. The non-overcomers of Sardis will continue unto the revelation of Christ, when He will come upon her "*as a thief*" [Rev.3:3 and 16:15]. Laodiceanism will be the pronounced feature of the end of that period. Indeed, Laodiceanism is prevalent today, though it is the Sardian time.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." [Rev.3:20]

Likewise, viewed dispensationally, this just people, falsely so-called, was never incorporated into Christ's Body. They are no part of Him, or of His true Church. It is very evident that Laodicea does not dwell in God, nor does Christ dwell in her; else why does He stand at the door and knock? Nay! Laodicea has a form of Godliness but denies the power thereof. She has a profession without any possession. She is in apostasy.

The "*Amen, the faithful and True Witness*" [Rev.3:14] is standing at the door of Christendom today, outside the door, making His final appeal to her, saying: "*I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see*" [Rev.3:18]. In the Diaglott,

Revelation 3:20 is striking: “*Lo I have stood and I knock,*” showing that the Divine Entreaty is going on today.

“I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” [Rev.3:18]

The Lord offers 3 indispensable products to this wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked people, namely “*gold tried in the fire,*” “*white raiment,*” and “*eye salve*”; the very least that any believer should have.

1. **GOLD TRIED** figures Divine Life. Through faith in Jesus we obtain this new, heavenly, Divine Life, which is the blessed beginning of true and eternal riches. We are born again. Man, though he be a millionaire, is poor if he is not a partaker of the Divine Nature. Gold tried refers to our **STATE**.
2. **WHITE RAIMENT** speaks of Christ's righteousness, which becomes ours when we believe on Him. Our “*nakedness*” before God, which sin entailed, is then covered. God sees us in a new, white, spotless robe, even as He saw Adam in his new fur coat [Gen.3:21]. White raiment refers to our **STANDING**.
3. **EYE SALVE** symbolizes the Holy Spirit, whom by receiving we have “the anointing that abideth.” He illuminates, lubricates, and heals our whole being.

As here intimated, the 3 adorable Personalities of the Godhead—Father, Son, and Spirit—unite in redeeming and saving mankind. The above 3 initial items of the Gospel are always freely offered to men. They are emphasized especially now in the closing days of this age. God is calling out a people who shall fully accept this 3-fold Divine Offer and thereby fully overcome this Laodicean condition. They will constitute a special company; the end-time link between The Church and The Kingdom. They will be the 3rd and last rank of The Church to be translated.

Observe that every church is addressed through the pastor. This one is counseled to buy tried gold, etc. This proves unavailing. Hence, the judge exclaims, “*Behold, I have stood at the door and I knock.*” This is the final and most positive evidence that the Lord, the head of the His Church, is on the outside. No one knocks to get out of a house. Furthermore, he adds, “*And I will come in.*” There is no hope of Him being received by The Church as such, but only by individuals—“*I will come in TO HIM.*” This is solemnly significant. Only for the sake of those who may yet repent, the Lord delays spewing Protestantism out of His mouth. Doubtless that will follow the apostasy. Paul's great conflict for them in Laodicea, “*even as many as have not seen my face in the flesh*” [Col.2:1], is pathetic and prophetic. The Holy Spirit yearned through him over The Church in the end time. Epaphras also was deeply concerned for them (see Col.2:1 and Col.4:12-16).

The church in **EPHESUS** and the church of the **LAODICEANS** are the only 2 of the 7 named elsewhere. They are first and last in John's list of 7, and figure the highest and lowest; the extremist, and the beginning and ending conditions of The Church. Laodicea is the climacteric result of Ephesus leaving her preeminent love, love of the heavenly Bridegroom. Why does John give so little space to Christendom? Because he is stating the decision only of the Judge, who pronounces righteous sentence according to Paul's Gospel, which has set forth full provision for The Church to know and do the will of God; and, to creditably represent Jesus in the earth (see Rom.2:6 and 1Ti.1:11). Our attitude to Paul's message determines the Judge's decision and rewards to us.

SMYRNA and **PHILADELPHIA** are alone free from any semblance of blame. To them only, crowns are definitely promised. Smyrna, called "*poor*" in this world's goods, is truly "*rich*." Philadelphia, seemingly weak, being small and hidden, "*has a little power* (dynamite)," which is complimentary; for this is not said to any other.

Not one word of eulogy is pronounced concerning **LAODICEA**.

EPHESUS is the first addressed, had the "first love," the highest privilege, the fullest instruction; but was the first to fail. **SMYRNA** and **PERGAMOS** are the perpetuation of Ephesus. They of Ephesus who continued in their preeminent love became "*the church of the Smyrnians*," or the full overcomers down to the present time, viewed dispensationally. Real Ephesian saints, now Smyrnaïtes, are "seated in the heavenlies with Christ." By faith they maintained that place.

The non-overcomers of **EPHESUS** become the **PERGAMOS** church. They reject Ephesian truth. **PERGAMOS** dwells on earth, flirts with the world, comforted and controlled by the world, tolerates wrong doctrine, harbors false teachers and refuses to repent. The Spirit stirs some of their members against prevailing conditions. These are called out and become **SARDIS**. The rest are termed **THYATIRA**, "sacrifice of labor," after her real nature.

As **SMYRNAITES** are the 1st Rank victors of Ephesus who die during this age, so the **SARDIANS** are the 2nd Rank victors, or those escaping from Pergamos, who died in this order or rank. That is, Sardis is to Pergamos what Smyrna and Philadelphia are to Ephesus.

Two great religious horns now appear on Christendom: **CATHOLICISM**, figured by, and **PROTESTANTISM**, figured by **SARDIS**. These move side by side to the end. By translation, the overcomers of **SARDIS** will escape the fiercest phase of the coming judgments. The overcomers of **THYATIRA** will have to be miraculously preserved, or suffer martyrdom during The Tribulation days.

There are no translations from **THYATIRA** (which is the 4th Rank in The Church), to the marriage of the Lamb. They comprise the feet portion of the body of Christ [Zec.14:4]. Non-overcomers of course, not being saved, will be shamefully overthrown [Rev.17-18].

PHILADELPHIA is God's oasis in the desert condition of these closing days. **EPHESIAN** saints are here; but known by another name—“*Brotherly love*.” Though she is reckoned as **SARDIAN**, that is, as Protestant, yet she is distinct from it. She is a 3-fold overcomer, prevailing over 3 conditions: ÆHalf-hearted Sardonism, • domineering Thyatirianism and Žlukewarm Laodiceanism. As love was the prevailing feature of full overcomers at the beginning, so it is also at the end.

Dear Reader, with which company are you identified? Paul said, “*I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God. I have espoused you to one Husband (Christ) that I may present a chaste virgin to Christ*” [2Co.11:2]. Do you accept that espousal? Do you wish to be one of the blameless company, one of the brotherly-love class, so as to be a part of The Bride? If not, why not?

DISPENSATIONAL SETTING

The 7 churches, by their respective religious conditions, foreshadow existing conditions during certain periods of this present age. **EPHESUS**, the powerful and promising period, extends from Pentecost to 300 A.D. **PERGAMOS**, the compromising and declining period, begins here with Constantine's subtle courtesy to the Christians and reaches to 1500 A.D. **THYATIRA** and **SARDIS** here introduce two opposite conditions. It is generally called The Reformation Period. Under Martin Luther, a revival began which has continued and increased to the present time. **PHILADELPHIA** introduces the translation period, during which time The Church is being ripened for the harvest and harvested home. Doubtless that time is now and will continue until the whole body is glorified. **LAODICEA** expresses a direct opposite condition, which stamps the present time as the lukewarm period as well as the translation period, “*Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world*” [Act.15:18].

OVERCOMINGS AND REWARDS

“To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the Tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” [Rev.2:7]

This is the first and main promise to full overcomers. When the Lord created Adam and placed him in Eden, He gave him the privilege to “*eat of the tree of life in the midst of the garden*.” But when he sinned, he forfeited that privilege [Gen.2:16, Gen.3:22]. Redemption canceled that forfeiture, and did more. It provided that the new creation shall eat, not simply of that material, symbolic tree of life, but of Christ Himself, the true Tree of Life. When on earth, Christ announced Himself to be “*the true bread from heaven*”

[Joh.6:32]. A lesser rank of overcomers have the lesser promise of feeding on Christ as “*hidden manna*” [Rev.2:17]. Is it not so today? Is not Christ only manna to most believers, rather than “*the old corn of the land?*” This can hardly be regarded as a reward for overcoming. Rather it is a promise of being sustained by the same life that we feed upon here. Smyrna-Philadelphia believers must feed on Christ as the Living Bread in order to be full overcomers. In varying degrees, all believers eat of the Tree of Life; and, since there are degrees of overcoming, there will be also grades of rewards. We will consider them separately.

1ST RANK REWARDS

SMYRNA AND PHILADELPHIA are hemispheres of one victorious whole. Hence, their rewards must be studied together; for each receives the same recompense as the other.

SMYRNA demands our first notice. Two items are promised to Smyrna victors.

- **1ST**: “*A crown of life*” for their faithfulness unto death. A crown is also offered to Philadelphian saints. Faithfulness is the one simple condition for obtaining the crown. Tribulation was continuous, imprisonment was foretold, martyrdom was possible, and death was inevitable; but, a “*crown of life*” is eternally sure.
- **2ND**: The second item is negative, “*He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.*” This is the present particular heritage of being full overcomers because they die daily; they are exposed to death continually. Death is judgment, the penalty for sin. The “*second death*” is the “*lake of fire*” [Rev.20:14]; that is, “*eternal judgment*” [Heb.6:2], even “*everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord*” [2Th.1:9]. Christ met that penalty for us by dying once to sin in our stead. He tasted death for every man [Heb.2:9]. That was the first death. Therefore the death of a believer is not a death, but a sleep. “*Our friend Lazarus sleepeth*” [Joh.11:11]. He died once in his Substitute. He cannot die again. This is the meaning of Jesus’ words in John 11:26, “*Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.*” The body (of a believer) is “*dead because of sin*” [Rom.8:10]; therefore sickness and death are no longer judgments for sin; but simply results of it. Full overcomers reckon thus with God.

On a personal note...If I do not steadfastly acknowledge that I was judged at Calvary by constantly judging the deeds of my body and the desires of my fleshly mind, and thus keep my body under; if I do not walk in the Spirit, but walk as men, my Father may chasten me by permitting me to be sick. I might even “*sin unto death*” [1Jo.5:16]. For lack of self-judgment, “*many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep*” [1Co.11:30-31]. Premature death and chastisement by sickness are hurts by the second death. If I live for my own carnal gratification, seek my own fleshly ease and advancement, I practically deny the death penalty of the Cross and throw myself across the path of Divine Chastisement. I am liable to be sick and die

prematurely, liable to injury by accident, possibly fatal injury—die in defeat—“*hurt of the second death.*” But thank God, such misfortune can never come to him who walks in the perfect will of God. No matter what befalls him, he is not hurt of the second death. If he dies, if he is martyred, he will be raised and taken up to heaven before the hour of God’s judgment.

PHILADELPHIA rewards await us. Aside from the present 7 notes of eulogy and encouragements to this company, there hangs high before them a super-excellent 4-fold reward; or it is 1 grand reward with 3 bold embellishments: A pillar and 3 sublime names upon it. This is the fullest and greatest reward. How it behooves us to look into it deeply.

The phrase “*my God*” occurs 5 times in this promise. Besides Revelation 3:21, the word **my** occurs only once more. These facts afford special strength and comfort. “*My God, saith Jesus,*” is back of all. Where shall this victor appear? In the temple of my God (study Eph.2:19-22). The whole body of believers is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; but the 1st Rank overcomers have a pronounced place in that temple: Buildd together for a habitation of God in Spirit. Such saints are destined to become “*pillars*” in that temple. Oh the marvels of Divine Grace! Pillars are solid, massive supports, usually in a conspicuous place. Their towering greatness greets our eyes upon entering a building or confronts us in its wide halls. Some saints shall share the shining honor of such an inspiring position in the final, glorious, and eternal temple of our triune God. Beloved, shall it be you and I? Whoever wins that place, will have it forever, “*And he shall go no more out*” [Rev.3:12]. By the fight of faith, we hold fast His Word, do not deny His name, and keep the Word of His patience, that no man may take our coming crown. His name be praised forever!

Then observe the embellishments emblazoned upon that pillar:

1. **“THE NAME OF MY GOD.”** Some believers become such large “partakers of the Divine Nature,” that they appear like God Himself. They become steadfast, faithful, immovable, uncompromising, and fervent in love because they are “filled with all the fullness of God.”
2. **“THE NAME OF THE CITY OF MY GOD, WHICH IS NEW JERUSALEM.”** There are 3 Jerusalem’s. One is è the earthly city where David’s throne will be. This is the oldest city known [Heb.12:22]. This “*Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all*” [Gal.4:26], that is, our mother grace. Paul informs us of è the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God, the present throne of God, whereon Jesus also is now sitting mediating for His people. But è the “*new Jerusalem*” will be composed of “*living stones*” [1Pe.2:5, 7] and will be the eternal habitation of God. What is the name of that city? Revelation 21:2, 9 answers that it is “*the Bride, the Lamb’s wife.*” Observe closely that the city itself is The Bride. That great city, descending with the glory of God, with its huge wall and stupendous foundations, is declared to be “*as a bride adorned for her husband*” [Rev.21:2]. Not all of that heavenly company constitutes The

Bride of the Lamb [Rev.21]. How then can anyone teach that the whole Church will be The Bride?

3. Finally, the 3rd glittering embellishment is **“MY NEW NAME.”** Pray tell what is that name? It cannot be **JESUS**; for that has been His well-known personal Name as a man for over 1900 years. It is His honored Name of authority and power by which alone men are saved and before whom all creation must bow. It cannot be **THE WORD OF GOD** [Rev.19:13]; for that was His Name in the beginning [Joh.1:1]. It cannot be an old name, or title, but a “new name.” There is only one answer. If the New Jerusalem is The Bride and is to be engraven on the pillar-overcomers, it follows that the name **BRIDEGROOM** will be His new name. The Bride of the Lamb will bear the imprint (the likeness) of her husband. Hers will be no ordinary training in this world. Hers is no easy, self-seeking, shrinking career. She fellowships His sufferings and is made conformable to His death. The phrase “*the Lamb’s wife*” is profoundly significant. “*His wife hath made herself ready*” [Rev.19:7]. It is not hard to see that **BRIDEGROOM** is the new name. It is mentioned in reference to Jesus only on 3 occasions: ☩ Matthew 9:15; • Matthew 25:1; and Ž John 3:29. It was such a hidden truth that Paul never calls Jesus “Bridegroom”; he leaves that to be revealed by the Spirit through other Scriptures. He implies this truth in Ephesians 5:31 and also in 2 Corinthians 11:2: “*I have espoused you to one husband that I may present a chaste virgin to Christ.*”

God be eternally praised! Some saints shall share these highest honors with the blessed Son of God. Let us see it clearer. The full-fledged victors constitute the strong, formidable members of that living temple. They become so like the Lord, through yieldedness to Him here, through eating all His gracious Word, through deepening fellowship with Him in His trials and triumphs, and through Christ dwelling and growing up in them, that their Divine/human Bride Nature, received from the Bridegroom will be transcendently conspicuous and glorious. As the **BRIDEGROOM**, He shall come to be glorified in the holy ones: “*If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together*” [Rom.8:17]; and as Jesus (Savior), He shall “*be admired in all them that believe, in that day*” [2Th.1:10]. A very short time before that day, the day of Christ’s revelation, the cry will be heard: “Behold the Bridegroom cometh, come ye forth to meet Him.” That cry is not yet being made, for Jesus distinctly declared that it shall be “*then*” and “*at midnight*”; that is, that cry will be sounded out sometime during the 7 year period of Christ’s coming, the last week of Daniel [Mat.25:1, 6]. It will be after the Bridal Company is translated; for the wise virgins are not The Bride—they will be the 144,000, the last group to get into the wedding. Oh, who will sing out and swing out in the power and love of Ephesian doctrine and be a real Philadelphian saint? Who will take Christ for all and through Him conquer all? And with Him inherit all?

2ND RANK REWARDS

"To him that overcometh, will I give of the hidden manna and will give him a white stone and in the stone a new name having been written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." [Rev.2:17]

This is the promise to **PERGAMOS** believers. All believers are overcomers in some measure, *"for whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world"* [1Jo.5:4]. The nature and measure of the reward is determined by the measure of the overcoming. Only those who overcome all things can hope to *"inherit all things"* [Rev.21:7]. In as much as some fail to overcome fully, of course their rewards will be limited. Be it remembered that manna was Israel's food in the wilderness [Deu.8:16]; but *"old corn"* was their food in Canaan [Jos.5:11-12]. As a reminder of their diet in the wilderness, a pot of manna was taken along when they went into Canaan [Exo.16:33]. A checkered Christian experience, one having only some victories marred by defeats, is typified by Israel in the wilderness. Such saints have not learned Christ as the *"old corn,"* or the *"true bread from heaven."* They do not actually know Him in resurrection life and power; else they would not resort to their own resources. They know Him only as *"manna,"* that is as an indistinct portion, a *"what is it?"* This accounts for their defeats. The real victorious Christ from heaven is hidden from them; therefore, Christ as hidden manna will be their portion hereafter. Only as we know Him and appropriate Him now will we know Him in the ages to come. However, everyone will be satisfied in his sphere.

The new name on a white stone affords similar instruction as the above. The **PSEPHOS** (stone) was used for counting and voting by the Greeks. When cast into an urn, it expressed either approval or disapproval, commendation or condemnation of the one whose name it bore. Sometimes condemnation was indicated by a hole in the stone. **White** speaks of purity or freedom from sin and agrees with the *"white robes"* of Revelation 7. *"A new name having been written"* speaks of the new creation. As a reward for having overcome in this order, the overcomer shall receive from the Judge the Unmarred assurance of being in the new creation. The Lord casts the ballot of approval into the urn of His own reckoning concerning His child. Wondrous grace! The reward of the **SARDIAN** overcomers is joined with the above in as much as they are in the same rank with the **PERGAMITES**. The Lord declares, *"They shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy...He that overcometh the same shall be clothed with white raiment"* [Rev.3:4-5].

Note the correspondence here with the *"white stone"* above. The only difference between the Pergamite and Sardinian overcomers is this—the Pergamite falls asleep in Jesus and the Sardinian lives until He comes. Hence, each receives the same reward as the other. Further, *"and in no wise will I blot out his name out of the book of life: but I will confess his name before my Father and before His angels"* [Rev.3:5]. This by no means implies that if people are once saved, but do not overcome, they will be lost. Legalism blots out the names of those who do not overcome and pronounces them heretics and lost forever. But Christ, the Judge who looks upon the heart, declares in

strongest terms that He “*will in no wise blot out their names.*” Nay! He votes them in by the “*stone*” of His own reckoning. In the same emphatic term, He declares that in the coming eternal temple pillar-saints “*shall in no wise go out any more*” [Rev.3:12]. Persecutors cast our names out from the world’s honor rolls and from religious records; but God assures us that He will never blot our names out, for we have eternal life.

AN INTERESTING CONTRAST

The reward of the 1st Rank overcomers is far greater than that of the 2nd:

- The 1st **BECOMES SOMETHING**; but the 2nd only **RECEIVES SOMETHING**. The first is made a pillar; the second receives a stone.
- The 1st receives **3 GREAT NAMES WRITTEN UPON HIMSELF**; the 2nd receives only **HIS OWN NAME WRITTEN ON A STONE**.

Oh, let us learn Christ as our all-sufficient present life; feed on Him continually; and walk, work and war in His strength that we may not miss the full victor’s reward. Let us not be content with the hope of receiving Pergamite and Sardian rewards only.

Remember, that whether we wake or sleep in Jesus, our remuneration is determined by faith’s estimate and appropriation of Christ. Those who fall asleep in Pergamos will be raised to meet those who shall be translated from Sardis.

3rd RANK REWARDS

“To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit in my throne even as I also overcome and am sat down with my Father in His throne.” [Rev.3:21]

It is self-evident that the full victors overcome the Laodicean condition (lukewarmness) to the uttermost, of course. But here is a special reward to a special crowd. This letter stands at the last because it expresses the last sad state of Protestantism. **LUKEWARMNESS** is one of the most subtle and formidable obstacles to the believer. There is a company who does not appear with the full overcomers, and yet do overcome this foe. Lukewarmness lies like a crouching thief at the very root of a victorious life. Lukewarmness cries,

“Certainly it is right and noble to be a Christian, but it is not necessary to be extreme.”

“Be quiet; be sober; be easy; have a good time; do not make a fool of yourself; be respectable; be sensible; oh yes, be an earnest worker; give freely; but do not be narrow.”

“There is good in all churches, in every religion.”

Such is the so-called kind and wise counsel of Laodiceanism. It does not want real life and power. It ignores the Christ of crucifixion and the Christ

of miracles and power. It ignores the simplicity of Christ and the supremacy which belongs to Him, and exalts means, methods, and carnal men. It loves form, foam, fuss, flowers, fables, flattery, and feasibility. Oh, how the Laodicean shudders and shrieks before the living, piercing truth that is pointed, practical, and powerful. How it winces before the reality of real conviction, real salvation, real joy in the Holy Spirit, real Divine Dynamite, real ecstatic glory; in short, real *"righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit"* [Rom.14:17].

Hence, the overcomer is like God Himself. He spues this condition out of his mouth. He dare not yield to it; he cannot endure it. He meets it everywhere, but greets it never. He stands alone, a misunderstood, reviled fanatic, a tower of living faith in the real living God and in the lovely but rejected Christ of the Bible. Yes, the overcomer stands alone here, but he shall be with Christ forever. He has no certain dwelling place here, but he shall sit yonder. Let us notice the exact character of his "sitting." The Lord Jesus said, *"All authority is given unto me in heaven and on earth"* [Mat.23:18]; but he is not yet using it because the Lord's Day has not yet begun. Christ is not sitting as a King on His Father's throne but as an Intercessor. He is perpetuating His High-Priestly career. He is serving His people as subordinate to the Father, not coordinate with Him. These overcomers of Laodicea will reign with Christ as **SUBORDINATE** to Him. The Bride will reign **CONJOINTLY** with Christ, even as it is written of the first pair, *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, in our likeness and let THEM (Adam and Eve together) have dominion"* [Gen.1:26]. But that man and woman were the figure of who was to come, even the 2nd Adam—Christ and the 2nd Eve—Christ's Bride. For it is written of Christ's Bride: *"If we suffer (or endure) with Him, we shall also reign together with Him"* [2Ti.2:12]. Suffering is the price of reigning.

By the advent of the Holy Spirit, the great revival in Jerusalem was a revival of Kingdom hopes. The 12 apostles and the 7 deacons of Acts were full overcomers for that time. They rose above the lukewarmness of Israel. They won the laurels among the lukewarm or so-called *"just people"* at that time. They became the connecting link between the Kingdom and The Church. Likewise, the 144,000, of whom those early workers were the *"first fruit,"* will become the connecting link between The Church and The Kingdom in the beginning of the next age. They will be the full overcomers for that time. The 144,000 are the 5 wise virgins [Mat.25], or the manly son of Revelation 12.

Let the reader consider Paul's *"great conflict"* or care for the Laodiceans [Col.2:1]. Those who overcome the lukewarm condition at that time will be a special company. The present decline among believers points to that day. The slumber of Matthew 25:5-6 is already stealing over us. Some are yielding to it. When these shall hear the final call to be zealous and repent of their sluggishness (because the Lord loves them and longs to *"sup with them"*), and when they hear the cry, "Behold the Bridegroom and His Bride are coming, come ye forth to meet them," then they will arise and trim their lamps and hasten to the marriage supper of the Lamb. The

Church, save the feet portion—“*His feet*” [Zec.14:4], will pass to glory in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Ranks.

4th RANK REWARDS

“He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.” [Rev.2:26-27]

The description of the Judge—“*His eyes like unto a flame of fire and His feet like fine brass*”—together with the phrase “*unto the end*” shows at once that Thyatira passes far into The Tribulation period. Some of her people pass entirely through that period. The last hours of that time will be “*the great day of His wrath*” [Rev.6:17]. The phrase “*my works*” is a great contrast with “*the word of my patience*” in the Philadelphia church. If saints observe the latter, they will not need to experience the former. They will be kept out of the dark hour of trial through which the other must inevitably pass. The rewards of 4th Rank overcomers are that they stand on Mount Olivet [Zec.14:4]. There are 3 items in this reward:

1. Our Lord will conquer the nations [Psa.2:9]; and rule them through the 4th Rank overcomers (compare Rev.19:15). Jesus will reign from heaven; His Bride reigning conjointly with Him. The 144,000 (the man child) will reign **SUBORDINATELY** to Him; and the overcomers from the Thyatira condition will reign **SUBORDINATELY** to the 144,000. God only knows who will be the last ones counted in The Church.
2. “*And I will give him the Morning Star*” [Rev.2:28]. Comparing this with Numbers 24:17, 2 Peter 1:19, and Revelation 22:16, we learn that this promise is to Israel alone. The morning star (day star) is the harbinger of the day. In the dark closing end of the Great Tribulation period, Jesus will appear to the saints as “the Morning Star,” an assurance of the millennial day just ahead, when He will come to Israel as “*the Sun of righteousness with healing in His wings*” [Mal.4:2].
3. The Last to Ascend. However, during the reign of Antichrist, some believers will be slain because of their testimony to the truth (see Rev.6:9-11, 15:2-3, 20:4). These will stand in triumph upon the sea of glass. The 2 witnesses of Revelation 11 will probably be among this company. The last ones slain [Rev.13:15 and 14:13] will possibly be caught up to heaven without being buried even like the 2 witnesses. These are believing Jews, “*the remnant of her seed*” (that is, of the woman in the wilderness [Rev.12:17]; see Rev.15). They also shall live and reign with Christ.

PARABLES AND CHURCHES

There is a very interesting correspondence between the 7 parables of Matthew 13 and the 7 churches named in Revelation 2 and 3. He who spoke the former dictated the writing of the latter.

1. **THE 4 SORTS OF SOIL**: The Word of God is the seed. It falls into 4 kinds of hearts and reaches the 4 corners of the earth. The letter to the church in **EPHESUS** answers to this parable; for in it were grades of good ground hearers, and those who left their first love because they became offended by persecutions and choked by cares of life and the deceitfulness of carnal riches.
2. **THE GOOD SEED AND THE TARES**: In this parable the children of the kingdom are the good seed and the children of Satan are the tares. The devil is building a church to his glory. The church in **SMYRNA** were all good seed, faithful children of the living and true God. But a synagogue of Satan also was in that city, where the tares gathered for mock worship.
3. **THE MUSTARD SEED**: This parable figures the small beginning of Christendom, its rapid growth, and its spectacular and overgrown culmination. Saved people are scattered throughout this condition and many of them are also defiled by it. The church in **PERGAMOS** answers graphically to this parable. Not only the synagogue of Satan but "*Satan's seat*" is in this church [Rev.2:13]. The devil has many progressive headquarters in the midst of Christendom, which ignorant people admire. Consider Christian Science, Unity, Russellism, and Modernism.
4. **LEAVEN HIDDEN IN MEAL**: In the 3 preceding parables, we read of seed, good and bad. The pure seed is the Word of God. That is expressed in this parable as "*three measures of meal*," or the doctrine of God. The essential and basic facts of this doctrine are the 3 Persons of the Deity and their respective offices. Leaven always figures evil doctrine and practice. The primary spoonful of leaven was legality, the religion of human effort. The phrase "*a woman*" means a religious body of people. The Catholic Church is responsible for this condition. While she acknowledges that the atonement which Jesus wrought was necessary, yet she says it was not enough. All other religions spring from this devilish root, hence the 67 varieties of carnal and Christ-dishonoring fruit. The church of **THYATIRA** answers to this parable. The whole of Christendom is leavened today with evil doctrine, which will culminate in Laodiceanism.
5. **THE TREASURE HID IN THE FIELD**: This refers to The Church, His Body, which Jesus Christ purchased with His own blood [Mat.13:44]. This is part of the mystery hid in God [Eph.3:1-10]. The church in **SARDIS** answers to this parable, because it foreshadowed the

awakening from the Dark Ages into Protestantism. During this age, Jesus has been calling out a people to His own name. These constitute the body of Christ.

6. **THE ONE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE:** This refers to The Bride of Christ. The “*goodly pearls*” sought by the merchantman constitutes the entire Church; but, the Bridal Company is mentioned as “*one pearl*.” These are undivided in faith and love and hope. They believe God **unswervingly**, love Christ **supremely**, and hope for His coming **steadfastly**. The church of the **PHILADELPHIANS** answers to this parable. They possess all the characteristics of a pearl: Its beauty, smoothness, solidity, firmness, and costliness. The Bride is but ONE, a DOVE, the FAIR ONE, my UNDEFILED, the CHOICE ONE, BEAUTIFUL [SSg.2:10, 13-14; 5:2; 6:4; 6:9; 7:1].
7. **THE NET CAST INTO THE SEA:** This parable takes us through the millennium to the consummation of God’s great scheme with mankind. The phrase “*the end of the world*” [Mat.13:49] means “*the consummation of the age*” (compare Mat.13:39 to Mat.13:43). The church in **LAODICEA** answers only to the beginning of the next age on which it will entail some evil effects. When Christ will be crowned, He must “*put down all rule and authority and power*” [1Co.15:24]. At the end, the angels will gather out of the kingdom “*things that offend and them that do iniquity* (wickedly)” [Mat.13:41]; for some will pretend to yield to Him [Psa.66:3, 81:15]. The culmination of this will be manifested in the nations of Gog and Magog who gather around the camp of the saints and Jerusalem, and fire will come down and devour them.

Spoken At the Well

Blessed words that with us dwell,
 Sweetly spoken at the well,
 By our Savior, weary, resting near the way.
 Precious words in sweet refrain,
 At this well we will remain,
 Drinking from the fount of love to
 Endless day.
 Gushing streams that never cease,
 Bringing ecstasy and peace
 In our journey thru this wilderness of woe;
 Streams refreshing ev’ry day,
 Let us drink and bear away
 Water for the thirsty pilgrims
 Here below.
 More abundant is the flow
 As we onward, upward go,
 Till in glory with our Fountain-Head we stand.
 There we’ll drink forevermore
 On that sinless, painless shore
 ‘Merced in wonder, love and praise in
 Vict’ry land.

THINGS YET FUTURE [REV.4-22]

“After these things, I looked and behold a door opened in the heaven. And the first voice which I heard as of a trumpet, was talking with me saying, Come up hither and I will show thee things which must take place after these things. And immediately I became in spirit; and behold a throne was placed (or being placed) in the heaven, and upon the throne One Sitting.” [Rev.4:1-2 Greek] (compare with Isa.14:13)

The 3rd Great Division of Revelation begins with this chapter. The 2nd Vision Viewpoint is marked by John's entrance into the opened heaven. On that occasion, he heard the same mighty voice which had spoken in the 1st grand division of this interesting series. Instead of **TURNING TO SEE** the speaker, he was summoned **UP TO HEAVEN**. Here we are introduced into the throne room of our Lord Jesus Christ. He earned this honored place by His sufferings and death for humanity. In Chapter 4, He is seen as the Lamb of God and Redeemer (compare Dan.7:9, *“I beheld till the thrones were cast down (or set up) and the Ancient of days did sit”*). Daniel and John saw the placing of the thrones in heaven. We read of principalities, powers and wicked spirits in the heavenlies in Ephesians 6. In Ephesians 2, we are taught that God raised up His Son from the grave and provisionally raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the same heavenlies. Satan's throne is now in the lower regions of the heavens. He is *“the prince of the power of the air”* and *“the god of this world”*; therefore, the conflict of spiritual saints is not *“with flesh and blood,”* but with those wicked forces in the heavenlies. By faith we now dwell where we shall someday actually dwell, clothed with glorified bodies.

DESCRIPTION OF THE KING

“And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine (sardius) stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.” [Rev.4:3]

The 9-fold picture of Jesus Christ in Revelation 1 was He as the Judge of Christendom. Here, we have a picture of Him as the coming universal Ruler. Bear in mind, that though it reads as if those things had already happened, their **fulfillment is yet future**. Everything from Revelation 4 through 22 was future to the Apostle John's view, and to us, because Revelation 2 and 3 carry us through to the end of this Church Age.

The **jasper** of Scripture is like our diamond, clear as crystal (compare Rev.21:11). **Jasper** means, *“He will be made bare, or prominent.”*

The **sardius** was the carnelian in various shades of red; also the color of raw flesh. **Sardius** means *“ruddiness,”* which suggests the humanity of Christ. Having redeemed mankind by His death and resurrection, God will display Him in great glory before the vast heavens by and by.

A rainbow **SPANNED THE HEAVEN** after the flood, the token to Noah that the earth would not again be destroyed by water. But John saw a rainbow **AROUND THE THRONE** before the threatened judgments; the token of God's mercy in the midst of The Tribulation days.

The **emerald**, meaning "green gem," foretells of life out of death, "a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." Look for a full description of these and other gems at the end of this study book.

"And around the throne were twenty and four thrones (not seats); and upon the thrones, I saw twenty and four elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold."
[Rev.4:4 Greek]

Some full-grown saints will reign conjointly with Jesus Christ. Crowns of gold speak of the highest order of crowns. The figure 24 was the number of the priestly courses under the old covenant. Twelve is the number of Divine Government, and twice 12 is the strengthened authority that believers will have when crowned and reigning with Christ.

"And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." [Rev.4:5]

This speaks of Jehovah's majesty, might, holiness and right, and His justice in punishing the wicked, which He is about to do. As a drenching rain is preceded by dreadful thunder and dazzling lightning, so the judgments about to be poured out upon a Christ-rejecting world are portrayed, in symbol, from heaven (see 1Sa.12:17-18).

The "*seven Spirits*" express the 7-fold fullness of the Holy Spirit in whatever capacity He may act.

The "*lamps of fire burning*" suggest the indignation of the Holy Ghost against the wicked and His clear illumination of men, leaving every one without excuse. The **seven horns of the Lamb** indicate His sufficiency of power, and the **seven eyes** His perfection of penetration. The 2 symbols being the "*seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth*" [Rev.5:6] indicate that the Holy Spirit is the executive Agent of the Godhead in accomplishing His purposes on the earth. The Holy Spirit executes the will of the Father and of the Son, whether dispensing mercy or judgment. This proves that the Holy Spirit is not "*what withholdeth or letteth*" [2Th.2:6]. He will continue to operate on earth during the 7 years opening the next age, disseminating blessing on all who will believe, but wreaking vengeance on those that will not repent and believe.

"And before the throne was a sea of glass like unto crystal; and in the midst of the throne and round about the throne were four beasts, full of eyes before and behind." [Rev.4:6 Greek]

In 1 Kings 7:23 we read of "*a molten sea*" before Solomon's temple, which corresponded with the laver made by Moses. Spiritually, it is called "*The*

laver of regeneration" [Tiu.3:5]. The "sea of glass" expresses the cleansing absolutely necessary to come into God's presence. The elders will have obtained that cleansing.

THE LIVING CREATURES (ONES)

The "living creatures" (not beasts) figure a company of full overcomers who possess the characteristics here named. In Ezekiel 1, they are seen on earth; here they are seen in heaven. They occupy the closest and most intimate place with Christ and will always have that place. John saw them in the throne and round about it. They have full vision of Divine Things, having "eyes before, behind, and within." They understand Divine History and Prophecy, the Old Testament and the New Testament, and discern deep Christian experiences. They reach the acme of spiritual wisdom and understanding. "He that is spiritual discerneth all things, but is discerned of no man" [1Co.2:15].

"The first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle." [Rev.4:7 RSV]

A 4-fold portrait is given of them. The **lion** denotes strength and courage. "The righteous are as bold as a lion" [Pro.28:1]. The **ox (calf)** speaks of sacrifice, suffering, and service. "The ox...treadeth out the corn" [Deu.25:4]. The **face of a man** proves that the living creatures are human beings and not disembodied seraphs, unfallen angels, or some mysterious, super-sublime creatures connected with the government of God. The **flying eagle** denotes their heavenly, spiritual nature and activities. They are partakers of Christ. He is their life [Gal.2:20]. "The way of an eagle in the air is wonderful" [Pro.3:19]. The translation of the saints also will be wonderful.

The Lord says, "I am the Living One, He that liveth" [Rev.1:18]. And here are 4 living creatures. Our Lord possessed the above 4 traits of character which are pictured in the 4 Gospel records:

1. He is the **Lion of the tribe of Judah** as described by Matthew.
2. He is seen as the **Ox of sacrifice and service** in Mark.
3. Luke portrays him as the **Son of Man**.
4. John sets Him forth as **the Eagle**, the heavenly, Divine One.

DEPARTMENT OF THE LIVING CREATURES (ONES) IN HEAVEN

"And the four living creatures, each of them have respectively six wings, round about and within full of eyes; and they have no cessation day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God the Almighty, who was and who is and who cometh." [Rev.4:8 Greek]

Six wings suggest the complete Divine Equipment to bear God's message, whether of mercy or of judgment. That number is the creature

instrument (number 2) multiplied by the Divine Number of Deity (number 3). Everyone has 6 wings, making 24 in all, which correspond with the number of elders that minister with them. These saints execute God's will perfectly on earth, walking in all the light He gives them; for they have full understanding of His things, being "*full of eyes before and behind...and within.*" They will continue their spiritual activities in heaven, the first and chief one being worship. On earth, they laud and adore the God of creation and redemption (compare Joh.4:23).

Overcomers render service gladly; but worship must come first and prepare for service. Few saints learn this great secret. The living creatures exclaim, "*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God the Almighty,*" falling down with the elders before Him.

In Revelation 4, they worship the Lord as the Creator.

In Revelation 5 they worship Him as the Redeemer. So we should do now.

Those living creatures and elders are not 2 groups of believers, but 2 phases of 1 group. The 3 closing verses of this chapter indicate that the living creatures lead in worship and the elders join with them. Later, we shall see their united and separate performances in glory.

THE LAMB FOUND WORTHY [REV.5]

"And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals." [Rev.5:1]

John is still in heaven in his spirit. The 3 Persona of Deity are in view here. This speaks especially of redemption. The sealed book was a scroll. "*The things which must be hereafter*" [Rev.4:1] are the contents of this sealed book, which was presently cast upon the vision screen. Revelation 6 will open the seals, disclosing its contents.

"And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon." [Rev.5:2-3]

The "*strong angel*" is doubtless one of the elders. We should not expect John actually to have those experiences in heaven. He had them in vision only; but the sterling facts will occur. The Lamb of redemption will actually open the seals. Jesus Christ purchased the authority to reign as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David by the fact that He was "*the Lamb slain*" [Rev.5:5-6]. Hence, Judah's Lion will have the power and David's Lord will have the right to bring to pass the events herein recorded. Israel nationally rejected "*the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world*" [Joh.1:29], at His first advent, even as Joseph's brothers rejected him at first. But at the beginning of the next age, Judah's Lion will be crowned on David's throne by having been the Lamb slain. He wore a crown of thorns once; but He is destined to wear a crown of royalty and glory forever. The contrast is

the greater because the Greek word for **lamb** is not AMNON as in John 1:29, but ARNION meaning “a little lamb or lambkin.” The smallest, weakest creature, the despised and rejected of men, the helpless, lonely, bruised and slain One shall be exalted to sit in heaven King of the ages (saints) [Rev.15:3]. He shall judge the world and save Israel.

“And when He had taken the book, the four living beasts (creatures) and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials (bowls) full of odors (incense), which are the prayers of saints.” [Rev.5:8]

The company figured by these will be the first perfected ripened fruits of redemption of this age. They are seen first in heaven. They will share jointly with the Lamb in fulfilling God’s will in the opening acts of the Millennial Age; therefore, they must be in heaven to witness the declaration of the worthiness of Jesus Christ to take in hand the government of the heavens and the earth.

“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.” [Rev.5:9-10]

As the Apostle John was called to heaven in spirit to see those events mirrored, so the full overcomers will be summoned thither by the same voice of command to participate actually in that sublime drama. The relation of the Deity and the humanity of Jesus and the union of the living creatures and the elders with Him, as expressed in Revelation 4 and 5, are exceedingly intricate and interesting. As worshippers, the overcomers are pictured as **LIVING CREATURES** in the midst of the throne. As rulers, they are termed **ELDERS** sitting on thrones around the great throne.

Who are the living creatures and elders? Our foregoing remarks anticipated the answer. They fall down together before the throne. Each one has a harp (a symbol of praise) and each one has a golden bowl (a symbol of petition). Incense is in every bowl—prayer was their chief ministry on earth. Praise will be their sublime activity in heaven. They sing in unison “a new song.” All are subjects of redemption; for they exclaim, “Thou hast redeemed **US** ... and hast made **US** kings and priests; and we shall reign on (over) **the earth**.” At least 8 things are said of all of them, and these 8 facts prove them to be redeemed and glorified human beings. Every other mention of them in other chapters confirms these proofs.

REPRESENTATIVE NUMBERS Be it not supposed that there will be only 4 living creatures and 24 elders in heaven; neither will there be such a distinction as living creatures and elders. Rather they are representative numbers, and together they figure **1 IMPORTANT GROUP** in the heavenly program.

- The living creatures are 4 because they possess the 4 pronounced traits of their Head, Christ, to whom they are so vitally joined; also, they are from the 4 points of the compass. “He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit” [1Co.6:17].

- As elders, there are 24; because they figure the full, official authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, as King of kings and Lord of lords, over the universe for 1,000 years.
- Their actual number is indicated by one statement in Ezekiel 1:24: *"I heard the noise of their wings like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the almighty, as the voice of speech, as the noise of a host."* They will be a host indeed, a glorious host.
- They sing of themselves, *"Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation."* Count the nations and languages, and you will think of *"the TEN THOUSANDS of His holy ones"* in Judges 1:14. The Bride, the Lamb's wife, the central figure of the Holy City [Rev.21:2, 9], suggests the immense size of that company. The works of the daughters convey the same thought, *"What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the COMPANY OF TWO ARMIES"* [SSg.6:13].

As Adam's dominion over the beasts did not begin until his wife was with him; so Jesus Christ must have His Bride elect with Him when His dominion begins. We say Bride elect, for the wedding will take place about 6 years later [Rev.19].

The 4 living creatures and 24 elders are not 2 distinct companies. They are **1 UNITED GROUP**; but in the vision they appear to minister as 2 groups. As priests, they all worship God. As kings, they all reign with Jesus. As priests, all of them are in the throne and round about the throne. As kings, all wear crowns of gold and reign.

A critical Bible teacher may quote Revelation 5:9-10 in the Revised Version, and object to our interpretation. That reads as if those living creatures and elders sang about other people instead of themselves; that Christ redeemed others and made them kings and priests and they should reign not the singers. We have no quarrel with the Revised Version, for it includes the singers as well as those being sung about. It is a very common thing for folk to speak of Christians (believers) in a general way as of absent parties; yet all the while considering themselves included. Were not those singers redeemed? Will not all the saved ones reign with Christ in some measure, in some capacity? My little toes share in the dominion exercised by my head.

Furthermore, it is objected that **us** is not in the Greek. Let the reader observe there are many italicized words in the Bible. Italicized words are not in the original; hence, translators supply them. For example:

IT in Revelation 1:1 and 11, **IS** in Revelation 1:3 (twice),
BE in Revelation 1:6, and
ONE in Revelation 1:13 are very important words.

The wording of Revelation 5:10 is very similar to Revelation 1:6. Men unwisely insert words often, for example, the definite article **THE** is not in the Greek in Revelation 1:10—“*in**THE** Spirit.*” It should read “*In spirit.*”

The worship of God is the most supreme activity of saints on earth, and it will be so throughout eternity. As pertaining to the Lamb of God Himself, the full overcomers shout, “*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God the Almighty*” [Rev.4:8]; however, regarding His relation to Israel and the earth, they exclaim, “*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts; His glory is the fullness of the whole earth*” [Isa.6:3]. Jesus said, “*The Father seeketh men to worship Him*” [Joh.4:23]. The word **worship** occurs 10 times in that narrative of John 4. That company of priests, kings, worshippers, and rulers shall have the most responsible place with Jesus Christ in judging the world and in establishing peace on earth. They are now in training for that honored service by learning to worship God and by reigning in life through the “*abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness*” [Rom.5:17]. They judge the world now, even as Noah condemned the world by building the ark. By faith, their feet are on the necks of their enemies (see 1Co.6:1, 3). The particular ministry of the full overcomers during the first 7 years of the millennium is expressed in Revelation 6:1-7, 8:2; 11:16-18; 15:7, and 17:1. Study these citations and see.

“And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand (100 million), and thousands of thousands (innumerable); Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.” [Rev.5:11-14]

The 4 closing verses of Revelation 5 are freighted with sublime majesty.

- Before the seals may be opened and the judgments begin, all creation must acknowledge the holiness and faithfulness of God and the Lamb, in respect to creation and redemption.
- Gentile Times will end when Christ takes the throne, and Jewish Times will begin. From the commencement of the week of 7 years, Gentile rulers will be usurpers. Their refusal to yield to the dictatorship of God’s Son and the Jews’ refusal of His Messiahship will occasion The Tribulation days. Jesus must fight for possession of His right to reign. If the world rulers were not usurpers then, how could the Lord judge the world and nations justly?
- With the beginning of Christ’s reign, Isaiah 45:20-25 and Philippians 2:9-11 will be fulfilled. Hence, the Jews and Gentiles and the professed church will all be out of Divine Order. At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow. The phrase “*We shall reign **ON the earth***” [Rev.5:10] is explained by Luke 1:32-33: “*And He (Jesus) shall*

reign **OVER** the house of Jacob.” The preposition EPI translated ON, means “upon and over.” We shall reign with Christ in heaven, and from heaven reign with Him **OVER** the earth. The inhabitants of the earth will be subject to Christ and to the saints as one with Him.

THE SEALS OPENED [REV.6]

“And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard one of the living creatures saying as it were the noise of thunder, Come.” [Rev.6:1 Greek]

This chapter is a sort of index to the remainder of the book. Its amazing language is symbolic. Four prevailing conditions are mentioned. The words, “and see” are not in the best manuscripts. The 4 riders are not bidden to come and see, but to come and perform their parts in the drama.

The 1st Seal: The Rider on the **white horse** betokens peace and prosperity. We look for a national proclamation of “*peace and safety*” [1Th.5:3] including a covenant with the Jews for 7 years. The conqueror has a bow, but no arrows, indicating conquest without blood. He will be diplomatic and rule by moral persuasion. He will hold a promise bow rather than a battle bow. Later, a crown will be given to him, indicating authority. That period will likely embrace the 7-horned League of Nations [Rev.13]. That time is near at hand.

The 2nd Seal: The **Red Horse** speaks of war. His rider will have a sword and authority to kill his fellows. He will interfere with the peace league. That time will be the fulfillment of 1 Thessalonians 5:3. “*For when they (the nations) shall say, peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.*” One or more of the nations that sign the peace league will rise up and break it. That will lead on to the final contest, the battle of Armageddon. The “*seven kings*” [Rev.17:10] will evidently be the heads of the peace league. One of them probably will be “*the beast that thou sawest and is not*” [Rev.17:8], and the Antichrist. He will be 1 of the 6 that go down at the time of the red horse period [Rev.6:10]. He will come up from the pit, continue for a short space, “*forty-two months*” [Rev.13:5], and land in the lake of fire with the false prophet, the 2nd beast [Rev.19:20].

The 3rd and 4th Seals: The **Black** and **Pale horses** pre-figure the inevitable results of war: Hunger, famine, poverty, death, and destruction and paralysis of every industry in the world. The present equipments for warfare are so complete and proficient that the nations will wipe one another off the map if God does not intervene. Jesus Christ foretold that “*except those days should be shortened there should not flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened*” [Mat.24:22].

“And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those that were slain on account of the word of God and on account of the testimony which they held.” [Rev.6:9]

The 5th Seal: These are not martyrs of the Dark Ages. Their fellow servants and brethren will not worship “*the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands*” [Rev.20:4]. They will be slain during the earlier part of the reign of Antichrist. They are no part of the great multitude of Revelation 7 who will be in heaven before these souls are slain. Doubtless, the scope of this seal includes those in Revelation 15:2-3 and 20:4. The phrase “*under the altar*” is figurative of possessing a lesser place than in The Church (the body of Christ). The original title, translated **LORD**, is “**DESPOT**”. They will exclaim, “O Despot, the holy and the true” [Rev.6:10]. The same term occurs in Luke 2:29, Acts 4:24, 2 Peter 2:1, and Jude 1:4. Its use in every case expresses deep feeling, and usually in exclamation, even as here. Like the imprecatory Psalms, they will cry for retribution (for example see Psa.6:10). The dominion of Jesus Christ will be with the despotism of love, righteousness, and peace.

The conscious existence of souls in heaven ought to prevent the disease of so-called “**SOUL-SLEEPING**.” Those souls will not be in the grave but in heaven. If they should be asleep in the tomb, how could they cry with a loud voice or be comforted with white robes and told to “*rest yet a little while?*” Paul never taught that foolish theory. He had “*a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better*” than staying on earth [Phi.1:23-24; compare also 2Co.5:6-9].

The Events Under the Seals: These events are expressed by symbols. Though the seals are opened one after the other yet their contents do not actually occur in uniform succession.

- The first 4 cover the entire Tribulation period.
- The 5th doubtless begins under the 2nd.
- The 6th occurs at the end of the 4th. Revelation 6:12-17 seems to agree with Matthew 24:20. “*Immediately after The Tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened,*” etc.
- The 7th records the terrible happenings of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th somewhat in detail (note Rev.8-9).

The final rejection of Jesus Christ by the world will be in the same order as was His former rejection by the Jews.

- Matthew records His rejection as the promised King; therefore the first living one (figure of the lion-like overcomers), summons the first horse and his rider. The saints will have kingly authority with the King of kings.
- Mark records His rejection as the sacrificial One, the sin offering. He made peace “*by the blood of His cross*” [Col.1:20]. How fitting then that the ox-like overcomer should call forth the red horse, whose steedsman will “*take peace from the earth.*” These facts are indeed marvelous.

- Luke declares Jesus to be the peace offering. “...*On earth peace, good will to men,*” the angels declared [Luk.2:14]. “*He came and preached peace*” [Eph.2:17]; but the Jews refused to hear Him. Plenty follows peace; but famine follows war. A great dearth came in all the land after Jesus was crucified. It will come again in unspeakable measure. The third living creature, having “the face of a man,” will call forth the black horse. The “**PAROUSIA**,” or presence of Christ from heaven will result in devastation and death because He will be due to reign, and the world will refuse His dominion.
- Finally, John wrote of Jesus as the heavenly One, the Son of God, who was crucified. The hatred of the Jews culminated in killing Him. Likewise the pale horse expresses the culmination of man’s hatred of Christ. The eagle-like overcomer fittingly calls out the pale horse. Because the “Prince of life” will be blasphemed, He will send His quartette of wrath—“to kill with sword and with hunger and with death and with the beasts of the earth” (the rulers, national and religious, are those beasts [Rev.13]).

PARENTHETICAL PORTRAITS [REV.7]

In Revelation 6, the Apostle John beheld the sad events of the opening of the Millennial Age as they will take place. However, it was impossible to record them precisely so, because sometimes 2 or more happenings occurred at the same moment; therefore, there are overlappings. A going back several times is necessary. Also, the same facts are sometimes expressed in different ways or by different figures. Some form a parenthesis.

PARENTHESIS 1 [REV.7:1-8]

Here we have the sealing of 144,000.

“And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.” [Rev.7:1]

This portion will be fulfilled before the middle of the 7 eventful years. John does not say, “*After these things*” the events of Revelation 7 happened; but instead “*After these things, I saw.*” After he saw the contents of Revelation 6, he beheld other things. Revelation 6 outlines what he saw in detail later.

Who are the 4 angels? They are God’s people, who hold with Him by faith that His perfect will be done. They are termed that which “*withholdeth, or hindereth*” [2Th.2:6-7].

What are the 4 winds?” They are wicked spirits “*in high places* (the heavenlies)” [Eph.6:12]. Two of them are called “*the prince of Persia*” and “*the prince of Grecia*” [Dan.10:13, 20]. Satan is named “*the prince of this world*” and “*the prince of the power of the air*” [Joh.12:31 and 14:30; see also Eph.2:2]. “*The four winds of heaven strove upon the great sea*” [Dan.7:2-3]. That is, evil spirits did the behest

of the devil in moving the nations to overthrow their neighbors. The national map of the world has a corresponding map in the heaven (compare Rev.12:3 with Rev.13:1 and Eph.6:12). Jesus did not deny it when Satan claimed to have power over the nations [Mat.4:8-9]. Doubtless the 4 winds of Revelation 7:1 dominated the 4 Gentile world powers of Dan.7 and will dominate the revived Roman Empire.

After the closing days of this (Gentile) age, the man of sin (lawless one), the Antichrist, will be revealed and reign for 42 months [Rev.13]. Under his cruel despotism, unspeakable damage will be done to the earth (the Jews), to the sea (the Gentiles), and to the trees (the earth-dwelling saints) (compare Rev.12:17 with Psa.104:16 and Isa.53:12). Evidently Satan would have had this man in power long ago if God had not restrained him in answer to the cries of the saints. Perhaps he aimed to do it at the time of the World War¹. But the saints held back the world rulers of darkness (evil spirits). After the 144, 000 of the “*servants of God*” will be sealed and caught away to heaven [Rev.14], the Antichrist will be enthroned on earth. Note that the sealed ones are “*of all the tribes of the children of Israel*” [Rev.7:4]. They will be “*sealed with the Holy Spirit*” (compare Eph.1:18 and Eph.4:30 with Joh.6:27); that is, they will be filled (anointed) with the Spirit.

Evidently, the sealing began with the anointing of the 12 apostles [Act.2], the earnest of those to be sealed in the beginning of the next age; for the first 7 years of this present dispensation were an earnest of the millennium. They were the last 7 years of Daniel’s 70 decreed (determined) weeks of blessing upon Israel [Dan.9:24].

Who are “*the wise virgins*” of Matthew 25 but the 144,000 [Rev.14:4]. Those sealed at the beginning “*went forth to meet the Bridegroom; but He tarried*” for these nearly 2,000 years, or 2 prophetic days [2Pe.3:8]. They will be present at the marriage of the Lamb as friends of The Bride [Psa.45:14] and of the Bridegroom [Rev.14:4]. Perhaps the end time portion of this company is being sealed before our eyes today, even as Ephesian saints are being “*sealed unto the day of redemption*” [Eph.4:30]. The 144,000 are by no means The Bridal Company, even as the wise virgins at the oriental wedding were not the bride. That scene about the 144,000 in John’s vision was on earth. We will see the same group again, but next time in heaven [Rev.14]. The remainder of Revelation 7 records a scene in heaven.

PARENTHESIS 2 [REV.7:9-17]

After this (these things) I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.” [Rev.7:9-10]

¹ “From the time of its occurrence until the approach of World War II in 1939, it was called simply the World War or the Great War, and thereafter the First World War or World War I. In America it was initially called the European War.” [WIKIPEDIA]

This vast crowd is erroneously called **THE TRIBULATION SAINTS**, because some folk suppose that they will be saved during The Tribulation period. We must distinguish between the unspeakable "*Great Tribulation*" of Matthew 24:21 and the "*Great Tribulation*" of Revelation 7:14. The latter is termed "*the hour of temptation (trial) which shall come upon all the world*" [Rev.3:10]. Matthew 24 refers only to the final trouble coming upon the Jews, not upon all the world, that will be localized to Palestine and occur after the middle of the week of 7 years. It is called "*Jacob's trouble*" [Jer.30:7] and "*the indignation*" [Isa.26:20].

This description of the innumerable company is a scene in heaven. Two things are mentioned as having happened to them on earth. Two other things are implied; but 12 facts are named concerning them that shall occur in heaven. These constitute the vast multitudes that have believed on Jesus Christ throughout this Church Age, except the Smyrna overcomers. The many believers who live until translation, except the Philadelphia overcomers, are also included. It is unreasonable and unscriptural to suppose that they will be saved within the 7 years of tribulation. If that were true, then more folk will be saved in 7 years than throughout the past 1,900 years. That view contradicts the 5-time repeated statement, "*They repented not*" [Rev.2:21; 9:20-21; Rev.16:9, 11]. If that be true, where shall we look for the myriads in heaven that were saved during the past 19 centuries? Instead of being saved during The Tribulation days, we read that "*they come out*" of that time [Rev.7:14].

By such an interpretation, the 4 living creatures and 24 elders are made to represent all that will be raised and translated; for they are the only saints seen in heaven up to that point. That is improbable. First, because they are a comparatively small group, and second because they figure only the highest rank of believers. The description of them proves this fact. Not one citation in Revelation intimates that they will be saved during The Tribulation period; or, that there will be a translation after the days of tribulation. Jesus said in plain words, "*He that shall endure to the end (of The Tribulation days) shall be saved*" from physical death [Mat.24:13] (see also Rev.2:25-26 and 12:14). Even the victors over the beast are not of The Church; for "*they sing the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb*" [Rev.15:3]. None who are saved after Jesus Christ has been enthroned will be counted in The Church (the body of Christ). That will be Kingdom Time entirely. Of course the everlasting Gospel, proclaimed by the flying angel, will move some to believe on Jesus, but they will not be translated to heaven.

POINTS OF DIFFERENCE

The living creatures and the elders represent a particular order or rank of believers. In reality, they are not a small company (see Rev.5:9). The blameless Smyrnaites and the commended Philadelphians are in this 1st rank. The innumerable company is in the 2nd Rank. The time of their appearance in heaven and their lesser characteristics indicate this fact. Note 12 clear points of difference:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. The living creatures and elders will arrive in heaven before Christ is enthroned [Rev.4:1]. | 2. The countless company arrives in heaven after Christ is enthroned. |
| 3. The living creatures and elders will be kept out of the hour of trial, or Great Tribulation [Rev.3:10]. That is termed "The Tribulation...the great one" in distinction from many tribulations of the saints during this age. It embraces the Great Tribulation of Matthew 24:21. | 4. The countless company will come out of the first part of The Tribulation. |
| 5. The 1 st Rank, or living creatures, is seen " <i>in the throne</i> " or sitting on thrones around the great throne. | 6. The 2 nd Rank, or countless company, is seen " <i>standing around the throne</i> "; hence they form an outer circle. |
| 7. The first " <i>fall down and worship.</i> " | 8. The second cry, " <i>Salvation to our God.</i> " |
| 9. The first have " <i>crowns on their heads.</i> " | 10. The second have " <i>palms in their hands.</i> " |
| 11. The first acknowledge that they were " <i>made kings and priests unto God.</i> " | 12. The second " <i>serve Him day and night.</i> " |

The 1st Rank, the living creatures and elders, lead in the worship of God. They will be employed also in specific ministries associated with Christ, because they enjoy such ministries on earth. For example, they will announce the results of the opening of the seals [Rev.6]. They are the 7 angels that sound the 7 trumpets [Rev.8]. They hold the golden bowls containing the 7 last plagues [Rev.15-16]. Nothing more is said after Revelation 7 about the innumerable company until at the wedding, where they are called "*servants*" [Rev.19]. The living creatures and the elders are mentioned again and again, the last time in Revelation 19:4 as worshippers.

JUDGMENT PROCLAIMED [REV.8-9]

"And when He had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels who stand before God; and to them were given seven trumpets." [Rev.8:1-2]

This marks a vital change in the Divine Panorama. The first 5 chapters and Chapter 7 are preparatory. Chapter 6 is an epitome of what follows. The company represented by the 4 living creatures and 24 elders will be in heaven before Revelation 8 will begin to be fulfilled.

"*Silence in heaven.*" Have you observed what a solemn calm and stillness precedes a dreadful thunderstorm? The atmosphere is sultry and oppressive. The ensuing tempest purifies the atmosphere. Then follows a gladdening calm. The birds sing sweetly, the sun shines brightly, vegetation sparkles, men rejoice. Just so with the beginning of the next

age. The full overcomers will be absent, having been translated. The religious atmosphere will be exceedingly foul, Laodiceanism being the prevailing condition. A form of godliness without Divine Power is unbearably oppressive. The world, though religious, will reject the simple Gospel of faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the holy Jehovah will proceed to purify it with fiery judgments. The vengeance of an offended God and of a rejected Redeemer, presently to be executed, will awe all heaven into profound, solemn silence. The “*half an hour*” is not literally 30 minutes, but simply a brief time, possibly a few months. This age is called an hour, likewise is the Millennial Age [Joh.5:25, 28]. The time of the great Divine Indignation is termed “*the hour of His judgment*” [Rev.14:7].

“*The seven angels*” mentioned here, and in Revelation 15, are not disembodied or “ministering spirits” [Mat.4:11 and Heb.1:6, 14], but redeemed human spirits with glorified bodies. Angels are never to be judges; but instead, “*we shall judge angels*” and “*we shall judge the world*” [1Co.6:2-3]. Furthermore, angels never serve as priests at an altar. They cannot know anything about sacrifice. Only the Redeemer and the redeemed can understand priestly service. He has “*made us unto our God kings and priests*” [Rev.5:10]. During this age, angels as servants of God minister comfort, protection, and deliverance to saints; but saints only as one with Christ, as “*holy brethren*” in fellowship with Him, enjoy the priestly and kingly offices with Him. Hence, we read in Hebrews 2:5, “For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come”; because, during the millennium, man, in the person of Christ, will reign supreme. God has “*put all things in subjection under His feet*” [Heb.2:8].

“And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.” [Rev.8:3]

The “*another angel*” is none other than our blessed Lord. Only Aaron, the high priest, could offer the incense in the Mosaic tabernacle. Jesus Christ, our great high Priest, is the anti-Type of Aaron. Likewise He is “the altar” in heaven, even as in Him “we have an altar” now [Heb.13:10]. There is no discrepancy between this verse and Revelation 5:8, which declares that “*the incense is the prayers of the saints*.” Isaiah 6:6-7 is a sidelight. David cried, “*Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense*” [Psa.141:2]. The prayers of Jesus are also incense before the Father, and they are here mingled with the petitions of the saints (compare Rev.5:8).

JUDGMENT PRAYERS ANSWERED

These are not the ordinary or extraordinary entreaties of all saints generally. The great petition on the heart of Jesus Christ, and which He also taught His disciples, is the particular request here: “*Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven*” [Mat.6:10].

This agrees wonderfully with David’s petition which he desired should be directed as incense, “*Let not an evil speaker, a man of violence, be established in the earth; let him be hunted to his overthrow*” [Psa.140:11 margin]. David prayed by “*the Spirit of Christ that was in him*” [1Pe.1:11]. Of

course that petition will be answered; for that man of violence is “*the man of sin*” of whom Paul wrote [2Th.2]. That the kingdom of God should come and His will be done perfectly in the earth, through the reign of His Son over the nations, is the essential prayer that fills the “*golden bowl of incense*,” and which Jesus shall offer with the prayers of the saints upon the golden altar.

“And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.” [Rev.8:4]

That is, the united cries of Jesus and of His holy ones for the establishing of the kingdom by the necessary judgments of Israel and of the world; and, by the return of “*Him whose right it is to reign*,” [Eze.21:27], are accepted by the righteous Judge. Those cries will be answered speedily. While these very saints are in the world, they judge it by living in full sympathy with Jesus in all His operations and in His future purposes and hopes. They offer mercy to men, but warn them of those very judgments if they spurn mercy. They pray for the salvation of the people, but especially long for the Lord to hasten His coming.

“And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.” [Rev.8:5]

The “*fire of the altar*” is God’s answer to prayer in judgment upon those who reject the judgment that fell upon Christ on Calvary. The “*voices, thunderings, etc.*” are the mutterings of Jehovah which immediately precede the judgments, just as rolling thunders and dazzling lightning go before a terrific wind and rainstorm. “*How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past tracing out*” [Rom.11:33].

THE 7 ANGELS SOUND

“And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.” [Rev.8:6]

We must not confound this sounding of trumpets with the sounding of “*the trump of God*” in 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16. The “*trump of God*” will be the trumpet of **resurrection and translation**, the voice of the Lord, summoning the redeemed to glory. These 7 messengers represent those redeemed ones in heaven **announcing the judgments** which will then fall upon the world. God’s faithful ones must be in heaven before He can punish the inhabitants of the earth. The judgments announced by the 4 trumpet angels will be fulfilled from above. That shows that God is over all and has charge of all. Those visitations will be the instruments of His correction (punishment). They begin to be recorded in Revelation 8. The 3 Woes, the utterances of the last 3 angels, indicate that wicked men, inspired by Satan, will be the agents of trouble and disorder. The Woes begin to be described in Revelation 9. The “*sorrows*” of Revelation 8 and the “*woes*” of Revelation 9 culminate in the “*bowls of wrath*” of Revelation 16 to 18.

"The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed." [Rev.8:7-9]

Doubtless some nation will disturb the peace and safety by hurling destructive elements from airships upon Jerusalem. That will be the beginning of *"the hour of His judgment"* [Rev.14:7], which will grow worse and worse, climax in the battle of Armageddon, and be ended by the revelation of Christ. Most likely, the development and enlargement of that trouble is described by the 2nd angel. *"The earth"* [Rev.8:7] refers to Palestine as distinguished from *"the sea"* [Rev.8:8], which refers to the nations (compare Rev.13:11 with Rev.13:1).

"And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter." [Rev.8:10-11]

Evidently this star is the same star of Revelation 9:1, that is, the devil. Here John sees him falling; there he is *"fallen"* [RV]. As in Revelation 9, he has authority (the key of the pit) and national power; *"burning as it were a lamp,"* in contrast with Jesus, *"the Light of the world"* [Joh.8:12]. Paul declares that *"Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light"* [2Co.11:14]. Through false prophets, the devil will embitter *"the rivers and fountains of water"*; that is, poison the minds of religious bodies of people who receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved. That will lead up to the full development of the ministry of the 2nd beast, the false prophet [Rev.13], by whom *"God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe the lie"* [2Th.2:11].

"And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise." [Rev.8:12]

Of course the sun and moon will be darkened. The smoke of battle always obscures the light. Revelation 8 will begin to be fulfilled sometime before the Woe period of Revelation 9 commences. The reason for this will be made plain in the notes on Revelation 17:8-11. The **PEACE AND SAFETY** period (the white horse of Rev.6) will be brief comparatively. As Michael will fight Satan to cast him out to make room for the saints in heaven (which probably will begin with the ascension of the full overcomers), the devil will seek revenge by causing some nation to arise against the Jews to destroy them.

THE 3 AWFUL WOES

"And I beheld and heard an angel flying thru the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe! Woe! Woe! To the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound." [Rev.8:13]

Revelation 8:13 is in fact the introduction of Revelation 9. The Revised Version says "*An eagle*" was what John saw. This is correct, no doubt. That messenger, like "*the eagle that hasteth to the prey*" [Job 9:26], will be moved by Divine Indignation to go quickly and announce the 3 Woes. It will not be our Lord, but some unflinching herald of His who will declare the rapid increase of the Divine Judgments. The Lord may cause some of His servants to travel miraculously through the air in that day, even as He did Phillip in Acts 8.

1ST WOE – PIT OF THE ABYSS

"And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power." [Rev.9:1-3]

This is an important point. Here we are 250 days before the middle of the week, or 2 years; 9 months and 20 days (1,010 days) from its commencement.

This is the beginning of the **1st Woe**, which continues exactly 5 months (150 days) [Rev.9:5].

The **2nd Woe** covers 100 days, ending with the ascension of the 2 witnesses [Rev.11:13-14].

Thus, the **3rd Woe** will occupy the time of the man of sin reigning as God, that is, 3½ years.

This star is Satan himself, called "*Lucifer* (day star), *son of the morning*," whom Isaiah saw cast down [Isa.14:12-15]. Jesus saw "*Satan as lightning fall from heaven*" [Luk.10:18]. This is the "*great red dragon*" cast down from heaven [Rev.12:9]. He is in contrast with "*the bright and morning Star*" of Revelation 22:16.

In the Old Testament, the home of the departed spirits, whether saved or unsaved, is expressed by the word **hell** (Hebrew: **SHEOL**), a very deep place down in the earth [Job 11:8]. It is called also "*the nether parts of the earth*" [Eze.31:16]. The wicked dead are in "*lowest hell* (Sheol)" [Deu.32:22, Psa.86:13]. The Hebrew for **pit** in Numbers 16:30, 33 is **SHEOL**.

In the New Testament, the abode of departed spirits is expressed by the word **hell** (Greek: **HADES** [Mat.11:23], **GEHENNA** [Mat.5:22], and **TARTARUS** [2Pe.2:4]. We also read the “*lower parts of the earth*” [Eph.4:9], “*prison*” [1Pe.3:19], “*the deep*” (Greek: **ABUSSOS** meaning “*abyss*” [Luk.8:31, Rom.10:7]), and “*bottomless pit*” (Greek: **ABUSSOS** meaning “*abyss*”, Rev.11:7; Rev.17:8; Rev.20:1, 3). “*The pit of the abyss*” (Greek: **PHREATOS TES ABUSSOUR**) occurs only in the Revised Version of Revelation 9:1. The abode of the saved departed spirits is expressed also by the words “*Abraham’s bosom*” and “*paradise*” [Luk.16:22 and 23:43].

All the above words or expressions except **GEHENNA** refer to the homes of the departed from the beginning until Christ was raised from the dead. **GEHENNA** refers to the lake of fire, the abode of the devil and the wicked after the millennium [Rev.19:20 and Rev.20:10, 14-15].

The Greek word **PHREAR** translated **PIT** in Revelation 9:1-2 etc. is translated **pit** in Luke 14:5 and **well** in John 4:11-12. The latter citation indicates that it expresses depth. It is defined in the Greek as “*a pit, a dungeon, a well, a deep dark channel, or cavern.*” Its use in the Old Testament conveys the same meanings. Doubtless “*the pit*” in connection with “*the abyss*” [Rev.9:1] means “*the aperture or shaft that leads down to the pit.*”

The Greek word **ABUSSOS**, as an adjective means “*enormous, unfathomed.*” Though “*the abyss*” was the great habitation of all the dead before Jesus came, since Jesus arose from the grave, it is inhabited only by the wicked dead. The righteous see “*afar off*” from the wicked, separated by “*a great gulf fixed*” [Luk.16:23, 26]; but Jesus Christ depopulated upper **HADES** (Sheol), the upper part of the abyss (compare Eph.4:8-10 with 1Pe.3:19). The believing dead were not in a place of darkness; Romans 10:7 suggests this, “*Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ...)*” (compare 1Pe.3:19). Jesus went to the “*prisoners of hope*” [Zec.9:12] in “*Abraham’s bosom*” [Luk.16:22]; for they had died in the faith, and He led them out and took them to heaven when He ascended on high.

Our Lord has “*the key of hades and death,*” that is, authority and power over the dead. At the time of which John writes, He will allow Satan to open the pit and bring up many of its inhabitants; for demons dwell there as well as lost souls [Luk.8:31]. Satan is “*the prince*” the “*god of this world*” [Joh.12:31, 2Co.4:4]. This office was given him before he fell. Jesus Christ, “*the Prince of life,*” took it from him provisionally at Calvary: “*That thru death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil*” [Heb.2:14]. By the brightness of His coming, our Lord will actually annul all Satan’s power and hurl him down into the very pit, which 3½ years before he will have the power to unlock [Rev.20:1-3]. “*The Prince of life*” will overthrow the prince of death. The dominion which Satan lost through ignominious pride and self-will,

Jesus Christ gains through true humility and a submissive will to the Father. Reader, with which are you allied?

THE LOCUST ARMY The locusts which come out of the smoke are demons come up from hell. These will possess and empower wicked men, filling them with satanic hate. At no time could men continue to fight and shed the blood of their fellows with pleasure if they were not supernaturally endued with the devil. It has been dreadful enough in the past; but oh how terrible it will be in the beginning of the next age when Satan himself, with his organized forces of heaven, will fall unto the earth and his demon hordes will come up from the abyss. And, with all his accumulated wisdom and power, he will possess the nations and they will fight one another as never before. However, God will protect His own people, seen in the vision as “*grass*,” “*green things*,” and “*trees*.” For 5 months the locusts will be allowed to torment unbelievers, but not kill them. The first woe of 150 days will be a preparatory period for more troubles. Armies will be organizing. Local wars and rumors of wars will so alarm the people, that many will seek death in vain. The boasted peace and safety league will be broken forever. One man, filled and controlled by the devil, will have supremacy. Joel had foretold of this great locust-like horde, terming them CATERPILLARS, PALMERWORMS, CANKERWORMS, and LOCUSTS. Those nations were used of the Lord to chastise the Jews; hence, called “*His army, a very great camp*” [Joe.1-2]. But afterwards He will take vengeance upon those nations (see Zec.14:3).

“*They have over them as king, the angel of the abyss.*” His name in Hebrew is ABADDON, and in Greek he has the name APOLLYON [Rev.9:11 RV]. The Hebrew word means “*Destruction*” and the Greek word means “*Destroyer*.” Satan himself is that king. He will come down to the earth as the Jews’ adversary; the devil, as a “*roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour*” [1Pe.5:8]. He is the “*star from heaven*” named in Verse 1 of this chapter [Rev.9].

THE 2ND WOE

“One woe is past: behold there come two woes more hereafter.”
[Rev.9:12]

The 1st and 2nd Woes complement each other. The 1st is preparatory as “*prepared unto battle*” [Rev.9:7]; whereas, the 2nd suggests the conflict begun. The language describing those armies indicates that they are the same company. While in preparation for war, “*they torment men 5 months. Men shall seek death and shall not find it*” [Rev.9:5-6, 10]. Forerunning skirmishes and the horrors of war will be to many as scorpion stings. Many families, whose sons will be summoned to battle, with breaking hearts will seek to die. The

World War of 1914-18² was so unspeakably devilish that most of the surviving soldiers long to forget it by refusing to speak of it. The forebodings of the present World War (World War II) are so fearful that they are a scorpion sting. The next one will be incomparably worse. How foolish of believers to insist that we must be here and pass through The Tribulation period. Why not believe what is written, *"I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation"* [Rev.3:10]?

"And the sixth angel sounded...Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates." [Rev.9:13-14]

Those 4 angels are called *"Four winds"* [Rev.7:1], which means 4 nation-ruling evil spirits, or *"princes"* [Dan.10:20-21]. As the angel Michael was a good spirit prince doing God's will; so there are evil spirit princes which serve Satan. Since the devil is the *"god of this world"* he controls the rulers of the nations through his angel princes. Evidently 4 national powers beyond the Euphrates will couch lion-like and when the Divine Restraint is removed they will rush in upon the Holy Land. After Satan is cast down, he will bring up from the pit his demon hordes by whom he will inflame a great company from the East. The number which John saw, 200,000,000, is about one tenth of the present population of the globe. The census of 1938 was 2,012,000,000. No matter what mischievous purpose men may conceive against God's people [Eze.34:10], they cannot move except as He allows them. For comfort read Deuteronomy 32:8-9. That mighty eastern army will open fire on a certain previously determined hour (God sets the time) of a certain day, of a certain month, of a certain year; literally, *"the hour... and the year"* [Rev.9:15].

"And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone." [Rev.9:17]

John marveled at the striking appearance of the horses. Their description together with the fire and smoke and brimstone which issued from their mouths, suggests that they will be the most deadly war-weapons that devil-inspired men can make. The battle tanks of the present great conflict belch from both ends, like volcanoes; death-dealing shot mingled with liquid fire are an earnest of what is coming. In the air, on the waters, and on the land many kinds of instruments of offense and defense are operating by all the nations. Millions of dollars are spent on national and international destruction. John emphasizes 3 elements of quick devastation, *"By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire and by the smoke and by the brimstone which issued out of*

² "From the time of its occurrence until the approach of World War II in 1939, it was called simply the World War or the Great War, and thereafter the First World War or World War I. In America it was initially called the European War." [[WIKIPEDIA](#)]

their mouths" [Rev.9:15]. The phrase "*the third part of men*" no doubt means a third of the world's population. Today, one third of the world's population is 670,666,666 (note the repetition of the figure 6); for the census of 1938 gives the population of world as 2,012,000,000 in *Hammond's Modern Atlas of the World*. Since 1930, the population has increased 75½ million.

Divine Judgments are already falling on the world, the dizzying earnestness of those in the near future. In Revelation 8 it is said that "*the third part*" of 9 great essentials will be affected seriously under the prophesied woes. What will be the moral result? Will the people be changed God-ward? Read the report, "*And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands...Neither repented they of their murders*" [Rev.9:20-21].

Move Forward

To the front, to the front of the car,
Where the air and the vision are clear.
Keep the aisle open, friends; heed the Star.
Void the panic—the crowd in the rear.
Move forward; there's nothing to fear.
Why so few in the front of God's car?
There are too many thronging the aisle.
O so few have their eyes on the Star
And a pressing right thru all the while,
Like the one Christ healed with a smile.
There is room in the front of God's car,
And the vacant seats call you that way.
O Beloved, why heed not the Star
Who is longing to bring in His Day?
Move forward, press onward. Why stay?

CHRIST IN AUTHORITY [REV. 10]

"And I saw another mighty Angel coming down out of the heaven, clothed with a cloud and a rainbow upon His head and his face as the sun and His feet as pillars of fire." [Rev.10:1 Greek]

In Revelation 1, we saw this same sublime Personage, walking as a scrutinizing **Examiner** of His heavenly people, The Church, whose "*members are on earth*." In Revelation 4, we saw Him as **Creator** of all things; and in Revelation 5, as **Redeemer** of men; hence worthy to open the seals. In Revelation 10 we behold the same One, who receives authority in heaven to execute the final purposes of God [Rev.5], now descend and stand on land (Palestine) and sea (the nations) in flaming majesty, grandeur, and power to assume full control of all things on earth.

"*Clothed with a cloud*," signifies that the saints then in glory will be associated with Him in His taking charge on earth. "*A rainbow upon His head*" indicates that He will show mercy to the repentant in that time of judgment. "*His head and face as the sun*" shows that Jesus, as the one

bright orb of splendor, will bring to light every hidden thing and expel the darkness of that night of sorrow. *“His feet as pillars of fire”* speak of His full purpose and power to punish the wicked, because they reject His mercy today.

END OF GENTILE TIMES

“And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth.” [Rev.10:2]

Concerning the *“little book,”* see notes on Revelation 10:9. Gentile Times will not continue to the close of The Tribulation days, or the battle of Armageddon, as is taught generally; though the Lord will bring Gentile rebellion and usurpation to an end then. When the Lion of the tribe of Judah shall set up His throne in heaven, then He will begin to control things on earth also. Study the following reflections:

1. Jesus announced that from 71 A.D. *“Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”* [Luk.21:24]. John announced that the same *“holy city shall they (the Gentiles) tread under foot forty-two months”* [Rev.11:2]. The former must be fulfilled before the latter can begin. The 43 months of treading down can have no meaning if it is a part of the *“times of the Gentiles”* mentioned earlier. Indeed, John being required to *“measure the temple of God and the altar”* and *“them that worship therein”* [Rev.11:1], shows that the Lord will take charge of the city and separate the penitent Jews unto Himself, allowing the court to fall into the hands of the nations for a brief time, that is, 3½ years.
2. If God gave the Gentiles dominion for a certain period, how can He justly give the dominion to the Jews within that period? How can He send judgment upon the nations and seek to oust them if they still have the right to reign? Nay! The truth is that when Jesus will begin war with Satan to thrust him down, and when He, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, will take His authority on earth, shown by Him standing on land and sea, the nations will be usurpers. This is a truth that 95% of Bible students overlook. Jesus came in His Father’s name but the Jews received Him not. He is coming again with authority to reign. At that moment, another will come in his own name; and him they will receive [Joh.5:43]. Will he not be a usurper? With that one, the Jews will enter into a covenant [Dan.9:27] instead of accepting God’s Messenger of the covenant of grace. He will be one of the leading rulers or nations of the world. If Christ’s rulership begins after Gentile dominion ends, every dominion not in subjection to Him will be a usurpation and rebellion.
3. It was said to Daniel, *“Seventy weeks (490 years) are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city”* [Dan.9:24]. For what purpose? That the Lord might bestow certain special blessings upon Israel. That period should come within Gentile dominion. But the so-called last week of Daniel 9:26 does not have to be the last 7 years of Gentile Times, as many suppose. Neither can that week of 7 years occupy

the same time as that expressed by Daniel 9:27. The last, or 70th week (which began with the death of Christ [Dan.9:26], was a period of blessing throughout. But Daniel 9:27 depicts a time of trouble and sorrow, with no intimation of blessing.

4. Notice the following:

- a. Now I want to show you that the last 7 years of that determined time for Israel was fulfilled from the death of Christ to the stoning of Stephen [Act.7]. Daniel 9:24 was fulfilled from Calvary to Pentecost. The Holy Spirit was not poured out upon the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius [Act.10] until about 7 years after Pentecost, because God had to make good His Word to the Prophet in fulfilling the last week (7 years) of the 70 determined weeks. All that was to be accomplished during those 490 decreed years was done before 40 A.D. Then God gave repentance to the Gentiles [Act.10-11]. By His death, the Lord finished *“transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity”* and by His resurrection, He brought in *“everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy”* [Dan.9:24]. After His resurrection, Jesus gave His ancient people 7 years to receive Him as their Messiah and King, as Stephen’s gaze into heaven shows [Act.7:55-56]. Even having *“all things common”* [Act.2:44] among the disciples speaks of the year of jubilee which will come when Jesus Christ shall be received by the nation Israel [Lev.25]. Pentecost came in the Jewish year of jubilee. Peter’s visit to Cornelius, 10 years later, was an earnest of the Jew’s ministry to the nations after Jesus comes to reign.
- b. The Jews rejected Christ at the beginning of this age. Hence, the fulfillment of the 70th week was only an earnest of the full measure of blessing yet to come. (It was wholly a period of mercy and grace, as Daniel 9:24 indicates.” Therefore, Daniel 9:27 must be fulfilled in distress and perplexity. It will begin in **trouble** [Jer.30:7] and end in **wrath** [Rev.6:16-17]. That is added proof that the fulfillment of the terrible week of Daniel 9:27 (when Antichrist will make a covenant with the Jews) will be beyond the Times of the Gentiles. God will not authorize that covenant; it will be a usurpation. *“Another who comes in his own name”* [Joh.5:43] will presume to take the place that belongs to Jesus Christ only. The Jews, the Gentiles, and the Laodicean church will be out of Divine Order, which will occasion the sorrow, pain, destruction, and death of that period. Our Lord will be compelled to fight for His official rights. That situation is typified by David’s reign over Israel. He ruled over Judah for 7 years (even as Jesus will rule in heaven) before he became actual ruler over the 10 tribes, though he was king

by Divine Choice over the whole nation from the time he ascended the throne over Judah (see 2Sa.2 with Psalms 78:70-72).

- c. “*The fullness of the Gentiles*” [Rom.11:25] must not be confounded with “*the times of the Gentiles*” [Luk.21:24].

The “*fullness of the Gentiles*” **is religious** and refers to the calling out from among the Gentiles a people for the name of the Lord [Act.15:17]. Their fullness will come with the catching away of The Church. The light that dispels the blindness from Israel will then break forth. The angel, with the everlasting Gospel, in view of the coming Millennial Kingdom, will follow (compare Mat.24:14 with Rev.14:6 for a proof of these facts).

The “*times of the Gentiles*” **is political** and it began when God cast Israel out of their land (606 B.C.), giving dominion to the Gentiles, and continues until the beginning of the Tribulation when Jesus takes His throne.

THE VOICE OF AUTHORITY

“And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.” [Rev.10:3]

There should be no doubt as to who is that “*Mighty Angel*” in Verse 1. In Revelation 5:5, He is called “*The Lion of the tribe of Judah*.” It is written that the Lord “*shall cry, yea, he shall shout aloud; He shall do mightily against His enemies*” [Isa.42:13 RV]. He roars out His purpose to possess at once His promised possessions. Harken to Amos 3:4, “*Will a lion roar in the forest when he hath no prey?*” The “*seven thunders*” that respond are doubtless the 4 living creatures and the 24 elders proclaiming, in detail, the character of the visitations that accompany His seizure of His possessions on earth. That those thunder voices are the intelligent utterances of men is evident; for John says, “*I was about to write*” [Rev.10:4]; he understood what they said. But a voice from heaven exclaimed, “*Write them not*.” Is this not all added proof that the nations will be usurping authority? Else why must Christ fight to gain His God-given sovereignty?

THE FINAL OATH

“And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer.” [Rev.10:5-6]

Daniel saw the same Personage and heard a similar declaration announcing that after “*a time, times and half a time*” (3½ years), those judgments would end [Dan.12:7]. That explains John’s words “*time no longer*.” That cannot mean that time will then end and eternity begins; for the 1,000 years reign of Christ must come in after that. It simply means that

when Jesus takes hold of the situation, there will no longer be time allowed to the nations to usurp His place; their times will have ended. However, in the days of the voice of *"the seventh angel"* [Rev.11:15] (the latter half of the week) when he is about to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets. Concerning the Jews, Daniel prayed, *"O Lord, hearken and do; defer not for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name"* [Dan.9:10]. And Jesus declared that *"He will avenge them speedily that cry day and night unto Him"* [Luk.18:7].

"And I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey; but as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter."
[Rev.10:10]

The *"little book"* became the substance of John's prophecy; for after his exile was ended, he was to *"prophecy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings"* [Rev.10:11]. What he ate he also wrote for us. His prophecy was suggestive of the prophecy of the 2 witnesses whom he mentions in Revelation 11.

Questions: Why do many appreciate the truth so little? Why do they give it forth with so little power? **Answer:** Because they simply hear it; they do not eat it. They do not chew, masticate, enjoy, and swallow it. It is not incorporated in their very being. The head hears the truth but the heart does not appropriate it. Also, because the Word *"divides between the soul and spirit"* [Heb.4:12]. Most believers prefer the soulish life; they draw back from the wholly spiritual life because it is too narrow, too seclusive, too expensive (no worldly pleasures). It is the utter rejection of the old man, as the apostle Paul exclaimed, *"I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"* [Gal.2:20].

THE 2 WITNESSES [REV. 11]

"And there was given me a reed like unto a rod (staff): and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein."
[Rev.11:1]

This chapter is really the continuation of the preceding 10th chapter. Though *"the Angel"* is not mentioned in the Greek, yet it is His voice that speaks. The authority He assumes in Revelation 10 continues here. He is the Lord Jesus Anointed, taking His place as *"the God of the (whole) earth"* [Rev.11:4]. This is further proof of His right to supremacy and that all other rulers are then usurpers.

Remember, all this occurred to the Apostle John in a vision; hence, he did not actually measure with a literal rule; but he symbolized the ministry of the 2 witnesses who will measure with the Word of God (see Eze.2:9-10). They will announce protection and comfort to those Jews who will receive their message and believe God; and, give warning of the treading down of Jerusalem.

During the first half of the week (of 7 years), the Jews will have liberty to worship in the temple; but during the latter half, the temple will be defiled

by “*the abomination of desolation*” [Dan.11:31 and Mat.24:15]. Those who believe, being measured by the infallible rule of Divine Truth, will be the only temple for God. A part of that treading down of the Holy City is also called, “*Jacob’s trouble*” [Jer.30:7], an unparalleled “*time of trouble*” [Dan.12:1], and “*a Great Tribulation*” [Mat.24:21] which will continue 1,010 days.

TWO UNIQUE CHARACTERS

“And I will give unto my two witnesses that they may prophesy a thousand, two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.” “These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.” [Rev.11:2, 4]

These are truly an interesting couple of people. Let us not befog them by fanciful interpretations. Observe that they stand ready to receive orders before the God of the whole earth who is therefore back of all their movements. He calls them “*my two witnesses*” because they will be His chief representatives in behalf of Israel on earth in those days. Also we read, “*These are the two olive trees*”; that is, they will be anointed with the Holy Spirit, and by ministry of the Word they will communicate life and power to others. They are also called “*two candlesticks*”; they will be the chief spiritual luminaries in Jerusalem at that time.

“*Clothed in sackcloth*,” indicates the sorrowful, oppressive, and unbelieving time of their prophecy; and, the great need of their hearers to turn in repentance to God.

Why 2 witnesses? Because 2 is the least number of competent and invincible testimony (compare Deu.17:6 and 19:15). Jesus also declared that “*the testimony of two men is true*” [Joh.8:17]. Surely, in that coming day of religious darkness, 2 well-equipped Jews will be required to lift the scales from the eyes of their fellows. Doubtless Daniel foresaw these men as the “*other two*” who shall speak in the end time [Dan.12:5].

EXACTLY WHO ARE THEY?

We have a suggestion, if not a clue, to their identity in the return of the Jews from Babylonian captivity. Zerubbabel was made governor in Jerusalem and Joshua was made High Priest. Haggai and Zechariah were the 2 prophets, Divine Witnesses, at that particular time. Just so it will be when again God sets to work bringing His ancient people out of the 2,000 years of blindness and captivity. “*The prince of the host*” [Dan.8:11], corresponds with Zerubbabel, and the implied priest (for there will be sacrifices offered) corresponds with Joshua. The chief men “*that understand among the people and shall instruct many, yet fall by the sword*” [Dan.11:33], correspond with the prophets Haggai and Zechariah. Who are those instructors in Daniel’s account if not the “*two witnesses*” in John’s account? Those witnesses may be 2 companies of people, led by 2 prominent men.

Then those 2 witnesses will doubtless prophesy. In their vain attempts to prove that Moses and Elijah will actually be those 2 prophets, men have failed to note what Jesus said about Elijah [Mat.11:14 and Mat.17:10-13]:

"And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." [Mat.17:10-13]

"And if you will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come." [Mat.11:14]

When announcing the birth of John, the angel said that he should "*go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord*" [Luk.1:17]. And John the Baptist did all that; but the Jewish nation refused his witness. These Scriptures certainly show that it never was intended that the same identical Elijah should again come and prophesy; for John the Baptist's ministry was the fulfillment of Malachi 4:5-6 if the Jews had received him. Accordingly, we cannot expect Elijah to come in person at the end of this age. We can only look for "*two witnesses*," as the Apostle John declares, whom God will chose for that day to give the final wooing and warning to the Jews, "*in the spirit and power of Elijah*," even as John the Baptist did. God is never short of material. He will find 2 persons, or 2 companies, whom He will enable to perform His will.

TIME OF THEIR PROPHECY

The 2 witnesses shall prophesy for 3½ years, beginning with the week of 7 years. Thirty days before they begin to witness, the daily (continual) burnt offering will be taken away by coercion of "*the little horn*" of Daniel 8, who doubtless will become the 2nd beast (the false prophet) [Rev.13]. The image of Revelation 13, "*the abomination of desolation*," will be set up at the end of their testimony. At the same time, the beast (the Antichrist) will slay the 2 witnesses. There are several inferential evidences of the time of their prophecy; but we have one positive proof of it. Their career ends with the ending of the 2nd Woe [Rev.11:13-14]. How exact are these last week of Daniel dates. The 2nd Woe ends and the 3rd Woe begins in the middle of the week, when "*the abomination that maketh desolate is set up*" in the temple [Dan.11:31] (see Rev.11:6). Note, they have not only power, but also authority, that is, the official right from God to execute judgments in connection with their prophecy. They foretell judgments; then execute them. They surely will have no small part in the Divine Program of the first half of Daniel's last week.

FINALE OF THE 2 WITNESSES

"And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.” [Rev.11:7-12]

Thank God! No power, no scheme can stop those who move in His will. The Jews sought many times to slay Jesus; but they could not until the time appointed of the Father. The enemy tried in various ways to end Paul's life; but he could not do it until Paul had finished his course. Then, when one's work is completed, death, even at the devil's cruel hand, is not defeat but final victory and eternal gain. *“The beast that ascended out of the pit of the abyss (250 days beforehand; see notes on Rev.13), shall ...kill them.”* They will be true to God and faithfully warn the Jews against the coming reign of darkness. Some of their hearers will believe their words and stand against the beast.

Behold how the Lord gets the greater victory out of that apparent defeat. *“Their dead bodies lie in the streets of the great city (Jerusalem), which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.”* Observe the prohibitory power in their dead bodies. The passersby will behold them; but no one will be able to put them into graves. God always takes care of His own. Oh what blind rejoicing will seize the Christ-rejecting earth-dwellers at that time. They will indulge in great, frenzied, devilish hilarity over the death of God's true servants, who faithfully will have sought to bless them. They will esteem their blessing only as *“torment.”* The Spirit of God takes care of the spirit of life while it is in the body and after it is departed from the body. It is from God in the first place, and He looks after it forever.

In Revelation 4, we learned that heaven opened and this same voice called John up thither. That is the voice of the Lord. If people deny the teaching of ranks of believers, how do they explain this? There will be at least 4 living creatures and 24 elders in heaven long before the 2 witnesses will go up. Also, the great multitude of Revelation 7 and the man child born in Revelation 12. Behold the last testimony of God's favor toward those men, and His confirmation of their stern prophecy. Scarcely are they gone when there occurs *“a great earthquake”* [Rev.11:13]. That will occur in Jerusalem. Some Jews then dwelling there will accept the witness and warning of those 2 sons of oil. Doubtless, afterwards some of them will be killed because they give God glory and because they will not receive the mark of the beast (see Rev.16). This is all yet future and will have a literal fulfillment in due time.

“The second woe is past; behold the third woe cometh quickly.” [Rev.11:14]

According to the last 3 verses of Revelation 5, John seems to be carried forward in vision to the end of The Tribulation days. Then every created thing in all the universe will praise the Lamb of God for His marvelous work and accomplishments of redemption. Likewise the last 5 verses of Revelation 11 are of a similar character. It is declared in Revelation 10:7, that *“in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.”*

Now, these closing 5 verses of Revelation 11 come under the sounding of that 7th angel. His words are the proclamation of realized hope, as if this “*present evil age*” had come to an end and the millennium had begun. He exclaims, “*The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever*” [Rev.11:15]. The 24 elders fall down and adore the Lord God Almighty because He is reigning. By anticipation, the nations are seen angry, the time for the judgment of the dead and rewards of the righteous have arrived. John was inspired to call “*the things that be not as though they were*” [Rom.4:17]. We too should rejoice in hope, though hope may seem to be postponed; for “*He that shall come will come, and will not tarry*” [Heb.10:37].

TWO WONDERS IN HEAVEN [REV. 12]

“And there appeared a great wonder (sign) in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.”
[Rev.12:1-2]

This is one of the most difficult and interesting portions of the book of Revelation. However, here, as elsewhere, the Word of God is its own commentary.

First, observe that this is not actually a woman, but **a sign**. In his vision, John beheld an object that **looked like a woman**. Now, we know that God likens His people as a body to a woman. Speaking to Jerusalem as representing Israel, it is written “*The Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit and a wife of youth*” [Isa.54:6]. The Church is likened to a woman; for Paul writes, “*I have espoused thee to one Husband, that I might present a chaste virgin to Christ*” [2Co.11:2]. The entire company of God’s people is called, “*The household of God*” and “*the whole family in heaven and on earth*” [Eph.2:19 and 3:15].

Note another important fact. The sign-woman was first seen in heaven, but having given birth to her child, she is seen then on earth [Rev.12:6, 13-17]. Hold this well in mind. We shall see that the woman in heaven with clothing and crown constitutes all believers who will be in heaven at that time, just before the middle of the week.

THE WOMAN’S ARRAY

Who are the sun, the 12-stars, and the moon?

- Malachi calls the Lord “*the Sun of righteousness*.”
- In Song of Solomon, The Bride is compared with “*the sun*” and with “*the moon*.”
- And saints “*shine as luminaries in the world*” [Phi.2:15].
- Joseph dreamed that “*the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance*” to him [Gen.37:9]. His father and brethren at once understood that he would someday rule over them, which indeed came to pass. In that dream, Jacob was the sun, his wife was the moon, and their 12 sons were the stars. Joseph was the most brilliant of all.

- In Revelation 1, all God's shepherds are termed "*the seven stars*."
- And, in Revelation 22:16, Jesus calls Himself "*the bright and morning Star*."

These references combine to teach us that the sun, moon, and stars symbolize God's people in certain aspects. Saints put on Christ, "*the Sun of righteousness*" [Mal.4:2].

"*Clothed with the sun*". Previously, we saw in heaven the full overcomers—the 4 living creatures and the 24 elders. Mary was truly arrayed with honor and glory in bringing forth the child who was destined to be "*the Sun of righteousness*." Indeed, He, together with those so entirely like Him, even the full overcomers, constitute the company with which the sign-woman is invested. The sun is our greatest material luminary. It was appointed to "*rule the day*" [Gen.1:15]. How expressive of the Lamb and His Bride reflecting the fullest and brightest sheen of glory, filling the heavenly city with light.

"*The twelve stars*" refer to "*the spirits of just men made perfect*" [Heb.12:23]. They are Old Testament saints, who are now in heaven with glorified bodies (compare Mat.27:52-53 with Heb.11:35). Doubtless Enoch, Moses, and Elijah are included. Here, the number 12 is most likely a representative number; God's governmental number and also Israelitish. They suggest the authority and power that the wonder-woman has in the universe as associated with Christ in His dominion.

"*The moon under her feet*." We saw also another company of believers in heaven, commonly called, "The Tribulation saints." In Revelation 7, they are seen in heaven. These will constitute "*the moon under her feet*." The moon shines by means of borrowed light. Even so, these lesser saints, being only partial overcomers, hence much occupied with their tribulations, do not overcome without the special intervention and help of full-grown saints. Furthermore, they are children in grace, and like children in a home, they are at their mother's feet. Another fact, the moon being nearest the earth, looks larger than the sun; likewise the moon-group of believers will be larger than the sun-group. Study the countless company of Revelation 7.

THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

In the introduction, we remarked that the book of Revelation cannot be understood fully without a knowledge of the Apostle Paul's teaching. This is especially true in the study of Revelation 12. Therefore, we shall turn to Ephesians, wherein we read of the whole family of God with its respective groups (classes) and of all stages of experience and ages. All those who scripturally believe, "*are the children of Abraham*" and constitute the "*household of faith*" [Gal.3:7, 6:10]. These are also called "*the household of God*" and "*the whole family in heaven and earth*" [Eph.2:19, 3:15]. At this juncture, remember that John saw the sign-woman in heaven and on earth. This whole family certainly must include all believers, whether before Christ or since Christ.

Furthermore, in Ephesians 4:12, we are informed of "*the body of Christ*"; which of course is only a part of the family, or of the household of faith, or

of God. Believers on Him during this age, called out to His Name, constitute the body of Christ (The Church). Also in Ephesians 4:13, we read of “*a perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*,” unto which believers are to grow. Are these simply figures of speech to tickle someone’s fancy? Are they not rather full of meaning?

Consider the deep and solemn significance of Ephesians 5. Herein is expressed the closest, sweetest, the Most Divine union between husband and wife. But the profounder typical meaning is what we must see. The Apostle Paul ends these exhortations on marital fellowship by saying, “*This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and His Church*.” Wonderful this truth! But we are not left in the dark as to its spiritual meaning. God is “*the Father of all them that believe*,” and they are His family (household). Jesus Christ is His eldest Son. All present-age believers are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. Then even as the Lord took out of Adam’s side a rib, of which He builded for him a woman, so the great Head of this great family is taking out of the body of Christ a company of believers, who shall constitute The Bride of Christ. Not all The Church will be in the Bridehood; for they will not all qualify for that place. Further proof of that is seen in Eph.6, in speaking to “*children, masters and servants*.” Are these not in The Church? Are they not members of Christ’s body? Yes, truly; but they are not typical of The Bride, for she is a wife not a servant. She is a full-grown woman not a child. The **great mystery** here is this, that Christ should select out of His body certain ones who shall constitute His Bride. Therefore, we remark that the woman, clothed with the sun, crowned with the stars, and the moon beneath her feet is simply another way of expressing the whole family of God so fully depicted in Ephesians. In Ephesians 5, we see God’s family on earth; but in Revelation 12, we see God’s family in heaven and on earth.

THE MANLY SON BORN

“And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.” [Rev.12:3-4]

At once every one asks, “Who is the man child?” We answer, that it is a certain body of believers, even as his mother, the sign-woman, is the whole body of believers.

First, observe that it cannot be The Bride of Christ; for she is seen by representation in heaven in Revelation 4:4-7. It cannot be The Bride because she must be a full-grown woman, even as the body whence she is taken is a full-grown man. This man child is only a youth, though a strong, manly son. Samuel also was called “*a man child*” [1Sa.1:11]; but he was not then full grown. The meaning of the phrase “*man child*” is simply “*strong, robust, healthy, fully developed*” as a child. It cannot be The Bride; for the man child is only caught up to God and His throne; but The Bride is seen as the overcomers in the midst of the throne.

Observe that in Revelation 4 we are informed of a certain company of saints in heaven known as the 4 living creatures and 24 elders. Then in Revelation 7, we are informed of 2 other companies, namely, the 144,000 and the innumerable company. John sees the countless group "*before the throne and before the Lamb*"; but he does not see 144,000 there until Revelation 14. Therefore, how and when do they arrive in heaven? We should most logically look for them somewhere between Revelation 7 and 14. Only in Revelation 12 is there any possibility of finding them. Who else can the 144,000 be if not "*the man child*?" We must bear in mind constantly that the woman is not actually a woman, but a company of men and women, a sign, or wonder woman; likewise the child is a sign-child. John saw all this in vision. The phrase, "*the remnant of her seed*" [Rev.12:17], indicates that the man child is a body of people.

Here, great prominence is given to the man child (the 144,000) because this company of believers constitutes the transition of God's dealings from The Church to Israel. In the beginning of this age, the 120 became the transition from Israel to The Church. Because Israel nationally rejected Christ, the Lord suspended His dealings with them and introduced The Church (the body of Christ). At the beginning of the next age, the order must be reversed. Although they are a part of The Church, the 144,000 will form the nucleus of the coming Kingdom. They will be the transition from The Church to Israel. The first chapters of the Acts were the transition Scriptures at the beginning of this age. Peter's epistles are the transition writings for the commencement of the millennium; they refer to the revelation of Christ. Israel was the first group of The Church and they will be the last group of The Church.

ISAIAH'S ANNOUNCEMENT

"Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child" [Isa.66:7]. Here we also read of the birth of the same man child. Isaiah, not writing of The Church, but of Israel only, did not see the travail pains of the wonder woman which John describes. That is, he did not see the terrific opposition of apostatized Christendom against the 144,000 as they hold the victory in qualifying for translation. He saw only Jacob's trouble, or the time of unspeakable tribulation upon the Jews [Mat.24:15-21]. Therefore, he declares that the man child was born before the woman travailed, or before the middle of the week.

Then Isaiah informs us of another birth, even the conversion of the Jews as a nation. *"Shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children"* [Isa.66:8]. "*Zion*" refers to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They will be in sore distress (called travail pains) by the oppression of the nations gathered against them [Zec.14]. Those who flee to the mountains [Mat.24:16-19] constitute, in part at least, "*the woman in the wilderness.*" Her children (Zion's children [Isa.66:9]) are "*the remnant of her seed*" [Rev.12:14, 17].

John saw the great sign-woman both in heaven and on earth. He saw her in pain in bringing forth the man child as well as the pain that followed its birth (compare Rev.12:2 with 12:14-16). But Isaiah saw the woman on earth

only, and as Israel. Inasmuch as Isaiah was to write only of Kingdom facts, he wrote simply of the fact of the birth of the man child and not of the process of that birth. He beheld the beginning of The Kingdom period. This is a powerful proof that the man child is the 144,000, which completes The Church in glory and links it with the Kingdom on earth.

"And she brought forth a man child (male son), who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up unto God and His throne." [Rev.12:5]

The bringing forth and catching away of the man child is the ascension of the 144,000, whom we see next in Revelation 14:1-5. The Lord Jesus will rule the nations with absolute authority [Psa.2]; and the 144,000 will rule with him and with the other glorified saints.

"And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore (1,260) days." [Rev.12:3-6]

John saw the sign-woman first in heaven; because she is constituted of all believers who will be in heaven at that time. He also saw her on earth; because all believers then on earth will form a part of her. What a positive proof that the man child is a company of believers and that his birth and ascension are the departure from earth of that company. Who can it be, but the 144,000 sealed in Revelation 7, seeing that they will be the only part of The Church at that time not yet translated? The earth-dwelling portion of the woman will flee into the wilderness. Although she is still in the world, God takes care of her in a miraculous manner. That company of people, the woman in the wilderness after the birth of the man child, will be the 4th Rank. Doubtless we read of them in Revelation 2:26 and 18:4. We also read of them in Isaiah 26:20-21. The Tribulation days (Jacob's trouble) will be on at that time; for the Antichrist will be in power then. By comparing Verse 6 and 14, we learn the exact value of "a time (360), times (720) and half a time" (180), which equals 1,260 days or 3½ years. (see our tract, "The Man Child").

SATAN CAST DOWN

"And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels." [Rev.12:7]

That event is still future. After the whole Church is in heaven with glorified bodies, ready to possess her heavenly inheritance, Satan must be cast out to make room for the man child. The principalities, authorities, the world-rulers of the darkness of this age, the spirituals of wickedness in the heavenlies must be repulsed to earth to make room for The Church whose blood-bought right it is to reign where Satan is now reigning. We fight for this place now, even "the good fight of faith" [1Ti.6:12], because by faith we are already seated with Christ in the heavenlies.

Michael shall actually drive the devil and his angels down from heaven. Hallelujah! That will be the fulfillment of Jesus' word in Luke 10:18, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven"; for it was by faith that Jesus saw it.

God had originally ordained those principalities, among whom were Gabriel and Michael and all the holy angels. But Satan sinned and has led other angels to sin also; therefore, he forfeited his right to the heavenlies. He also caused man on earth to sin. But God will reverse things and give those who believe on His Son this very place in the heavens. This is why those who take their place by faith in the heavenlies with Christ have such a fierce fight with the devil. *“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places”* [Eph.6:12]. Satan does not want the redeemed to occupy that position. John saw those things in vision only. They are yet future. So with the following.

“Neither was their place found any more in heaven.” [Rev.12:8]

Of course not. There is room for the redeemed of the Lord only. They who bank on God’s faithfulness for 2,000 years prove Him true.

“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” [Rev.12:9]

There is no chance to juggle with this Scripture. It is too plain to see who is meant by the *“great red dragon”* of Revelation 12:3. It is also clear that the devil is not yet in hell, as some people suppose. *“He was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him.”* In Revelation 12:4, those angels are said to be the third part of the stars from heaven. Think of the damage the devil has done to God’s domain; but that is far more than repaired by the redemption of Christ Jesus.

VICTORY IN HEAVEN

“And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.” [Rev.12:10]

Question: Who uttered that loud voice? **Answer:** The 4 living creatures, 24 elders, and the countless multitude of Revelation 7.

Question: Who are meant by “our brethren?” **Answer:** The 144,000, figured by the birth of the man child.

All heaven will unite in a great shout of triumph because the entire mystical body of Christ will be there and Satan will have been hurled down. Of course there must be universal victory in heaven before it can come on earth; because Jesus Christ and His body shall reign from heaven. The salvation from Satan’s presence in heaven will have come. The power of God which raised Jesus from the dead and set Him far above all principality and power and dominion in heaven will be fully demonstrated to the uttermost. Then will be fully fulfilled the words of Jesus, *“All authority in heaven and upon earth has been given unto me”* [Mat.28:18].

Before the Lord can “*restore again the kingdom to Israel*” [Act.1:6], which will be on earth, He must inaugurate it in heaven. Because Jesus Anointed shall have universal authority in heaven and on earth, He commanded His disciples to baptize into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, which will be fully and consummately fulfilled at that time when God again resumes His dealings with Israel, pouring upon them “*the Spirit of grace and supplications*” [Zec.12:10, Eze.39:29]. They will no longer baptize into the Name of Jesus, because The Church, His Body, will have been gathered out and taken to heaven; and will judge and reign with Him.

THE THRONE OF JESUS CHRIST

To avoid confusion, we again call attention to the present throne of God, where Jesus is seated with Him as our present faithful High Priest. That is in the highest heavens. Also note the future throne of Jesus Christ as Lord of all, when He shall actually possess the authority mentioned above. Notice that in Revelation 3:21, He speaks distinctly of 2 thrones: ☿ “*My Father’s throne*” and • “*my throne*.” The throne of Jesus will be where Satan’s throne now is. Satan is called “*the prince of the power of the air*” [Eph.2:2]. In our ascension, we shall “*meet the Lord in the air*”; “*for the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven*” [1Th.4:16-17], that is, the highest heaven where God’s throne now is (consult Heb.1:3 and 8:1).

Daniel beheld the “*thrones cast down*” [Dan.7:9]; and John says, “*Behold, a throne was set in heaven*”; that is, it was being set while he was looking. This is the throne that Jesus Christ, as a Man, shall occupy in heaven and be **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**. This is “*the throne of Glory*” that Hannah saw by faith [1Sa.2:8]. It is from this very throne that “*God will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He hath ordained*,” even Jesus Christ [Act.17:31]. This is “*the throne of His glory*” upon which the Son of Man shall sit, when He “*shall come in His glory*” [Mat.25:1]. This is **THE HEAVENLY PLACE**, which we now occupy by faith and where we shall reign with Christ in Glory; and from which we shall reign with Him over all the earth. The 12 apostles (the Apostle Paul is not included in these) of the Lamb “*shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel*,” whereby they shall be the immediate rulers of the nations [Mat.19:28, Luk.22:29-30].

PRESENT VICTORY OVER SATAN

“Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.” [Rev.12:10-11]

The word **overcome** here is exactly the same as occurs so often in Revelation 2 and 3, and the word **prevail** in Revelation 5:5. The particular items which these overcome are Satan’s accusations against them before God. Believers have no merit in themselves, no goodness of their own, no strength to withstand evil, no power even of themselves to love God. Nay, “*when I would do good, evil is present with me*” [Rom.7:21]. Peter’s egregious failure is a plain picture of the disgraceful weakness of the strength of the old creation [Mat.26:69-75]. The devil accuses us not only to ourselves and to

one another, but he dares to tell God what miserable failures we are, how weak and sinful we are. He said to the Lord about Job, “*Put forth thy hand now and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face*” [Job 1:11]. But did Job do so? Nay, Verily! How did he overcome the dreadful conflict, when his possessions were all swept away and his children became worldly? He acknowledged his own weakness and his entire dependence upon God by offering sacrifices to God. Job typically offered up Christ as his only merit and righteousness and strength and safety. Likewise, we meet Satan’s charge of weakness and sinfulness, as to the old creation, by admitting it every bit, while at the same time declaring that Christ died for us, shed His blood for our sins, and put them away thereby. We shout it out that we also died with Christ and count our old sinful-self dead indeed, because God counts it so. We firmly believe in the finished work of Calvary for us, and we boldly announce our faith in the devil’s face. That is prevailing through the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony.

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” [Rev.12:11]

Such believers “*love not their lives unto the death.*” While counting the old self-life dead, the new Christ life is gladly poured out for the salvation of others. “*I count not my life dear unto myself,*” said the Apostle Paul [Act.20:24]. Such saints **DIE DAILY**. Though the **OUTWARD MAN PERISH**, because of self-sacrificing service for the welfare of others; yet **THE INWARD MAN IS RENEWED** day by day by feeding on Christ, and of course never perishes. Hallelujah! Such then are the conflicts and the triumphs on earth of those who arrive in heaven as the manly son. The same is true of all overcomers, the heat of the battle and the value of the victory being according to that particular rank. Do you wonder at the acclaim?

“Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” [Rev.12:12]

It would seem that all the glorified saints will shout this triumphant acclaim to one another and to angels. At the beginning of Christ’s reign in heaven and over the earth, Psalm 150 will certainly be most sublimely and triumphantly sung by the united redeemed voices in heaven and on earth. Compare the first and the last verses of Psalm 150:

“Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.” [Psa.150:1]

“Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.” [Psa.150:6]

But it will be sung first in heaven (see Rev.19). And, it may fittingly begin at that point. The word **praise** (hallelujah) occurs 13 times in this last little Psalm 150.

ATTENDANT SCENES ON EARTH

"Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea; for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath; because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."
[Rev.12:12]

In the notes on Revelation 9, we saw that the ascent of the angel from the pit occurs simultaneously with the fall of the star (Satan) from heaven to earth. The beast, who before will receive a deadly wound, also will ascend out of the pit of the abyss at that same time [Rev.11:7, 17:8]. All these occur 250 days before the middle of the week. The "*woe*" in this verse includes all the indescribable and drawn-out suffering that the Antichrist shall precipitate upon men; destruction of property and life and nations warring against nations as has never yet had a parallel, not even in the present wars.

After 5 months of perplexing preparations [Rev.9:5-11], then will begin the white-heated national and international ferocity of devil-inspired men. The Great Tribulation, which is especially Israel's chastisement, will be embraced in that period. A **SHORT TIME** will be the duration of Antichrist's reign, namely, 42 months [Rev.13:5], which will be also the devil's duration on earth. It is then that "*he walketh about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour,*" even as now he "*appears as an angel of light*" by means of his ministers (compare 1Pe.5:8 with 2Co.11:13-15). Satan knows that he must be cast into the pit of the abyss by an angel at the coming of Jesus with His holy devotees. He will have had his last blow at these; but he will make a final assault upon Israel. He had induced them to unbelief in the wilderness; his minister Balaam led them into idolatry (compare Num.25 with Rev.2:14). He stirred up in them national pride until they cried for a king like the nations; he caused them to hate their Messiah, Jesus; and he is to blame for their national blindness. Finally, he will do his very wickedest in that last brief time, utterly to exterminate Israel from the earth.

"And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood." [Rev.12:15]

Still bear in mind that John saw this in vision. Hence, the woman is a body of people. The flood from Satan's mouth is the armies which he shall stir up against God's people. Isaiah 59 describes Israel's sad condition and God's just chastisement of them by means of their adversaries. God arises to deliver them. "*When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him* (put him to flight)" [Isa.59:19]. God may again cleave the earth and swallow up their enemies even as he did with Moses' enemies [Num.16:30].

By comparing Revelation 6:12 with Matthew 24:29, we gather that there will be a great earthquake at that very time, which is doubtless the meaning of "*the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood*" [Rev.12:16] of the armies which Satan will send to destroy Israel.

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." [Rev.12:17]

This "remnant of her seed" is especially the Jews in Palestine who will have believed on Jesus under the ministry of the 2 witnesses of Revelation 11. No doubt, some of them will be killed by the Antichrist. See the souls under the altar [Rev.6, 15:2-3].

THE GREAT WORLD POWERS [REV. 13]

"And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus:"

"And he stood upon the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the names of blasphemy..."

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." [Rev.12:17, 13:1, 13:11 RV]

The Revised Version is evidently at fault here in saying that the dragon, and not John, stood on the sand of the sea. We arrive here at the Apostle's 3rd Vision Viewpoint. In Revelation 13 and in Revelation 16-18, we get God's view of national and ecclesiastical affairs. Here the Holy Spirit sets the 2 beasts side by side, because they respectively represent the national and ecclesiastical world. Therefore we will study them together. Together, these 2 beasts really constitute the Antichrist, the antithesis of Christ as the coming rightful King and the true prophet.

THE 1ST BEAST

- In Revelation 1, John stood, in spirit, **ON THE LORD'S DAY** and heard a trumpet voice behind him. Turning about, he learned that it was the voice of the Lord judging His own people in view of the **DAY OF THE LORD**.
- In Revelation 4, John stood, in spirit, **WITHIN AN OPEN DOOR IN HEAVEN**, beholding scenes there, also in view of the unfolding of the **DAY OF THE LORD**. From that viewpoint, he also beheld earth scenes.
- Here, in Revelation 13, we see him **STANDING IN THE MIDST OF EARTH SCENES** and beholding them as they will transpire from the beginning of the eventful week (7 years of tribulation) to its awful and glorious close.

This beast pictures the united world powers of that period, even as the lion pictured the 70 years duration of the Babylonian Empire. Here, "*the sea*" does not mean a body of water; but it means the "*many waters*" of

Revelation 17:1; that is, *“the peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues”* [Rev.17:15].

The *“sand of the sea”* indicates the shifting, unsettled conditions of the nations at that time.

The *“beast having seven heads”* speaks of the empire which will be formed of 7 nations and *“rising up out of the sea”* tells how that empire will be formed. We surmise that strife between nations will exist, as at the present time. Then certain prominent nations will unite to overthrow those terrible opposing powers. That will no doubt result in a 7-headed empire. We are drawing near to that condition now. It will be the agreement of 7 nations from the midst of all the nations of the world.

John saw this in the vision as it will actually be forming. By comparing Revelation 13:3 with Revelation 17:8 and 11, we learn that 1 particular man is also called the beast, because he will be the emperor (world ruler), a dictator. He will receive the deadly wound and be healed and will be brought up from the pit of the abyss (compare Rev.13:3 with Rev.11:7). The emperor of Babylon was represented by a head of gold; but Daniel said also to Nebuchadnezzar, its first king, *“Thou art this head of gold”* [Dan.2:38], which expressed his dominant authority.

“The ten horns” on the beast are *“ten kings”* [Rev.17:12].

The *“names of blasphemy”* on the head of the beast expresses the exceeding wicked character of the coming World Empire. It appears yet more wicked in Revelation 17:3, even as *“a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy.”* The great fiery red dragon, that old serpent the devil, is the source and power of that blasphemous wickedness. He is the prince of this world. Nevertheless, some of those very nations call themselves Christian nations today; but God, because they count Him out, calls them bloody wild beasts. Their real character is set forth in the following.

DESCRIPTION OF THE 1ST BEAST

“And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.” [Rev.13:2]

Consider studiously Daniel 7, where we find a graphic picture of the first 4 world powers. The beastly features of those first 3 empires of Gentile Times will be the basic features of the coming World Empire. Daniel 7 teaches that the **lion**, by his strength and ferocity, represents the Babylonian Empire throughout its duration of 70 years. Hence, *“the mouth of the lion,”* in John’s vision, means that the coming empire will roar like a lion, *“speaking great things and blasphemies even against God, his name, his tabernacle and them that dwell in heaven”* [Rev.18:5-6]. Satan will empower its bloodthirsty emperor thus to speak.

The **bear**, by its stealth, deliberateness, and tenacity, represents the Medo-Persian empire. Here "*the feet of the bear*" indicate that the movements of the coming World Empire will be similar to that one.

The Grecian Empire was represented by the agile, swift, dashing **leopard**, of which Alexander the great was the pronounced expression. John's vision informs us that the first and chief characteristic of the beast, or World Empire, will be leopard-like; because it will operate with dashing rapidity. Any marvel? Nay; for its 1 absolute ruler will be devil-empowered and authorized, even devil-controlled. That is why the world will worship the dragon (the devil) and the beast [Rev.13:4].

Nebuchadnezzar's great image told of a 4th World Empire, represented by the iron legs and the feet of iron and clay. Daniel's 4th beast, described as "*dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly*," was another picture of the same 4th Empire, that is, the Roman Empire. Why did John not see that 4th likeness? Because the beast which he saw, was likened to the other 3 and will indeed be the feet portion of the great image of Daniel 2; that is, the finale of the Roman Empire; though it will not be so called. All the essential features of the first 3 empires united to make the 4th what it became. Likewise, the essential features of the world powers of Daniel's day will be the prevailing features of the coming World Empire, which will have 7 heads (comprised of 7 leading nations) and 10-horns (10 rulers lending their aid [Rev.17:12]). We are impressed with the oneness of the nations expressed by this verse. These 7 kingdoms will be so powerfully possessed by the spirit of Satan that they are regarded as one, even "*the beast*."

The Holy Spirit informs us that "*the powers that be are ordained of God*" [Rom.13:1]. Daniel had said to Nebuchadnezzar, "*Thou, O king art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, strength and glory*" [Dan.2:37] (study also Deu.32:8 and Dan.4:25, 35). **Question:** "Why then are the national rulers called **beasts**," someone may ask. **Answer:** Because they do not reign according to the wisdom of God. "*Man that is in honor and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish*" [Psa.49:20]. When Nebuchadnezzar was made king over Babylon, Daniel said to him, "*Thou art this head of gold*" (he was supposed to be the noblest specimen of rulers); but he swelled up with pride and boasted of his wisdom, wealth and power and left the God of heaven out of his reckonings. God terms such an attitude "*brutish*" or "*beastly*" [Psa.49:6, 10, 12, 20]. So Nebuchadnezzar was dethroned for 7 years and forced to dwell in the fields and eat grass like the cattle. He acted out what the Lord terms such fellows, until he humbled himself, confessed his ignorance, and acknowledged God and His Sovereignty [Dan.4]. Today, the allied nations acknowledge God nominally and are called Christian nations. Evidently they are heading toward the 7-Horned Empire; but as the 4 World Empires of history deteriorated from gold to iron and clay, so the empire which John saw will degenerate into an anti-Christian condition with the Antichrist as its emperor. The same condition is true of Christendom.

God ordained The Church and started it out in holiness and power, in simplicity and unity; but men corrupted it after 200 years. They substituted human learning and energy for the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit. Theories and by-laws of carnal men took the place of the Bible. The results are schisms, sects, and denominations; great systems having *“a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof”* [2Ti.3:5]. Instead of a powerful theocracy with one all-sufficient sublime Head, Jesus Christ, Christendom has become a gigantic democracy with many carnal heads. Men have not ruled over the nations as subject to the God of heaven.

Another, even Satan, has interjected himself and taken control of national affairs. He is termed *“The god of this world”* [2Co.4:4]. *“The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood”* the Lord, when He was on His way to answer Daniel’s prayer [Dan.10:13]. That prince was none other than an evil spirit in mid-heaven, acting under the direction of *“the prince of this world”* [Joh.12:31, 14:30], *“the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience”* [Eph.2:2]. Jesus did not deny to the devil that the kingdoms of this world are under his control today [Mat.4]. This condition of satanic rule of national affairs will culminate with the blasphemous usurpation of the nations. Hence, here John declares that the dragon (the devil) will give the beast his power, his throne, and great authority. Satan is the chief usurper.

The politics of the world are sure to grow worse and worse. Not one of the nations will ever be subject to Divine Authority until Jesus comes and all the *“kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord”* and His Anointed One [Rev.11:15]. Then every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**. Out of the universal, international, and religious wreckage will arise certain nations that will accept Jesus Christ as the universal Sovereign. The other nations and religious democracies will be overthrown forever. The divinely ordained nations only will exist and be subject to God.

THE MAN OF SIN

“And I saw one of its heads as slain to death; and the wound of its death was healed; and the whole earth wondered after the beast.” [Rev.13:3]

Remember, the Greek word **THERION**, here rendered **BEAST**, means *“a wild, savage beast”* (an appropriate picture of national greed). The Greek word **ZOON**, translated **BEAST** in Revelation 4 and elsewhere, means *“any creature; any living being, whether man, animal, or bird.”*

There is an important turn here in the account of *“the beast.”* One man, rather than the empire, becomes the center of attraction. Evidently the 7-Headed Empire will be comprised of 7 leading nations with their respective kings ruling in agreement with one another. Thus, the week (7 years) of national usurpation will begin with the League of Nations formed, announcing **PEACE AND SAFETY** [1Th.5:3]. That will continue a brief time; but trouble will arise (see notes on Rev.8). As stated in Revelation 17:10, 5 kings will fall; another will be slain by *“a sword”*

[Rev.13:14]; and 1, probably by gaining ascendancy over the others, will continue for a very brief time. Then the 1 slain head (king) will be healed by satanic miracle. According to Revelation 11:7 and 17:8, he *“will ascend out of the pit of the abyss.”* This stupendous miracle will call forth the admiration of the world, which will welcome such a fellow to be the universal ruler. It is quite probable that he will be dead just 3 days, even as Jesus was, which will make him seem to be the Son of God. For nearly 3 years, there will be a league of 7 nations governed by 7 rulers; but, during the next 3½ yrs, 1 man alone will assume absolute control of the whole empire. Daniel saw this man as a *“little horn”* [Dan.7:8]. Most of that time, he will exploit himself as God. For *“one hour,”* a very brief time, 10 kings will fall into line with him. This is all summarized in Revelation 13:1.

SOURCE OF 1-MAN POWER

At this point in the world program, 250 days before the middle of that terrible week of 7 years, Satan will be cast out of heaven [Rev.12]. Then, he will open the pit and bring up his man of devilish destiny and fully empower and authorize him to reign [Rev.13:2]. This is how the man slain will be healed and become the sole ruler. But, he will continue only for *“a short space”* [Rev.17:10], *“forty-two months”* [Rev.13:5]. That will also be the duration of the devil’s *“short time”* on earth [Rev.12:12]. From the moment of his coming out of the pit, that fellow will be reckoned as *“that man of sin, the son of perdition”* [2Th.2:4]. As Jesus Christ is *“declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead”* [Rom.1:4]; so the Antichrist will presume to prove his divinity by coming up from beneath. Therefore, we read that *“he, as God, will sit down in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God”* [2Th.2:4]. The world will marvel, wonder after him and worship him. Oh, how Satan blinds the minds of men. They will reject the true, unselfish, lovely Son of God and run after a false, blasphemous tyrant. They will follow one who will continue a short space instead of turning to Him who shall reign forever.

“The mystery of iniquity” [2Th.2:7] will culminate with those 1,260 most awful days. Apparently the true God will vacate the earth and let Satan do his worst, and let it be seen how wicked the devil can make man. The Antichrist is the man that the Christ-rejecting world will go wild over and call him their god and savior. But praise be to the true and living God! Over against the apex of the basest, most blatant blasphemy of *“that man of sin,”* will stand, in majestic, sublimest, heavenly glory, the true Anointed One...together with those whom He has redeemed with His own precious blood. The flaming effulgence of His descending presence will destroy that troop of darkness; and the exultant, most worthy praises of His people will be *“as the sound of many waters”* [Rev.19:1-7].

“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations..” [Rev.13:7]

“The saints” throughout Revelation 13 refer to Gentiles and Jews who will believe during The Tribulation period (compare Rev.2:26 with Rev.12:15-17 and 18:4). Though they fall by the sword of the Antichrist, yet they will have *“gotten the victory over the beast”* [Rev.15:2]. *“He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity, etc.”* [Rev.13:10]. Jesus said, *“With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again”* [Mar.4:24]. God will see to it that they which persecute and slay His people will meet a similar fate. *“Woe unto thee that spoilest and thou wast not spoiled...When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled”* [Isa.33:1 and Hab.2:5-8]. *“If any man hath an ear, let him hear”* [Rev.13:9]. Note how different is this statement from the one uttered 7 times to the 7 churches: *“If any man hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.”* Why the difference? Because by that time all whom God will really count as in The Church will have been taken to heaven. All who then may have ears to hear, will hear as dwelling on earth.

THE 2ND BEAST

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a little lamb and he spake as a dragon.” [Rev.13:11]

This beast is termed *“the false prophet”* [Rev.16:13 and 19:20]. The 1st beast will be a political (national) man, the 2nd beast will be a religious man; but they will operate hand in glove. The 2nd beast will work for the 1st beast. Together, they will influence the entire world, nationally and religiously.

The 1st beast will arise from the sea; that is, the restless, changing multitudes and nations.

The 2nd beast will come forth apparently more from the quiet, steady, established, religious elements, without observation, seemingly modest and weak. He has 2 horns as of a little lamb (ARNION, Greek); that is, he will feign to be small, gentle, inoffensive, yielding. Apparently he will not be a wild beast, but a domestic beast. The lamb speaks of sacrifice and of worship, as if this beast were a priest as well as a prophet; in imitation of Christ in both these offices. But God declares him to be a **BEAST** and a **FALSE PROPHET**. What a counterfeit of the dear *“Lamb of God which bore away the sin of the world.”*

Observe that this 2nd beast has 2 horns. Two, because he purposes to be cosmopolitan, that he may win the Jews and Gentiles. As the 1st beast will be the world’s greatest conqueror; so the 2nd beast will be the world’s greatest prophet, speaking unto and in behalf of all men, the 2 horns being the double symbol of his power. In man’s eye, those 2 fellows, whom the Lord terms **WILD BEASTS**, will be the greatest characters ever known. Though the 2nd beast will look like a lamb, yet his speech will give him away, *“he spake as a dragon.”* In the beginning, the serpent beguiled Eve thru his subtlety; likewise, the false prophet will culminate *“man’s day”* [1Co.4:3] by his oily, crafty, *“good words and fair speeches”* [Jud.1:15], addressing men with authority as of the oracle of God. He will prove to be the very embodiment of deception. Indeed, the 2nd beast’s power will lie in his deception—

2 lamb-like horns, weak and defenseless: he will depend upon his father, the devil, even as Christ, who was really weak in Himself, but strong through dependence upon His Father. Consult John 5:19, 30, 43.

"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 threescore and six (666)."
[Rev.13:18]

Let us look at this strange number of 666.

- 4 is the number of humanity, even as 3 is the number of Deity.
- 6 is the number of supposed human perfection; but 7 is the number of Divine Human Perfection (4 plus 3). 777 was the age of Lamech, who immediately preceded the deluge; and the rest, which Noah brought in, marvelously typifies the full-orbed perfection of God's purposes and operations which consummate in the next age. Hence this last book of His revelation is astonishingly the book of 7's.
- But here we also find man's number: 666, the counterfeit of Divine Perfection, climaxing "*man's day*" [1Co.4:3]. It means that depraved man, Satan assisting him, of course, will reach the highest point of perfection possible. Political prowess, amassing wealth, inventions for profit and pleasure, modes and speed of travel, religious attainments and achievements—everything will reach the loftiest pinnacle of human ability. Men are climbing toward the apex today in making implements, planes, and ships of war. The religious bouquets which men will toss at the beast, by which the 2nd beast "*deceiveth them that dwell on the earth,*" will be by far the greatest. It will be by showing himself off as God that his number will stand out, and that men will be induced to allow the imprint of the **MARK OF HIS NAME** on their hands and foreheads. Instead of giving praise to the true and living God, they will shout, "Glory be to Man." Concerning the Antichrist, in whom all these things center and consummate, men will exclaim, "Who is like unto the beast?"

But that will all end in colossal collapse and egregious defeat. God be praised! The number 666 is marvelously too short. Only God's number 777 will satisfy Himself and man. We have that full perfection and completeness in Jesus Christ. He shall indeed be "*in the midst of the elders, a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes* (all power and full perception) *which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth*" [Rev.5:6]. He is our glorious Head, our full completeness, our eternal perfection. Hallelujah!

The 2nd beast (false prophet) is the "*little horn*" of Daniel 8:6-12, even as the 1st beast is the "*little horn*" of Dan.7." The victories recorded there are religious, rather than national. He is also "*the hireling*" of John 10:12-13 associated with the thief (wolf) of the 1st beast; and, he is "*that wicked*" (lawless one) of 2 Thessalonians 2:8. He bears the religious stamp of "*all*

power and signs and wonders of falsehood' [2Th.2:9], which agrees perfectly with our text, *"he doeth great wonders."* The 1st beast will be a Gentile; the 2nd beast will be a Jew.

"And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." [Rev.13:12]

Step after step we see the Anointed of God counterfeited in Revelation 13. As the Holy Spirit exercises the authority of our blessed Lord in His people and causes them to magnify Him; so the 2nd prophet will speak for the false king. As the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus by **MIGHTY SIGNS AND WONDERS** wrought in answer to our faith; so the false prophet will attempt to prove the deity of the beast by doing *"great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men"* [Rev.13:13], in imitation of God's fiery judgments (see Rev.8, 9 and 16).

"And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." [Rev.15:13]

His miracles will be deceptive; yet he will persuade the people to make an image of the 1st beast, which will doubtless be his exact likeness. The emperor's throne will be in Rome but Jehovah's chief operations will be in Judea, where the Jews will be gathered and where the nations will be assembled against them. Therefore, to command the worship of Jews and Gentiles, the emperor will have his image erected in the temple in Jerusalem. *"Breath,"* not **life** (see margin), will be given to the image, and it will demand worship or death. That will be *"the abomination of desolation"* [Mat.24:15, Dan.9:27, Dan.12:11]. As Christ is **THE TRUTH**, so the beast will be **THE LIE**. By believing **THE LIE** men will be damned; however by believing **THE TRUTH** men are saved.

What a time of dense darkness (called **JACOB'S TROUBLE**) for Palestine. Any wonder that Jesus exclaimed, *"Except those days should be shortened no flesh shall be saved"* [Mat.24:22]. If the kingdom of the beast will be *"full of darkness"* [Rev.16:10], how great will that darkness be where all the power of the devil and hell and the national and false religious world will be concentrated? Mark the expressions of the awfulness of those Tribulation days: Devilish wonders, fire from heaven, deception, worship of a man, worship of the devil, absolute surrender to Satan demanded or death. That prophet will come *"after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and wonders of falsehood and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved"* [2Th.2:9-10].

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads. 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." [Rev.13:16-17]

Whatever that **MARK** will be, it certainly will be the satanic counterfeit of the sealing of God's people mentioned in Revelation 7 and 14. We get the spirit of its meaning by noting all that is said about it here.

- The **BEAST'S NAME IS THE MARK**. Traders must have "*the mark, or the name of the beast.*" It is called also "*the mark of His name*" [Rev.14:11], and "*his mark*" [Rev.15:2].
- There will be some indication by the hand, or on the head, of **ALLEGIANCE TO THE ANTICHRIST, AS AN ACT OF WORSHIP**, which will obtain the promise of his protection.
- The **GRIPS AND PASSWORDS OF SECRET ORDERS** are a suggestion of what is that mark.
- **NONE CAN BUY OR SELL EXCEPT HE WORSHIPS THE BEAST AS GOD** and shows loyalty to his devilish government.

Saluting the flag is not taking that mark. It is only an expression of loyalty to the government. Though some things point in that direction, yet nothing in use today can be called "*the mark of the beast*" because that beast is not yet in power, and will not be until the latter half of The Tribulation period.

Consider the essential difference between the true Christ and the Antichrist.

Jesus said "*I came not to do mine own will, but THE WILL OF HIM THAT SENT ME*" [Joh.6:38]. The Antichrist shall "*do ACCORDING TO HIS OWN WILL; he shall MAGNIFY HIMSELF; he shall not regard any god, but magnify himself above all*" [Dan.11:37].

The essence of the Christ spirit is **OTHERS**. The essence of the Antichrist spirit is **SELF**.

Jesus came from heaven, to **BLESS THE NEEDY**. He came graciously to relieve the undeserving. The Antichrist comes from beneath to **CURSE ALL**. This spirit is even now rife everywhere on earth. James says, "*It is earthly, sensual, devilish*" [Jam.3:15]. Even the world motive for doing good is eventually to benefit self. This is the nature of the natural man, the old man; and it was injected into him by Satan.

Believers yield to this Antichrist spirit, when they seek their own ease, their own pleasure, their own exaltation, their own defense. If we would be full overcomers, we must judge every manifestation of self as that which was once for all and forever rejected by our death with Christ on the cross. Thus, we overcome the spirit of Antichrist day by day. Beforehand we overcome the mark, the name, and the number of the beast. In no sense can we have fellowship with or, in the least, endorse the interests of self and still be full overcomers. Jesus said to the disciples, "*I have meat to eat that ye know not of. My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work*" [Joh.4:32].

Unique Humil ity

Humil ity, a flower rare,
That once was found in Eden fair.
“Twas long ago—and ne’er since then
Has it been glimpsed in haunts of men,
Till Jesus came in Bethl ehem.
O wondrous bloom of fragrance sweet,
Prized by all men with grace replete.
In lowly dell s ‘tis found again,
As contrite hearts yiel d to Christ’s reign
And let His life their lives constrain.
Humil ity! Oh gift Divine.
How marvelous! It may be mine—
This precious grace of unctuous life
In contrast with all sel fish strife.
“Tis manifest in the Lamb’s Wife.

Mary M. Bodie

THE SEALED ONES OF ISRAEL [REV. 14]

The first 5 verses of this chapter are a sort of heavenly parenthesis, an apparent interruption of the general program. The Lamb will be the important figure in the glory; because through His sacrifice mankind has been redeemed. By faith in Christ’s death and resurrection, some are saved and will finally reach the glory. They overcome the devil “*thru the blood of the Lamb*” [Rev.12:11]. The Lamb is indeed the great figure throughout this whole drama of Revelation. He is the one found worthy to open the book of unfulfilled prophecy and its seals [Rev.5-6]. And, at the closing of this book, we read that the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple of the New Jerusalem [Rev.21:22]

“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.” [Rev.14:1-5]

The “*Mount Zion*” here is the same mount as in Hebrews 12:22. As the earthly Jerusalem was built upon a mountain in Palestine, called Zion, a fortress, a monument; so the heavenly Jerusalem, especially as relating to Israel, is called Mount Zion. That will be the eternal fortress for them, of which the earthly Zion is but the reflection.

John saw the 144,000 in heaven. The voice which he heard was “*from heaven*.” The song they sang was heard “*before the throne*,” and that throne

was in heaven in Revelation 4 and 5. They are also declared to be “*without fault before the throne of God.*” These 144,000 are the same as those mentioned in Revelation 7 where they are called “*the servants of God.*” In that same chapter, John records their sealing; that is, their anointing with the Holy Spirit as Paul explains in Ephesians 1:13 and 4:30. Not only is the name of the Father written on their foreheads, but the “*name of the Lamb also,*” says the Greek. This Divine Stamp is what the Antichrist will seek to imitate by counterfeit in demanding the world to take “*the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name*” [Rev.13:17]. Apparently his devotees will receive an anointing with a spirit; but it will be devilish power.

In Revelation 7, John informs us that their number is 144,000 and that they are all Israelites, 12,000 chosen from every one of the 12 tribes of Israel. This is not a representative number, but the exact number of that company. The exact number of The Bridal Company is not indicated by figures, except by the dimensions of the Holy City [Rev.21:2, 9]. She will be “*as it were the company of two armies*” [SSg.6:13].

“*They sing ... a new song before the throne.*” Who will sing that song? Not the 4 living creatures and 23 elders; for it will be **SUNG IN THEIR PRESENCE**. Not the innumerable company of Revelation 7; for “*no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty-four thousand.*” Why then try to put that song into any mouth other than theirs? In these verses, John tells out the character, destiny, and reward of the 144,000.

- The 144,000 cannot be The Bride, as some vainly teach; for they have a lesser place than the 4 living creatures and the 24 elders, who figure The Bride.
- They will arrive in heaven quite a while after The Bride will have already arrived there.
- Immediately upon the setting up of the throne in heaven, a representative group, the 4 living creatures and 24 elders, will be seen there also [Rev.4]. They alone will be present when the Lamb is declared before the universe to be worthy to take the book and open the seals thereof. Their testimony alone, as full overcomers, will confirm that worthiness (see Rev.4 and 5).
- The 144,000 will not be there until about 3 years later (see Rev.12).
- The 4 living creatures and 24 elders will be “*in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne*” [Rev.4:6]; but the 144,000, will be “*before the throne*” only.
- The 4 living creatures and 24 elders will “*sit*” and have on their heads “*crowns of gold*”; but, the 144,000 will “*stand.*”
- The Bride of the Lamb will be in closest fellowship with the Bridegroom, moving side by side with Him; but this company of

144,000 are said to “*follow the Lamb.*” Their nearest expressed relationship is “*with the Lamb, before the throne.*”

- The Bridal Company is “*from every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue*” [Rev.5:9-10]; but the 144,000 are only from the 12 tribes of Israel.

The phrase “Gentile bride” is unscriptural. Likewise it is just as unscriptural to suppose that The Bride will be wholly of Israel. By His death, Jesus Christ “*made both one (Jews and Gentiles) to make in Himself of twain (Jews and Gentiles) one new man, so making peace*” [Eph.2:14-15]. That is, He died for all mankind (Jews and Gentiles) as one bad lump, that by His resurrection he might bring forth a new creation, a good lump from the Jews and Gentiles. Hence, as the Apostle Paul says further, “*thru Him, we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access unto the Father.*” Note the hidden mystery of Christ: “*That the Gentiles should be joint heirs (inherit with the Jews) and of a joint-body and joint-partakers of His promise by the Gospel*” [Eph.3:6]. Out of this **JOINT-BODY** (The Church—made up of Jews and Gentiles) our Lord is selecting a company who shall constitute His spotless and glorious Bride.

The phrase “*not defiled with women*” is used by some as a slam against the marriage relation, of which God is the Originator. Self-righteousness, the religion of “will worship,” is continually flaunting far-fetched theories on the public, based upon some isolated Scripture citation and by wild interpretations entirely out of harmony with the whole tenor of the Word. If this phrase be taken literally, then only women will be in that company, and unmarried women at that. Of course that is simply silly. Just as reasonably may one teach, from Ephesians 5:25-33, that only married men and women can be in the Bridehood; which also is foolish. What then is the meaning here? Plainly this: Woman is used frequently in the Bible to represent (symbolize) a body of religious people.

- In Isaiah 54:4-6, Israel is addressed as a “*widow,*” Jehovah having been her “*Husband.*”
- In 2 Corinthians 11:2, The Church is addressed as “*a chaste virgin.*”
- In Revelation 17, we find a description of “*the great harlot*” (the Roman Church).
- In Revelation 2:23, we read of “*her children,*” the so-called Christian churches or denominations.

Therefore, the word **women**, as used here, means religious organizations, not only such as are organized in the letter, but also those who have the spirit of sectarianism. The meaning is that the 144,000 will be separated unto God alone and hold Christ as their Head as the one, the only all-sufficient Head of the whole Church. They are a part of The Church. Thus they also acknowledge other believers as in The Church, though, on account of their carnal walk and ecclesiastical defiling influence, they cannot have perfect fellowship with them. With some of them, they can have no fellowship at all; because they are out of fellowship with God Himself. “*If we walk in the light...we have fellowship*” [1Jo.1:7]. Indeed we must walk in the Spirit to know always how to treat all God’s people. It is no

small item to live separate from men and yet not be separatists; to move independently of sects and organizations and still not be sectarian. **CHRIST IN US** actually, practically, is the only way. Thus, we can be channels of blessings to church people who are organized and to unorganized bodies who are sectarians, and yet not be defiled by their doctrines and ways. The phrase "*they are virgins*" bears the same interpretation. They have not fellowship with unscriptural religious bodies. A virgin figures one who is separated, having only Christ as Head. The time of the fulfillment of these 5 verses is in immediate connection with Revelation 12. They will be the continuation of events in heaven, while Revelation 13 will be occurring on earth, especially from Verse 3 forward.

GOSPEL AND WARNING

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto those who dwell upon the earth and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people." [Rev.14:6]

This verse announces good news to all the world. Then follows abruptly an abstract in figurative language of the judgments which are related in detail in Revelation 15 to 19. Through swift anointed messengers, God mercifully will give warning of the coming judgments.

In previous chapters, we learned that the word **angel** means "a messenger," and usually refers to some Divinely Endowed saint with a heavenly message to this world. The same is true in this case. Phillip was a type of those who will herald the truth at that time. Dreadful persecutions were rife when he and others went everywhere preaching the Word. On one trip, Phillip was supernaturally carried across the country [Act.8:39].

Because of the unspeakable darkness and devilishness of the times [Rev.12], the woman, the mother of the man child, must be protected and nourished miraculously for 3½ years; so also must the heralds of glad tidings then be miraculously guided and guarded. The devil will use aeroplanes and deadly instruments to transmit his messengers; and Jehovah must cope with him for the safety of His people.

Flying indicates the marvelous speed of such Gospel heralds.

"In the midst of heaven" corresponds with Jesus' words in Matthew 24:31, "*from one end of heaven to the other.*" Representatives of Israel will be gathered to Palestine from every place whence they were scattered.

"Those that dwell on earth," evidently refers to professed believers; for here they are distinguished from "*every nation and kindred and tongue and people.*" They will rejoice over the death of the 2 witnesses [Rev.11:10] (compare also Rev.3:10).

"Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." [Rev.14:7]

Consider the flying angel's message. It is a 3-fold exhortation on account of impending judgment. The phrase "*everlasting Gospel*" corresponds with Daniel's announcement of "*everlasting righteousness*" for his people [Dan.9:24], which the Messiah will bring in at the beginning of the new age. The nations also that will be saved will enjoy that righteousness. The angel's Gospel will be an offset to that of the false prophet, who will induce the world to go wild over the Antichrist. The Antichrist will deserve no worship, no honor; he never created anything but strife and sorrow. Therefore the entreaty, "*Fear God, and give glory to Him*" ... "*worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*" Thank God! His **ELECT** will hear and heed the angel's words.

*"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."
[Rev.14:8]*

This is an epitome statement of what is given, in detail, about the judgment of the Roman Church system in Revelation 18.

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into 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." [Rev.14:9-10]

The 3rd angel announced the full and final consequence of rejecting Christ as Savior and King and of accepting the beast instead. Unmerited mercy, when rejected, turns to unmeasured and just hate. Jehovah poured His wrath out against sin upon His holy Son once for all on the cross, who tasted death for every man. But they, who prefer Satan's poison, and worship his great man and drink in his supposed power by accepting "*the mark of his name*" [Rev.14:11], "*shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured without mixture into the cup of His indignation, and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.*" That refers to the battle of Armageddon [Rev.16:14-16], and agrees with Malachi 4:1, "*Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven...It shall leave them neither root nor branch.*" That will be the precursor of the fire and brimstone of the lake of fire. Hence, it will be temporary. Though their torment will be forever, yet it will not be in the presence of the saints and of the Lamb forever. From heaven, the glorified saints with Jesus will behold the unspeakable slaughter of that hour; but they will not see the torment of the wicked after they are cast into the lake of fire.

"And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." [Rev.14:11-12]

Here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus (see notes on Rev.13:7-10). That will be during the reign of Antichrist, when **JACOB'S TROUBLE**, the "*Great Tribulation*" [Mat.24:21] will be on. The Church will have been taken up. Some Jews will have received the word

of the “*two witnesses*” [Rev.11]. Some of these will miraculously escape and endure to the end of that dark period, as Jesus said in Matthew 24:13. Others will be slain by the Antichrist. In both cases, they will be counted overcomers (compare Rev.2:26). The patience and faith of those saints, necessary to enable them to stand and withstand in that evil day, will be manifest. “*The trial of their faith will be found unto praise and honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ*” [1Pe.1:7]. Hence, the special word of comfort from heaven in Revelation 14:13, which John was bidden to write:

- “*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord*”; that is, they that will be slain at that time.
- They shall “*rest from their labors*,” which will not be in vain.

JESUS’ COMING SYMBOLIZED

“And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.”
[Rev.14:14]

The “*white cloud*” is the host of glorified believers, associated with Jesus when He will be revealed from heaven.

The “*sharp sickle*” is His instrument of scathing judgment. Indeed the last 7 verses [Rev.14:14-20] of this concise chapter are a graphic pen-picture of the finale of the judgment scenes.

The voice of “*another angel*” calling upon the Lord to “*thrust in His sharp sickle*,” expresses the absolute sympathy and unflinching agreement of the saints in heaven with Him in judging the world. “*The harvest of the earth*,” speaks especially of the judgment of the world by wars and plagues, etc., fulfilling Isaiah 63:1-6 and Joel 3:13-14.

“*The cluster of the vine of the earth*” speaks particularly of Catholicism. The house of Israel was called “*the vine*” or “*vineyard*” [Isa.5:1-7]. The Catholic Church is in a similar relation to God as was Israel. She claims to be God’s church; but she divorced herself from Him, even as did Israel. The gathering of the “*vine of the earth*” (the judgment of the great harlot) is given in detail in Revelation 18.

Finally, “*the great winepress of the wrath of God*” ... “*trodden without the city*,” means the most terrible battle of all ages—Armageddon. The World War of 1914 to 1918 was an earnest of it and a preparation for it. The present conflict between the allies and Axis hoards is a greater preparation. The world has been rapidly ripening ever since for the final conflict. The cup of iniquity is about full. By that means, “*God will sit to judge all the nations about*” [Joe.3:12]. Jerusalem and the Holy Land will suffer untold chastisement because of that terrible carnage. Her wail will be, “*The Lord hath trodden under foot all my mighty men in the midst of me*” [Lam.1:12-17]. The valley of Megiddo (Jehoshaphat) will be the battlefield. So many will be the warriors from various nations. So unsparing will be the mad slaughter, and so deadly,

powerful, and sweeping will be the instruments of war, that blood will flow freely for a circuit of about 200 miles.

THE 7 LAST PLAGUES [REV. 15]

"And I saw another sign in the heaven, great and marvelous seven angels having the seven last plagues; because in them was filled up the fury of God." [Rev.15:1]

The phrase "*another sign*" refers back to Revelation 12 where we read of the sign-woman, man child, and the dragon. This "*another sign*" is not only great, but also marvelous, because the plagues are the belching forth of the fullness of Divine Fury upon a Christ-rejecting world. Wrath filled up is in contrast with unstinted and abounding mercy poured out during the past 2,000 years. The number 7 is a representative number which here is the final declaration of dispensational fullness and completeness. The phrase "*seven angels*" includes all the saints who fully judged the world during their lives, and will stand in full sympathy and cooperation with the Lord in judging the world at the end.

The "*seven plagues*" speak of the full measure of just judgment upon men. "*Last plagues*" implies former plagues, of which we read in Revelation 9; the judgments began in Revelation 8. The word **plagues** indicates the nature of the judgments. Rejection of accumulated mercy deserves accumulated fury from the hand of Divine Justice. Men deliberately turn from the ocean of God's love and choose instead the lake of fire. Men, "*knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them*" [Rom.1:32]. This is almost unbelievable, but it is taking place daily before our eyes.

"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. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." [Rev.15:2-4]

In Revelation 4:6, we saw "*before the throne a sea of glass like unto crystal.*" That reminded us of the **LAVER OF REGENERATION**. Here, the phrase "*mingled with fire*" points back to the unspeakable fiery tribulation during which those victors will have obtained cleansing in that laver before they can ascend to heaven. Peter speaks of that coming "*fiery trial*" [1Pe.1:7].

Exactly who are those who shall "*stand on the sea of glass*" in victory? Doubtless they are "*the souls under the altar*" [Rev.6:9-11] and those of Revelation 13:7, 15 and 14:13. The "*remnant of her seed*" [Rev.12:17] refer to these. The 2 witnesses of Revelation 11 may be of those fellow servants and brethren who shall be killed. Therefore, they will be among the great throng of Revelation 19 for they counted not their lives dear unto themselves.

To recant rather than die is shameful defeat; but to die rather than recant, though it seems like defeat, is glorious victory. Christ died in apparent defeat at the cruel hands of His foes; but in so doing, He *“annulled him that had the power of death, that is, the devil”* [Rev.2:14]. Jesus conquered and slew Satan with his own weapon. Those seen standing on the sea of glass are the last to arrive in heaven. By their being resurrected, the heavenly company will be completed. *“His heavenly kingdom”* will be full [2Ti.4:18]. What a glorious kingdom!

The song of Moses is found in Exodus 15 with the gist of it given in Exodus 15:11: *“Who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?”* Likewise, these victors over the beast will extol the greatness, justice and worthiness of the Lord. Their song is also prophetic of His future and eternal triumph, addressing Him as king of nations and adding, *“All nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments (righteous acts) are made manifest.”* Hence, the song they sing is indeed the song of the Lamb (note Rev.15:5).

Moses was instructed to build *“the tabernacle of testimony”* in the wilderness [Exo.25, Num.1:50]. That, however, was only a perishable shadow of **THE TRUE TABERNACLE** in heaven [Heb.8:2], of which John here speaks. Revelation 21:3 explains that the tabernacle includes all the glorified saints then in heaven. At the close of the millennial reign, it will be said, *“The tabernacle of God is with men”*; for the Holy City, surrounded with walls great and high, will come down out of heaven. They will be in heaven for 1,000 years, witnessing the results of redemption to all the universe. *“The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple”* [Rev.21:22]. In Revelation 11:19, we saw *“in the temple the ark of the testament.”* The Lamb is the ark, which speaks of salvation by sacrifice. The temple speaks of worship.

“The seven angels came out of the temple.” The angels, or messengers in the temple indicate the priestly function that some saints will have in close fellowship with Jesus as High Priest; because they fill that place on earth now. Coming out of the temple, *“having the seven plagues,”* shows their authority and co-operation with Christ to inflict the judgments which have been impending ever since His death for sinful man on the cross. Infinite love did its utmost to save men, the priests the meanwhile interceding for them. Then rejected mercy will take just vengeance upon men. The priestly character of the 7 angels is further expressed by their raiment—*“clothed in pure and white linen,”* similarly to the Lord Himself [Rev.1:13]. These cannot refer to angels, but to redeemed men. The 4 living creatures are not a different company from the 7 angels; they are one and the same group. The 4 living creatures are especially expressive of the character of them all; the 7 angels are expressive of them officially. The one instructs the others something like one minister speaks to other ministers in the same company.

“And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden

vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth forever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled." [Rev.15:5-8]

The angels come out of the temple, "*having their breasts girded with golden girdles*" [Rev.15:6]; that is, they show no mercy, but come forth to execute unstinted judgment; even as does the Candlestick Examiner move about in judging Christendom, having "*His paps girded with a golden girdle*" [Rev.1:13]. Likewise, no one can come into God's presence as an intercessor in behalf of a Christ-rejecting world at that time. The cup of iniquity will be filled to the brim. Upon men who refuse unlimited grace, the hour of unlimited Divine Fury must break forth. The bleeding Lamb will become a roaring Lion, dashing forth upon His prey. Study Genesis 49:9 and Isaiah 31:4 with Revelation 5:5. Then will prayers like Psalm 7:6 be answered, "*Arise, O Lord, in thine anger. Lift up Thyself because of the rage of mine enemies, and awake for me to the judgment that Thou hast commanded.*"

"*And the temple was filled with smoke.*" The smoke indicates Divine Wrath about to be poured out, as in Psalm 18:8, "*There went up a smoke out of His nostrils.*" My friends, how terrible is God's righteous wrath against sin and transgression, that He should give John a flashlight of it 20 centuries ago. On the other hand, how powerful was Christ's death to satisfy justice and how prevailing His high-priestly intervention ("*Father forgive them*") in restraining offended justice so many hundreds of years. How little we enter into the solemnity of these awful things. As we meditate, we are moved to exclaim with Miriam, "*Sing ye to the Lord; for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea*" [Exo.15:22]. "*Let the redeemed of the Lord say so*" [Psa.107:2].

WRATH POURED OUT [REV. 16]

"And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth." [Rev.16:1]

At different times and in various places, God has shown His displeasure against the wicked by means of judgments of various kinds. Those were earnestness of these final blasts of Divine Fury. As wickedness has increased, calamities have also increased. For example, indescribable earthquakes are far more frequent and widespread the last hundred years than before. Grievous sores, incurable diseases, horrible plagues, blistering heat; not only here and there but everywhere, will be important parts of the dark program. These will be the aggravated, accumulated, intoxicating "*fury of God, which is mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath*" [Rev.14:10]. Jeremiah was commanded to "*cause all nations to drink; and they shall drink and be moved and be mad because of the sword*" [Jer.25:15-16]. The visitations (wrath) recorded in Revelation 16 are the culmination of those in Revelation 8, which will commence sometime before the reign of the Antichrist. They will spread and increase in terribleness as the **HOUR OF JUDGMENT** (about 3½ years) proceeds. In his vision, it seemed to John that the plagues were emptied out of great bowls. According to Jeremiah 25:16, the chief

instrument will be the sword; that is, war always results in devastation, famine, poverty, and deadly diseases and plagues.

The time of those visitations of wrath will be the period of the reign of the Antichrist; for they will begin to be inflicted on the *“men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image”* [Rev.16:2]. They will succeed one another, the 1st angel preparing the way for the 2nd angel, etc.; each becoming more dreadful than the preceding [Rev.16:2-17]:

1. “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” [Rev.16:2].

“Upon the earth (land),” which no doubt will be more local; confined especially to Palestine and vicinity. The *“noisome and grievous sore”* may be akin to those inflicted on Egypt under Moses’ ministry.

2. “And the **SECOND ANGEL** poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood” [Rev.16:3-4].

“Poured out upon the sea,” refers to the nations and will be more widespread. “And it became as blood as a dead man.” The same is said of the *“rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.”* Moses smote the waters and they turned to blood [Exo.7:17-20]. In the vision, the ravages of war will be so terrible that the nations seemed like a sea of blood; death stalked on every hand. The rivers and fountains which ought to minister blessings, speak of religious bodies that propagate error. God’s curse will fall upon them also according to what they deserve.

3. “And I heard the angel of the waters (the **THIRD ANGEL**) say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art and wast and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus” [Rev.16:5].

“The angel of the waters” is simply the 3rd angel that poured out his bowl. He bursts forth in bold terms justifying Jehovah in all His acts of vengeance. Revelation 16:6 is positive proof that the *“rivers and fountains of waters”* are false teachers; for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and drank blood *“for they are worthy”*; that is, they deserve to be slain by the sword. Calvary confirms the angel’s witness of God’s righteousness, “And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty; true and righteous are thy judgments” [Rev.16:7]. Men will arise and condemn the Lord, even as they do today, saying, “God is not just.” “Why does He thus punish the people?” Therefore, the ejaculations of defending His character and justifying his conduct are interspersed here and there. The refusal of men to repent is further proof of God’s justice in judging them (compare Rev.16:9, 11 with Rev.9:20-21; 11:10, 18; and 13:3-4).

4. “And the **FOURTH ANGEL** poured out his bowl upon the sun, and power was given him to scorch men with fire” [Rev.16:8].

The sun will shine with unparalleled strength. Sunstrokes will mow people down like some deadly epidemic. The heat will be so unbearably intense that it will evoke vociferous blasphemies from unrepentant men. Who can point out the great revival that Bible teachers vainly declare will come during that awful time of judgment? **THEY REPENTED NOT** is everywhere as the sequel of God’s visitations of wrath. Therefore, there is no restraint thereof; but they grow in severity and climax in the battle of Armageddon.

5. “And the **FIFTH ANGEL** poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast and his kingdom was full of darkness and they gnawed their tongues for distress” [Rev.16:10].

In their most aggravated form, the judgment plagues will culminate upon the headquarters of wickedness. Doubtless the grievous and noisome sore of Revelation 16:2 (turning water-to-blood plague of Rev.16:3-4) and the sun-scorching plague of Revelation 16:8-9 will fall together upon the throne of the beast. No one can adequately conceive the terribleness of those days. International conflict will be increasing rapidly. The devastating effects of war will be beyond description. The smoke of battle will obscure the light of the sun. Electric wires will be severed, leaving whole cities in dense darkness by night. “*The land was darkened*” in Egypt by a great swarm of locusts, which typified the armies of men which will gather in Palestine [Joe.1]. That was followed by “*darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness that might be felt*” [Exo.10]. That was simply an earnest of the widespread night that will envelope the people then. National gloom, confusion, and distress will seize hold of and bewilder people and kings. Battle diplomacy will turn mad. The **PEACE AND SAFETY** compact will end in a colossal panic. Jesus gave a pen-picture of those days in Luke 21:25-26; read it carefully and consider. Luke 21:27 proves that these will come to pass in those days. “*And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud (glorified saints) with power and great glory.*” Hallelujah! Lord, haste the day. He surely will.

That will be also the climax of spiritual night. False prophets, under the devil-inspired leadership of the 2nd beast (the false prophet), will employ accumulated error and proclaim it as the true light; but it will prove to be **THE DARKNESS**. That darkness will be an earnest of “*the outer darkness*” (Mat.8:12; 22:13; 25:30), the eternal state of the unrepentant. What a contrast to the kingdom of God’s dear Son, the kingdom of dazzling light and sparkling splendor; for God dwelleth in light unapproachable. The Holy Spirit in other Scriptures pictures the density of the darkness that will envelope the world then.

Think of it, he who was called "*Lucifer (day star), son of the morning*" [Isa.14:12], will fill the world with darkness and night. He who was "*full of wisdom and perfect in beauty,*" covered with "*every precious stone*" the embodiment of dazzling brightness, and "*walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire*" (the throne room of Jehovah); he who was in himself a charming orchestra of "*tabrets and pipes*" [Eze.28], became lifted up and said, "*I will be like the Most High*" [Isa.14:14]. Instead, he comes to be the lowest and engulfs humanity in bewildering, self-destructive darkness: "*his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain; and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds*" [Rev.16:10b-11]. They will be deceived religiously, blinded mentally, distressed socially and nationally, become insane with gloom and wild with confusion. They will blame God for it all, the God who is holy, just and true, and who has showed mercy to all for 2,000 years.

Where will the throne of the beast be? We know that Rome was the seat of the last of the 4 great World Empires. The end-time World Empire must be "*the feet and toes*" of that great image of Daniel 2:33-45. "*The prince that shall come*" [Dan.9:26], that is, the final world ruler must be of the Roman Empire: "*the people of the prince that shall come*" devastated Jerusalem in 71 A.D. By carefully reading Jeremiah 25 and 51 with Revelation 16 and 18, we see clearly that Rome is the religious mistress of the world. Present unfolding facts sustain this view; and surely indicate that the revived Roman Empire will again rule the world. This does not seem possible, or even probable now; but radical events may change overnight. If the Antichrist chooses another site for his throne, it will certainly be in the West; for the race has been moving westward. The fact that tidings out of the East and out of the North will trouble the united world powers congregated in Palestine; and, the fact that "*the kings of the East*" will come forth to the battle of Armageddon [Rev.16:12], unite to suggest at least the direction of the universal throne. "*And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end and none shall help him*" [Dan.11:45]. This refers to the Antichrist, who will doubtless transfer to Jerusalem his religious headquarters (compare 2Th.2:4).

6. "And the **SIXTH ANGEL** poured out his bowl upon the great river Euphrates: and the water there was dried up, that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared" [Rev.16:12].

The literal river Euphrates would be a small barrier against armies today. Rather this is the meaning. In as much as the Euphrates was set as the boundary of Israel [Gen.15:18] and Israel's foes came from the East [Isa.8:7 and Jer.46:10], the Divine Restraint will then be removed for the eastern armies to come up to the final world war; for God has said, "*I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle*" [Zec.14:2].

The battleground is Megiddo (Armageddon) and is about 100 miles north from Jerusalem. The word **Armageddon** means “*war chariot of Megiddo*.” The valley of Megiddo is also called the valley of **Jezreel**, which means “*it will be sown of God*,” and the valley of **Jehoshaphat** which means “*Jehovah is judge*.” The valley of Megiddo is famous in Bible history for battles fought and victories won. Study Deborah’s song of triumph over Sisera. “*The kings came and fought . . . The stars in their courses fought against Sisera*” [Jud.5:19-21].

The careers of Elijah, Ahab, and Jezebel took place in that vicinity (see 1Ki.18 and 23. All the great engagements fought in that valley are shadows of the final conflict of the nations (see Joe.3; compare Rev.16:13 with 1Ki.22:21-22). God permitted a lying spirit in the mouths of false prophets to persuade Ahab to go up to battle that he might be slain. Likewise, He will employ miracle-working demons to induce kings and people to go up to the final siege. At the beginning of that awful judgment, God will send upon the impenitent “*strong delusion*” that they may believe the lie [2Th.2:11] that the Antichrist is The Christ. Also, that “*they all might be damned (judged) who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*” [2Th.2:12] because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved

“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils (demons), working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. [Rev.16:13-14]

Those evil spirits will not appear unclean and frog-like in man’s sight. The prophets, whom they will possess and move, will be polite and winning, wise and eloquent, religious and refined. They will confirm their pious utterances by “*working miracles*.” But the Holy Spirit pronounces them “*unclean spirits like frogs*” and “*spirits of devils (demons)*” To God those prophets are slimy ministers of darkness. Their fair speeches are but croakings; as blatant, impudent impotents and cheap orators. Those foul, lying spirits will control all the prophets who before were false to the truth of God yet claimed to be His ministers. They will move men irresistibly everywhere by their eloquence and miracles to hasten to the scene of battle. Quite likely, they will publish the miracles wrought by the false prophet and the image of the beast [Rev.13]; and, endeavor to gather men from all the world to behold that wicked wonder in the temple—the image of the beast (**THE ABOMINATION THAT MAKETH DESOLATE**).

Note the combined triune power of Satan:

1ST: The dragon, or the devil himself;

2ND: The national power, the beast, representing the nations;
and

3RD: The religious power, the false prophet, representing apostatized Jews and professed Christians.

Oh, the unspeakable terribleness, the physical and spiritual darkness of those days. It will seem like Jehovah were dethroned.

ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE

"Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments lest he walk naked and they see his shame." [Rev.16:15]

This is a clear commentary on Matthew 24:43, Luke 12:39-40 and 2 Peter 3:10. These citations refer to the revelation of Jesus from heaven, The Church being revealed with Him. As thieves come in the night, so Jesus will appear in the night of The Tribulation, which He will shorten by overthrowing the Antichrist and false prophet.

QUESTION: Who is the "blessed," mentioned here? **ANSWER**: It is "*he that overcometh and keepeth My works unto the end*" [Rev.2:16]; "*he that endureth unto the end* (of The Tribulation) *and is saved*" from physical death [Mat.24:14]. Inasmuch as God will have completed the body of Christ, The Church, 3 years prior, and will then be dealing with Israel only, those will be counted as Israel. All believers on earth at that time will be Kingdom believers and not counted in The Church in any sense. Daniel speaks of the same "*blessed*" one saying, "*Blessed is he that watcheth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred and five and thirty days*" [Dan.12:12] (compare Isa.25:9 and Zec.14:16).

"The great and notable day" [Joe.2:31], a brief period during the Day of the Lord, covers 75 days, extending from the destruction of the beasts unto the direct revelation of Christ to Israel, when they will exclaim, "*Lo! This is our God: we have waited for Him*" [Isa.25:9]. Zechariah 14:7 declares that "*it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night*"; similar to twilight.

7. "And the **SEVENTH ANGEL** poured out his bowl into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying: *it is done*" [Rev.16:17].

When Jesus Christ was hanging on the cross counted sin for us, He cried out, "*It is finished.*" What was finished? The judgment due to all men for their sins had fallen upon the holy Son of God. There remained no more judgment for all those who had believed and who should believe on Jesus. But the masses do not believe. For them there is a judgment to come; because they refuse the judgment which fell on God's Son in their behalf. Of this we had intimation in Revelation 10:7: At that time, "*the mystery of God should be finished*"; and it will be so announced from the throne. The revelation of Jesus Christ from heaven and the overthrow of the beast and false prophet in the battle of Armageddon will be the finish of "*the mystery.*" After the millennium will be the final judgment, at which time the wicked dead will be judged. Then again it will be announced, "*it is done*" [Rev.21:6].

"And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." [Rev.16:18-19]

The "voices" of Revelation 16:18 are the judgment utterances of the redeemed who stand in perfect accord with God in His just retributions upon men for rejecting the Gospel of His grace. Their anthem of agreement with Jehovah is recorded in Psalm 145:17, Revelation 15:3, and Revelation 19:2: *"Thou art holy, O Lord; true and righteous are thy judgments."*

As there was a confusion in the natural world when Christ was crucified, because God turned His face in holy abhorrence from the face of His Anointed for He was then made sin for us [Mat.27:45]; so here, all nature arises in tremendous triumphant agreement with God the Almighty in His visitations of wrath. Hence, the thunders and lightnings and earthquakes. There have been great upheavals in divers places at different times; but that final upheaval will far exceed them all. It will not be local; for here we are told that as a result of *"so mighty an earthquake and so great" ... "the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell."* It will go rumbling, roaring, and wrenching from city to city.

What city will be divided into 3 parts? Babylon no doubt is meant. In Revelation 14:8 and 18:2, Babylon is called *"the great city,"* even as in Verse 19 here. The cities of the nations also will fall at that time. Special reference is made to Babylon, *"to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath."* The city of which a 10th part will fall [Rev.16:13] is Jerusalem, the center of the ministry of the 2 witnesses. Observe that the earthquake of Revelation 16:18-19 will be much greater than the one of Revelation 11:13; so the cities are not the same.

"And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great." [Rev.16:20-21]

Think of it! *"Every island fled away and the mountains were not found."* Oh what dreadful devastations! How terrible are thy judgments, Oh Lord God, the Almighty.

Love's Gift to Me

Of all the gifts I treasure
To brighten memory,
The greatest is God's Son from heaven,
Unspeakable to me.
A little while I fretted.
Dark shadows hid the light;

But now my cares are lifted ever.
My path is shining bright.

Of all His grace and glory,
His blessings great I share.
A happy song I now am singing,
As mountain heights I dare;
For when my heart was baffled
And bitter loss I knew,
He brought me o'er the waters winging.
My battles battled thru.

And so for all these mercies,
To others now I'd show
The tender, gentle, melting spirit
That He has made me know.
To all mankind in trouble,
I'd show the grace I found;
For He has made my watered garden
A matchless piece of ground.

Far more than life can measure,
My Lord has been to me—
A Savior and a Friend and Lover.
His grace has made me free.
Forever, dawn is smiling
Upon my path below.
I'll brighten ev'ry dismal corner,
As thru the year I go.

Mary M. Bodie

JUDGMENT OF BABYLON [REV. 17]

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven bowls, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither. I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters" [Rev.17:1]

This is another phase of the judgment scenes of Revelation 16, and will occur at the same time. That angel represents the redeemed company of Revelation 16:14, "*called and chosen and faithful*." John's vision viewpoint was "the wilderness" [Rev.17:3]. That is, he saw the visitations of Divine Wrath upon the **MOTHER OF HARLOTS** as related to the whole world. She "*sitteth upon many waters*," that is, "*peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues*" [Rev.17:15]. This is the Babylon of Revelation 14:8, 16:18, and 17:18.

As the great city, the woman is Rome, situated upon 7 hills. But those 7 mountains are also said to be "*seven heads on a beast*" [Rev.17:3, 7; Rev.13:1]. Those 7 heads are represented by "*seven kings*" [Rev.17:10]. And the people are figured by "*many waters*" [Rev.17:15]. The national foe of Jerusalem is called a "*great mountain*" [Zec.14:7]. Also, God's kingdom on earth is termed a "*great mountain*" [Dan.2:35]. Evidently this is the meaning:

The 7 nations, called 7 mountains, composed of multitudes of people of various languages, will comprise one Grand Empire called "*the beast*," of which the city of Rome may be the capital.

Religious Rome is mistress of the world. Her hand is the prevailing ladle in the international pot. The Roman Church is termed **Jezebel** which means "*without cohabitation*" [Rev.2:20]. Her prelates pretend to live in celibacy; yet Jezebel's children are many and she boasts of her numbers. Today, the membership of the Catholic Church in Canada and in the U.S. is 24,000,000, nearly as many as all the other denominations together. Jezebel calls herself "*a prophetess*" [Rev.2:20]. The Church claims to be the teacher; ignoring the Holy Spirit. Study the title which John saw on her head: "**MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH**" [Rev.17:5]. In the Scriptures, cities are likened to women, only when viewed religiously. Hence, that city cannot mean Babylon in Assyria. Compare "*Ahola*," which figures Samaria, "*Aholibah*," Jerusalem [Eze.23] and "*Hephzibah*," Jerusalem [Isa.62:4-5]. Note how Jeremiah 51:13 agrees with Revelation 17:15. Ancient Babylon did not dwell upon many waters, but upon one water...the Euphrates. Observe also how Jeremiah 51:45 agrees with Revelation 18:4. Behold the similarity of the destiny of Babylon as described by Jeremiah 51:62-64 and Revelation 18:21.

"With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." [Rev.17:2]

The Church is a spiritual body of people. She cannot have fellowship with a nation. The union of church and state is entirely unscriptural. The state is of this world; The Church is from heaven. About 300 A.D., Constantine was the first emperor to take the church under protection because he saw that it would be to his advantage. Church and state entered into a mutual fellowship. God calls that **FORNICATION**; therefore, spirituality was supplanted by formality. Formal religion, which eases a guilty conscience, appeals to statesmen, who become carried away with it being "*drunk with the wine of her fornication*" even "*the wine of the wrath of her fornication*" [Rev.18:3]. People and statesmen of all nations have gone religiously mad because of the intoxicating effects of Rome's teaching that The Church is the Kingdom of God and that she must convert the world before Christ can come back to the earth to reign. The whole lump (the mass of religious humanity) is leavened with this anti-Christian heresy.

THE 4TH VISION VIEWPOINT

"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration." [Rev.17:3-6]

That was John's 4th vision viewpoint. "*The wilderness*" simply means "*the world*," where the nations operate. The coming World Empire will be beastly; that is, unlike God, without a thought of God and without reason. It will be scarlet—bloodthirsty, war-like. And yet, its chief ruler will claim Divine Titles, showing himself off as God, and many other names will he assume ("*full of names*" which the Lord terms "*names of blasphemy*") We have already noted that the "*seven heads*" are 7 great nations which compose the World Empire (see Rev.1).

Understand that by this vision God gave John an exact photograph of the nations and the relation of the Roman Church to them, then the imagery becomes plain. Her colors and adornments are further proof of the woman's identity; for they are worn by the pope and his associates. By visiting any Catholic cathedral you will see these colors (purple, scarlet, gold, precious stones, and pearls) and gildings in grand display. Rome bears the appearance of religious royalty (purple) claiming to "*reign as kings*" now [1Co.4:8]; of heavenly perfection (gold and precious stones and pearls). She pretends to nourish the needy and hungry (a golden cup in her hands). But Divine Justice, indignant at her blasphemous claims, pronounces the contents of that cup **ABOMINABLE AND FILTHY**. Hence, her consequent punishment is pending.

Christ and His Body (the true Church) are a great part of the mystery of Godliness; but the church of Rome is the essential figure in the mystery of iniquity. That is why she is called "*MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT*." The depths of this mystery are called "the depths of Satan" [Rev.2:24]. The origin and meaning of the word will help us greatly. **Babylon** means "*confusion, gate of Bel*." **BABYLON** is the Greek mode of spelling what in the Hebrew is uniformly **BABEL**. Perhaps when Nimrod founded the city he gave it the name **Babil**, "*gate of Il*, or "*gate of God*." After the confusion of tongues, the name was connected by the Hebrews with the root **BABAL**, "*to confound*" (*Young's Concordance*). Indeed, Rome claims to be the gate of God—the means of God getting to man. But Jehovah names her "*confusion*," and by her toil and teaching she spreads confusion worldwide. It is no longer a secret that Rome exerts far greater religious power over the nations and people than any other organized body of people. But God terms all that influence "*confusion*."

We are considering a very comprehensive verse. Who are the harlot daughters? Spirit-taught Bible readers agree that they are the Protestant denominations. The writer was certainly amazed to read, above 40 years ago, substantially the following in a Seventh Day Adventist paper:

First, the editor stated that his denomination was the true church and all other denominations were the harlot daughters. The Catholic church, of course, he said is the mother. Then he quoted from half a dozen leading denominational periodicals. All of them pronounced the Catholic church the mother of harlots. And each one declared his denomination to be the true church and all others to be daughters of the great harlot mother.

Had the Advent editor been bright, he would not have published those statements. He did not realize that he was thus proving his sect also to be a harlot. Every organization or sect, whether organized or not, that claims to be **THE CHURCH** thus makes itself a harlot daughter of Rome. The real Church of God is a spiritual body. It is so constituted by individuals being joined unto The Church by the Lord Himself, even joined unto the Lord [Act.2:47 and Act.5:11].

Does my reader object to calling religious organizations the “harlot?” If you do, it is because you do not know the Scriptures, nor do you understand Christendom as God sees.

- Will the objector explain the deepening fellowship which obtains between Catholicism and Protestantism?
- Why are Catholic priests accorded an equal place with others at monthly and weekly ministerial meetings?
- Why are influential preachers saying that the Roman Church should be recognized?
- Explain, please, how a world-famed evangelist over 20 years ago could preach Jesus Christ and the new birth and Jesus’ coming in one breath, and, in the next, advise his hearers to attend mass and join the Catholic Church...and hundreds accepted his counsel.
- God says, “Come out of her”; that fellow said, “Join her.”

At the Chicago World’s Fair, Catholics and Protestants, Jews and Mohammedans, were assembled on the same platform, exhibiting their religious wares. That was hailed as a great victory for Christianity. That is a common occurrence today.

Again I remark that this is an amazing verse. The woman in question is the “*MOTHER OF HARLOTS*.” The mother claims to be The Bride of Christ, but is proving herself false by running after other lovers. Likewise, her daughters are flirting with the world yet all the while claiming to be the Spouse of Christ. Oh, the infinitude of Divine Mercy and forbearance that patiently puts up with it all!

Then follows the still more solemn statement, the same woman is “*the mother of the abominations of the earth*.” Idolatry is worshipping idols instead of God, and is a great abomination in the sight of God. **CIRCUMCISION** was A **SIGN AND SEAL** to Abraham of his faith, so also to his descendants; but, afterwards the Jews made it the necessary means of salvation—it became the savior—thus it became an abomination to God. The **SERPENT ON THE POLE** was typically the means of Israel’s deliverance, because it pointed them to Christ’s death on the cross; but afterward they made it an abomination by worshipping it instead of the Redeemer whom it typified (see Num.21:9 and Joh.3:14 and marvel). Catholics **EXALT CREATURE THINGS** which, in God’s sight, they worship. They bow reverently before lifeless

statues of Jesus and “holy Mary,” as they call her. They adore the church, idolize the priests, and worship the pope. All this is abomination to God.

The world has become filled with those who copy Rome by introducing varying shades of idolatry; turning people away from Jesus Christ Himself, who alone is the Savior and Keeper. The abominations are legion. I tell you that anything that people put above or ahead of Jesus is abomination; whether creed, or church, or man, or form of worship, or rules, or gifts, or days—all are abominations before God.

“And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” [Rev.17:6]

Was that ever true of ancient Babylon? By no means. But it has been most horribly true of the Catholic church, as history assures us. To this day, she maintains the same spirit of hatred against real saints of God. None know this so well as those who have escaped from the hidden recesses of the dark system and come forth into the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God. Protestants are also following in their mother’s steps.

THE WOMAN AND THE BEAST

“I will tell thee the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.” [Rev.17:7-8]

We must hold in mind the exact point from which John is viewing this scene. Revelation 17:8 shows that he is standing within the 3 days during which the 1 head (ruler) is dead. He sees the 7-Headed World Empire, many waters and the woman sitting thereon. The fornication and drunkenness of the nations and the drunkenness of the woman with the blood of saints and martyrs all happen before John sees her; that is, during the past 19 centuries (see Rev.17:2, 4, 6). In Revelation 17 and 18, he is giving us the Divine View of the woman, especially during the week of consummations, and her terrible and just doom. What is told in one word in Revelation 2:22, is told out here in detail. In Revelation 17:8, “*the beast that thou sawest*” [Rev.13:1 2] “**WAS**,” at the beginning of the 7 years. “**IS NOT**,” refers to the death of one of the heads (kings) [Rev.13:3, 12]. He will be dead probably 3 days; because he will base his claim to be king upon the fact of being raised from the dead as the **COUNTERFEIT OF THE CHRIST** (compare Rom.1:4). This same one “*shall ascend from the pit*.” He will reign 42 months [Rev.13:5], then “go into perdition” [Rev.19:20]. During his reign, the Christ-rejecters shall wonder after him and worship him as God when they behold him killed and alive again so soon. Revelation 17:10-11 helps us greatly here.

"And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition."

- When the 7 years begin, there are 7 kings which will rule over their respective mountains (nations). These 7 comprise the World Empire.
- The 5 "are fallen": When John stands beholding the woman sitting on the beast, the angel tells him that 5 of them have been dethroned sometime during the first half of the 7 years.
- And "one is": One of the 7 kings will still be in power at that moment.
- And "the other is not yet come": At the moment when John is beholding, the "other" is dead.
- And "when he cometh": When he is raised to life, "he must continue a short space" of 42 months (3½ years [Rev.13:5]).
- And "the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition" after his 42-month reign [Rev.17:11]. What becomes of the 6th is not stated. His dethronement is implied.

At one glance, the Apostle saw the World Empire as it will be at the beginning of the 7 eventful years of the next age ("*a beast having seven heads*") and as it will be at the end ("*and ten horns*"). There will be a great combine of 7 nations, reigning jointly as a vast World Empire. Each ruler will have authority over his own kingdom or republic, but in agreement with the other 6. That will be a time of **PEACE AND SAFETY**, at least ostensibly. The "*white horse*" rider of Revelation 6 is a comprehensive symbol of that period of worldwide international peace. One of those 7 rulers will find it in his heart to be chief of them all. Dominance over others is the nature of fallen man; for the devil planted it in man's heart.

As suggested by Revelation 8:8, war will break out. A most terrific, rapid-fire battle will be waged with the most effective implements of carnage; the 8th ruler will win—"one is." "*Sudden destruction*" will end the peace period [1Th.5:3]. Five of the 7 rulers will be dethroned. The most ambitious one will be "*killed by a sword*" [Rev.18:3, 12]. Evidently Apollyon will bring him up from the pit of the abyss [Rev.9]. Being authorized and empowered by the devil, he will reorganize that World Empire of 7 nations into 1 Great Kingdom and rule over it for 3½ years. Then the Lord will be revealed from heaven with His saints and cast him into the lake of fire [Rev.19:20].

THE BEAST'S ABETTORS

"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet, but receive authority one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." [Rev.17:12-13]

These “*ten horns*” are the “*ten toes*” of Nebuchadnezzar’s imposing image of the 4 World Empires [Dan.2:41]. Thus, the week (7 years) of usurpation will begin with 7 kings reigning in mutual agreement; but, it will end with 1 king reigning supremely and 10 other kings ruling over their respective domains in subjection to him. The beast will be **KING OF KINGS** for a brief time. Those 10 kings “*have one mind* (purpose)” and will give up their power and authority to the beast.

We understand that the “*feet and toes*” of Nebuchadnezzar’s great image will have their fulfillment in those coming 7 eventful years. “*The feet*” (2 of course), similar to the Roman Empire, eastern and western, at the beginning stand for the 7 heads (nations) reorganized into one huge kingdom. The “*ten kings*” will answer to the “*ten toes*” on Nebuchadnezzar’s image. Is the Atlantic Ocean between those feet? Will not the United States be a part of the World Empire of that time? God knows.

That **ONE HOUR** means a part of the Antichrist’s reign. During that **ONE HOUR**, the great harlot will receive her doom at the hands of the beast; the kings being in agreement with him (compare Rev.17:16 with Rev.18:10, 17, 19). Revelation 2:22 also suggests that the length of that hour will correspond with the Great Tribulation (reign of the Antichrist), “*Behold, I will cast her* (Jezebel, that is, Catholicism) *into a bed, and them* (the nations) *that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.*” The “*hour of temptation*” [Rev.3:10] embraces the entire 7 years.

Those “*ten horns* (kings)” are not the “*ten horns*” of the “*fourth beast, dreadful and terrible*” of Daniel 7:7. We meet no discrepancy between Daniel and John when we bear in mind that neither one gives us **ALL** the information.

- Daniel 7:4-8 pictures the 4 great World Empires, extending from about 606 B.C. up to the 7 years which begin the next age.
- The divinely allotted “*times of the Gentiles*” [Luk.21:24] ends with Daniel 7:8 (the period of Gentile dominion, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar, which God authorized).
- The next 7 years will be a usurpation. Daniel informs us that God will recognize 10 nations in particular during the last years of the **TIMES OF THE GENTILES**. He explicitly states that 3 of those nations will be subdued, leaving only 7. These remaining 7 “*horns*” (see Dan.7:24) evidently are the 7 “*kings*” of John’s vision [Rev.17:10] which will rule over the 7 heads (mountains—nations) at the beginning of the 7 years.

Were there not 10 nations particularly to the front at the beginning of the World War of 1914 to 1918? And were not 3 of those nations subdued? Can we not almost name the 7 nations (“*seven heads*”) that John saw? Surely, the end of all things is at hand...“*watch and be sober*” [1Th.5:6]. We find another proof that Daniel’s “*ten horns*” are not the “*ten horns*” of Revelation 17; for the former, “*the kings of the earth,*” will bewail the

destruction of the harlot; but the latter will be the direct agents of her overthrow (compare Rev.17:16 with Rev.18:9).

TRIUMPH OF THE LAMB

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they who are with Him are called and chosen and faithful." [Rev.17:14]

What Satan daringly plants in human breasts! The one mind (purpose) of those 10 kings will be to dethrone Jesus Christ; and, with the Antichrist (the supreme usurper) gain supremacy over heaven and earth. When the plagues fall on the throne of the beast [Rev.16:10], they behold their dominion slipping away. They perceive that Jehovah is against them. Observe that it is the wild beast against the Lamb; for the Gentile nations are likened to wild beasts. The 10 kings" are with the former; but they are not called and chosen of God.

With the Lamb there are also lords and kings who are subject to Him. The beast assumes to be **THE KING OF KINGS**; but he is a usurper, an insurrectionist against the Divine Government. The lords and kings who are with the Lamb are "*called*" to these high functions. They are also "*chosen and faithful*"; because when they hear the call on earth they respond to it and prove faithful in their persistent hope of reigning with Christ. Indeed these are those who "*now reign in life thru the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness*" [Rom.5:17]. Through the triumph of Christ in that conflict, Daniel 2:34 will be fulfilled: "*A stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet, that were of iron and clay and broke them to pieces.*"

KINGDOM OF THE WILD BEAST

"For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will (purpose), and to agree (even to do one purpose), and give their kingdom unto the (wild) beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." [Rev.17:17]

What an amazing statement! God is back of all that happens with the nations. He will use 10 kings and the beast to punish apostate Christendom. This corresponds with Romans 9:17-18 which intimates that God makes the wrath of man to praise him [Psa.76:10]. Revelation 16:14 indicates that Satan will gather the nations for the battle of Armageddon; but Joel 3:2 and Zechariah 14:2 show that God Himself does it. No matter what is in man's mind, he cannot act until Jehovah is ready.

For years, men have tried to form the **PEACE AND SAFETY LEAGUE**; but their efforts are futile. When God's due time arrives, with mighty authority they will proclaim "*Peace and Safety*," but not until then. The nations endeavor to avert war; but when the Lord God of Israel shall speak, war will wage: "*For they shall drink and be moved and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them*" [Jer.25:15], etc. God is behind all His providences and wants us to see His hand everywhere and justify Him in all things.

"And the woman which thou sawest is that great city which has kingship over the kings of the earth." [Rev.17:18]

"*That great city*" is Papal Rome. "*Has kingship*" certainly expresses her hidden power over the rulers of the world. This cannot possibly be Jerusalem, as some suggest, because at that time Jerusalem will be in the throes of tribulation and not in control of the nations. This is none other than the city, whose overthrow is foretold in Revelation 14:8: "*Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city; because she made all the nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*" The next chapter delineates her downfall.

BABYLON IS FALLEN [REV. 18]

"After these things I saw another Angel come down from heaven, having great authority and the earth was lightened with His glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." [Rev.18:1-2]

This "*Angel*" is none other than the Lord Jesus taking control of the judgment of the harlot. We saw the same grand Personage in Revelation 10 (compare Eze.43:2-6). First, He announces the fall of the greatest religious system in the world, saying "*Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen.*" He tells what will happen as if it had already happened.

For centuries she has been a stronghold for "*every foul spirit (demon) and every unclean and hateful bird.*" Birds mean heavenly messengers. Unclean birds figure false messengers, though claiming to be true. Note that God does not recognize Christendom as His Church. He calls her **Babylon**, meaning "*confusion.*" For many years, He has been calling His people out of sectarianism unto Himself alone, "*Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues*" [Rev.18:4]. That will be His final call to come out.

"She saith in her heart, I sit a queen and am no widow and shall see no sorrow." [Rev.18:7]

Christendom hopes to be The Bride of Christ. She does not realize her sad divorcement from Jehovah, and does not see her certain doom. She, who boasts of the highest place with God, claiming the deepest sainthood, announces herself to be the only instructor of Divine Things and the true witness of Jesus Christ. This one shall receive the most terrible doom. Because "*her sins have reached unto heaven,*" [Rev.18:5], so enormous have they become that she shall be rewarded "*double according to her works*" [Rev.18:6]. Pay her back. So much "*sorrow and torment*" shall she have, even "*plagues...death and mourning and famine*" [Rev.18:5]. The greatness of Babylon's iniquities in God's sight is indicated by the number of references to them and to the manner of her utter destruction. The many prophecies of Babylon's overthrow, recorded by Isaiah and Jeremiah, will have their final fulfillment in the judgment of the great harlot.

The heinousness of the sin of Babylon is known to God alone. We cannot picture it. That a body of people should declare themselves to be God's own and spiritual, yet actually barter in all the most costly articles of commerce (about 30 named in Rev.18:12-13), and enrich themselves thereby—this is an exceeding abomination to God. In the Vatican at Rome are found the most costly gems of art. Fabulous treasures of wealth are laid up there, even as John informs us, “*gold and silver and precious stones and pearls, vessels of ivory and all manner vessels of precious wood and of iron and of brass*” [Rev.18:12]. But what does a real saint care for all that outward veneer? We are looking for a city whose “*Builder and Maker is God*” [Heb.11:10]; the real city of real gold. Instead of liberating men, Rome profiteers with “*the slaves (bodies) and souls of men,*” enriching herself by sending people to hell. Thus, her outward commercialism symbolizes her making “*merchandise of the Gospel.*”

The final declaration of her crime is given in Revelation 18:24:

“And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all that were slain upon the earth.”

Fox's book of martyrs records the fulfillment, in measure, of this statement.

Do you wonder at Revelation 18:20? “*Rejoice over her, O heaven and ye, the holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you upon her.*” The judgment of the false claimant to the Bridehood of Christ must come before the glorious wedding in the air can take place. As the beast will be the rival of our Lord for the throne of Universal Empire; so sectarianism will be the rival of the true Bride of Christ. The unspeakable triumph of the overthrow of both is recorded in the next chapter.

THE WEDDING IN HEAVEN [REV. 19]

“And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God.”
[Rev.19:1]

In this chapter we read of 2 suppers, 2 armies, and 2 triumphs.

It begins with a shout of triumph over religious foes, and ends with victory over national foes. The “*much people*” are some of the glorified saints of whom we read in the preceding chapters. We should suppose, at least, that those who stand in triumph on the sea of glass [Rev.15] and all who have suffered persecution at the hands of Babylon [Rev.18:24] will be in that company.

These unite in one grand anthem of triumph which begins and ends with “*Allelujah!*” This is the first time we read the word **Allelujah** in this book. It is the highest, the sublimest expression of praise. It will be the great note of the full triumph of the Christ and of His Church immediately after the

complete overthrow of apostatized Ecclesiasticism and before the marriage of the Lamb.

Here is a very important item. Before the wedding can take place in heaven, the harlot church must be judged for she claims to be The Bride of Christ. Her claims must be proven false, by being “*weighed in the balances* (of God’s invincible Word) *and art found wanting*” [Dan.5:27]. The unspeakable stench in the Divine Nostrils is: The great whore who “*did corrupt the earth with her fornication*” (stated in detail in Rev.17 and 18). The religious system which pretends to purify and ennoble humanity is the one chiefly charged with corrupting it. Note that the judgment of the world is not even mentioned in this final anthem of victory. And why? Because the woman leavened the whole lump. God blames Catholicism for the corrupt and abominable conditions in church and state (see again Rev.17:2, 4, 6). Therefore, the essence of that song of victory will be that of justifying the Lord God for destroying the great harlot.

“And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up forever and ever.”
[Rev.19:1-3]

MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

“And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.” [Rev.19:5-7]

The 4 living creatures and the 24 elders appear to stand out distinct from the vast throng.

- When the 24 elders chant the song of victory, the 4 living creatures “*fall down and worship God,*” and answer the song by saying, “*Amen! Hallelujah!*” [Rev.19:4].
- Whose “*voice*” but theirs (the living creatures and 24 elders) “*came out of the throne*” saying, “*Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great*”?
- The living creatures alone are seen “*in the throne*” [Rev.4:6].
- The living creatures always lead the great host in worship of heaven (compare Rev.4:8-11). At that time, they will call upon all the rest of the redeemed in heaven to magnify the Lord [Rev.19:5].

Evidently there are more who participate in the 2nd song than in the 1st song; for the 1st was as “*the voice of much people*” but that of the 2nd was as

the voice of “many waters” and “mighty thunders.” Part of the heavenly saints volunteer to shout in triumph over the harlot; but the choir leaders summon all to rejoice, because “*the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.*”

Observe the different classes mentioned; and, that they quickly obey the behest of the 4 living creatures. Their song is in some respects greater than the former (Vs.1-3). They sing and shout with a greater glory. This song is a glorious **pean** (“*triumphant, joyful song*”) of praise because the climax of **THE BLESSED HOPE** is reached. Therefore, they exclaim, “*Allelujah: For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*” Jesus Christ, once the lowly Man of Nazareth, will then rule supremely as God, the Almighty. Then will be fulfilled that His name shall be called “*The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace*” [Isa.9:6].

I say that the 2nd song exceeds the 1st song. Even today, we rejoice because God gives us victory over our enemies; but we rejoice far more in hope of the glory of God to be revealed at the marriage supper of the Lamb and the universal reign of Christ. We are more occupied with the Lord and His personal glory than with the destruction of His foes. So it will be then. The marriage of the Lamb will be the crowning event; and His reign the crowning glory.

“To her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.” [Rev.19:8]

This verse shows how The Bride makes herself ready...namely, by her “*righteous*” acts. Let us see this clearly. When we, as sinners, believe on Jesus He clothes us with His own righteousness. This is expressed by the words, “*have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*” [Rev.7:14]. That expresses our standing. But those are not Bridal robes. The Bridal Company weaves their marriage garments during this life and sends them ahead. They are The Bride’s righteous deeds, laid up to her credit, awaiting the wedding day. Hence, it is said here, “*To her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen,*” even the linen which she herself spins all her days on earth. These make up her hope chest.

“And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” [Rev.19:9-10]

Observe that those “*called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb*” are not The Bridal Company; they are guests. Doubtless, the Old Testament saints and those standing on the sea of glass [Rev.15] are among the guests. They are “*blessed*” by being permitted to enjoy that great wedding feast. Other saints will remain on earth and miss that glorious banquet because they do not now live for it and in hope of it. They are formal, worldly believers who are still in bondage to religious systems. The Spirit’s final call to such is, “*Come out of her, my people*” [Rev.18:4]. But some folk will answer

that call too late for the marriage supper (compare Mat.25:11-12 and be warned).

“And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.” Who uttered those words? The angel (1 of the 7 angels which spoke to John before [Rev.17:1]. He is mentioned first in Revelation 1:1. The casual reader might think he was Gabriel, or some other angelic personage. John thought he was the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; for he *“fell at his feet to worship him.”* But the angel assured John that he was a *“fellow servant,”* a brother, a witness (see also Rev.22:8-9). The angel was so much like the Lord Jesus, so fully imbued with His spirit and changed from glory to glory by beholding Jesus, that the Apostle John took him to be the Lord. Evidently, this angel is one of the full overcomers, seen first as the 4 living creatures and 24 elders. They must possess the inward traits of the Bridegroom in order to be in The Bridal Company. In the fullest measure, their bodies will be *“fashioned like unto the body of His (Jesus) glory”* [Phi.3:21 RV]. Of course, they will look like Jesus glorified.

ARMIES OF HEAVEN DESCENDING

“And I saw heaven opened and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True and in righteousness He doth judge and make war.”
[Rev.19:11]

We must continually bear in mind that John beheld these wonderful things **IN VISION**; therefore, they are set before us by symbols as well as by plain statements. This may happen a year after the wedding [Deu.24:5]. *“Heaven opened,”* means that it is God’s time to reveal His Son as the Almighty One. The *“horse”* speaks of power, especially in warfare. *“White”* speaks of purity and righteousness. A holy war will surely be waged. This white horse is by no means the same as the one in Revelation 6, which refers to national affairs. What the nations hope to bring about by their **PEACE AND SAFETY** plans, the Lord Jesus will accomplish by His coming. And in doing so He must overthrow their schemes.

“His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.” [Rev.19:12]

He clearly discerns the conduct and motives of men. He judges in righteousness because He discerns absolutely and minutely between right and wrong. The phrase *“On His head were many crowns”* is set over against the *“ten crowns”* which the Antichrist will have (see Rev.13:1 and Rev.17:16). They indicate the universal dominion which the saints will have as associated with Jesus Christ.

THE LORD’S VARIOUS TITLES

JESUS, which means Savior, is His given name [Mat.1:21].

ANointed or **CHRIST** is His official title.

LORD JESUS CHRIST or **ANOINTED** is His full official name and title as related to The Church. “*God hath made that same Jesus both Lord and Anointed*” [Act.2:36]. Hence, the frequent occurrences of this 3-fold Name in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles. By the Spirit, we instinctively speak to, or of, our **LORD JESUS CHRIST**: è Familiarly, intimately as Jesus (He is our Elder Brother); è reverently as Lord, or Lord Jesus (He is our Head, Master, Husband); and è officially as the Christ, or Anointed One (He is our example, our life [2Co.13:3-4 and Gal.2:30]. Jesus is never mentioned in this book by this 3-fold title.

In the introductory verses, He is called **JESUS CHRIST**. Several times He is called **JESUS**; and several times **CHRIST**. Usually it is “*Lord*,” or “*Lord God*,” or “*Lord God Almighty*,” because He is here seen chiefly in the capacity of Judge and then as King.

Observe 5 distinct titles by which Jesus is known in this chapter:

1ST: The title of supreme honor and glory: “*The Lord our God*” [Rev.19:1], or “*the Lord God, Omnipotent*” [Rev.19:6]. Jesus, the once lowly man of Judean rejection, will reign as God Almighty.

2ND: “*The Lamb*” [Rev.19:7]; so-called because by His sacrificial death for a sinful race He earned the name just mentioned before. The 2-fold name given to Deity in the last 2 chapters of this book is “*Lord God and the Lamb*.”

3RD: He is “called *Faithful and True*” because He demonstrated this character throughout His life on earth; and hence He has right to judge and make war [Rev.19:11].

4TH: His name is called “*the Word of God*” [Rev.19:13].

5TH: “*He hath a name written that no man knoweth, save He Himself*” [Rev.19:12]. What is that name? We believe that Revelation 19:16 indicates what it is and where it is written. Note that the phrase “*on his head, many crowns*” immediately precedes this statement of an unknown name. Those many crowns speak of joint-rulership with Him. The phrase “*No man knoweth*” cannot refer to saints, but to the world; for saints know all the titles of Jesus by the Word and Spirit of God. The nations are looking for a world ruler. They think it will be this one or that one. When the devil puts up his choice they will accept him; not knowing that Jesus Christ is the Man of destiny. Therefore, as a man, descending from heaven to be the Universal Emperor, our Lord will bear a title which will express His relation to the nations. How logical then for us to read:

“*And he hath on his vesture (His official, royal robe) and on his thigh (the symbol of strength) a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*” [Rev.19:6]

Paul writes of that same culminating day, announcing “*the revelation of our Lord Jesus Anointed, which in its time shall show (that He is) the blessed and only Potentate, the King of those being kings and Lord of those being lords*” [1Ti.6:14-15 RV]. At that time, our Lord will assume the **ALL AUTHORITY** which the Father gave Him nearly 2,000 years ago; this includes all The Church, for they too will be crowned [Mat.28:18, Gen.1:27-28].

JESUS JUDGES THE GENTILES

“And the armies in the heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed with fine linen white and pure.” [Rev.19:14 RV]

Doubtless all the redeemed in heaven at that time will compose those armies. However, note an important distinction between the linen vestments of these armies and that of the Lamb’s Wife.

- The **Bride’s** linen is the Greek word **LAMPRON**, meaning “*brilliant, lustrous*”; and refers to her life deeds; but the linen of **the armies** is **LEUKON**, meaning “*white, light*,” and refers to our righteousness, or standing by faith in Jesus (compare Rev.1:14 and 6:11).
- Also, the word **clothed** is not the same in the Greek. When referring to **The Bride** [Rev.19:8], it means that there was given to her “*a pure, brilliant, dazzling outer garment*,” sparkling with her happy, holy deeds through taking Christ as her life. But when referring to the **armies of heaven**, in which the Lamb’s Wife is included, the word for **clothed** is **ENDUED** as “*invested with authority and power*.” Christ’s first appearance in those closing days will be with “*a garment down to the foot*” (an “**ENDUE**ment to His feet,”) showing his official relation to Christendom as Judge [Rev.1:13] (see also Luk.24:49). The phrase from Revelation 1:13 “*a garment down to the foot*” is prophetic of this 14th verse of Revelation 19; for The Church is His Body and shares in His official kingly investment even down to the smallest member. She is with Him in executing Revelation 19:15.

Riding “*upon white horses*” speaks of the place of power which the saints will enjoy with the Lord as He descends to punish the nations assembled at the battle of Armageddon and to overthrow the 2 beasts. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 will be fulfilled then, which agrees with Verse 15 of Revelation 19. The first 6 verses of Isaiah 63 are a graphic, sublime, and powerful description of those days:

“Who is this that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah, this that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger and trample them in my fury and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments and I will stain all my raiment: for the day of vengeance is in mine heart and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked and there was none to help and I wondered that there was none to uphold; therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me

and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger and make them drunk in my fury and I will bring down their strength to the earth." [Isa.63:1-6]

So great will be the slaughter of men in that battle, that John declares, as did also Ezekiel, that the fowls of heaven will be invited to "*eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses*" [Rev.19:18]. "The slain of the Lord will be many" [Isa.66:16]. Jesus foretold of that hour saying, "*Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together*" [Mat.24:28 and Luk.17:37]. The undertakers will be 7 months burying the dead after the fowls will have been filled [Eze.39].

The last 3 verses of Revelation 19 announce the overthrow of the false emperor and of the false prophet—that is, the 2 beasts. The greatest battle in all ages will be fought and the greatest victory will be achieved. It will be proven forever, not only that man is a failure religiously and nationally; but, that man's very best, brightest, and biggest is a horrible stench in the Divine Nostrils. Therefore, then will be introduced the universal reign of righteousness and peace for 1,000 years. Jesus Christ shall reign.

The Colossal Consummation

The end is at hand,
The end of men, of sects and state,
The end of all the world calls great.
E'en now the judgment thunders peal
The doom. To Christians only is the weal –
The royal glory land.

The end is at hand.
We hear the mutterings of wrath,
Dread earthquakes in their raging path
And rains and floods and tempest cloud
Proclaiming volumes full and fierce and loud,
Divinely great and grand.

The end is at hand.
We hear of wars in countries far,
Ordained of heav'n; set not a bar
Of prayer against the will of God.
His purposes are wrought on angry sod.
The Truth must ever stand.

The end is at hand.
The Antichrist may soon arise—
A man of peace in blind disguise—
A covenant with Jacob make,
The nations win, a treaty quickly break;
The gaze of all command.

The end is at hand.
The Word is true—"The heavens rule,"
The Antichrist, the greatest fool;
And prophet false, to lake of flame
Shall go. The happy saints all free from blame
With Christ in white shall stand.

THE LONGED-FOR MILLENNIUM [REV.20]

Revelation 20:1-3 belongs properly with Revelation 19.

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the pit of the abyss and a great chain in His hand.” [Rev.20:1 RV]

This chapter falls into 4 parts and it covers 1,000 years:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Satan imprisoned [Vs.1-3]. | 3. Satan loosed [Vs.7-10]. |
| 2. Believers reigning [Vs.4-6]. | 4. Wicked dead judged [Vs.11-15]. |

In Revelation 1:18, we saw that the Lord Jesus *“has the keys of hell and of death.”* By that we know that He is the *“angel”* here mentioned. In Revelation 20:1, we saw that *“the key”* symbolizes authority and the *“great chain”* speaks of mighty binding power.

“And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.” [Rev.20:2-3]

Revelation 20:2 agrees with Revelation 12:9 showing that the dragon is the devil. When our Lord descends to the battle of Armageddon and overthrows the beast and the false prophet, He will seize hold of Satan and cast him into the pit of the abyss (hell) and shut him up therein for 1,000 years. Oh, how different the world will then be. The deceitful and destructive spirit that now works in the children of disobedience, stirring up strife, driving men wild over pleasure and mad over money, deceiving the people religiously—that spirit will not be here. Thank God! Satan will not be able to stir men’s hearts with selfish greed and graft and lead them to slay one another in bloody combats. *“The nations will not learn war any more” [Isa.2:4].*

BELIEVERS WILL REIGN

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” [Rev.20:4]

In his vision, the Apostle John’s telescope carried him forward through 1,000 years. He beheld a miniature picture of the new creation principalities and the reign of the saints with Christ during the millennial period. Evidently the thrones were of varying splendor according to the different ranks of believers. Special reference is given to *“them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus”* and *“had not worshipped the beast.”* They also

“lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years” but not in the same capacity or nearness as The Church.

Now, **QUESTION**: who are the ones who sat upon thrones? **ANSWER**: *“The armies in heaven”* [Rev.19:14]. They were the hosts at the marriage of the Lamb. We must distinguish between *“the armies of heaven”* and *“the souls of them that were beheaded.”* Not all the redeemed will be at that great wedding feast. The souls of those beheaded will not be there. They will witness for Jesus during The Tribulation days after The Church will have been translated. Their martyrdom will not be counted a high honor bestowed upon them. It will be a chastisement for not having accepted Christ earlier.

“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.” [Rev.20:5]

“But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished” should be read as a parenthetical statement; for it refers to the wicked dead only, not to any believers on Christ. No believing dead will remain in the graves after the resurrection of the saints at the opening of the millennium. Revelation 20:6 declares that *“blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.”* Saved folk are all *“blessed and holy”*; otherwise they are not saved.

With the statement *“This is the first resurrection”* a 2nd resurrection is implied; but that will embrace the wicked dead only (see Rev.20:12-15). The 1st resurrection really began with the raising of Jesus from the dead; for *“Christ is the first-fruit of them that sleep”* [1Co.15:23]. It includes those that arose the day that He arose [Mat.27:52-53]. It includes the resurrection of those in The Church which are in the graves [1Th.4:16] and Old Testament saints [Dan.12:2]. It culminates with the close of the millennium, though no believers will remain in the graves and be raised at the end; but they will be changed. *“Death will be swallowed up in victory,”* not only by corruption putting on incorruption, the dead raised incorruptible; but by changing the mortal to immortality without dying [1Co.15:54]. The *“mystery...we shall all be changed”* has in it the value of resurrection. To arrest the death tendency by changing our death-doomed bodies into immortality is equivalent to a resurrection, because the entire new creation is dependent forever upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

SATAN RELEASED FROM PRISON

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: The number of whom is as the sand of the sea.” [Rev.20:7-8]

The devil has always been deceiving the people. Just before the millennium, Satan will climax his deception of the nations through the craft and power of the Antichrist and the miracles of the false prophet. The battle of Armageddon will be the culmination of national satanic power [Rev.16]; but Christ will descend with His holy ones and defeat him, casting

him into the pit of the abyss and the 2 beasts into the lake of fire. Then, at the close of his 1,000-year imprisonment, Satan will be let out of the pit and resume his infernal conflict against the Son of God; taking revenge for his confinement. He will find a vast horde of people on earth who will have yielded **FEIGNED OBEDIENCE** to the Lord during His millennial reign, because in their heart they are His enemies, not being born again [Psa.66:3 and 81:15]. God's foes are one. They are all the children of the devil [Joh.8:44]; hence, in Ezekiel 38-39, the national foes of Christ and His people at the beginning of the millennium will be represented by Gog and Magog, and in Revelation 20 at the close of the millennium. Gog was the 2nd son of Japheth. **Gog** means "*high, to cover, to surmount, to top.*" Magog was the land of Gog. **Magog** means "*covering, overtopping.*" Satan is working in men to exalt themselves above God and to go over the top for his satanic majesty. But with him they will finally be hurled to the lowest bottom. That will be the devil's last fiendish combat against eternal righteousness. It will also be man's last chance to show on whose side he stands—the final proof that the mind of the flesh (natural man) is death (subject to the devil) but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace:

"For to be carnally minded (minding of the flesh) is death; but to be spiritually minded (minding of the Spirit) is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."
[Rom.8:6-7]

Oh, how solemn! Men have a lifetime in which to choose whom they will serve. They often seem to be on the fence; but fence-sitters invariably finally tumble to the enemy. Present day fence-sitters will end up with the Antichrist. The millennial reign will consummate in a similar manner; for men must define their position sometime.

Sad, sad, the finale:

"And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. 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 forever and ever." [Rev.20:9-10]

Fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours them; and the devil that deceived them is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. He goes to his own place, where the beast and the false prophet are, to receive from the Hand of Justice what he has been giving to mankind for 6,000 years, that is, to be "*tormented day and night forever and ever* (into the ages of the ages)." Does that sound like the devil would be saved, as a few fools have intimated? Christ did not die for the devil.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE WICKED

"And I saw a great white throne and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." [Rev.20:11]

In Noah's flood, the world perished; the inhabitants were drowned. However, the earth was not annihilated, neither were the people; for they must appear before God for judgment. There followed a reconstruction of the earth (see 2Pe.3:6). What believers experience now...*"regeneration"* [Tiu.3:5]...is what the earth will experience during the millennium [Mat.19:28]; *"a new earth and a new heaven"* as compared with present conditions [Isa.65:17]. However, the complete renewal of the earth will not take place until at the end of the 1,000 years' reign of Christ, when God will exclaim, *"Behold I make all things new"* [Rev.21:5].

In 2 Peter 3:7, it is intimated that the elements of destruction are pent up in the heaven and the earth, being stored up with fire *"reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."* That judgment will begin at the close of this age. Then it will be suspended for 1,000 years; at the end of which it will be resumed and finished as stated in verse 11 of this chapter. Therefore, the fleeing away of the heaven and earth from the face of God as Judge, teaches us that the whole old creation must pass away forever from His presence. He will have endured it 7,000 years; He will endure it no longer. Inasmuch as men reject the finished judgment that fell upon God's Son in their behalf, there will not remain even a shadow on which to stand before the Judge. Hence, John declares, *"I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God"*; but they will stand upon nothing. Those will be the wicked dead only. There will be no sainted dead in that company; for they will have been raised 1,000 years before. Note the last sentence of Revelation 20:6.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death (the grave) and hell (Hades) delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." [Rev.20:12-15]

Mark well the meaning and use of these different kinds of books. *"Another book"* is distinguished from *"the books."* Hell (**H**ADES, Greek) is the receptacle of the wicked dead. All the wicked dead for all the past will be raised and appear before God, the Just Judge. Note 2 vital facts: ☿ they will be *"judged out of those things which were written in the books"*; and • they will be judged *"according to their works."* The deeds of the wicked during the ages have been recorded opposite their respective names. The judgment of the *"great"* will be severer than that of the *"small"*; but all will be judged...none will escape. Of course their punishment will be according to their respective works. Note that the destiny of men is not determined **BY THEIR WORKS**; but their judgment is according **TO THEIR WORKS** because their destiny was settled beforehand by their rejection of the Savior; for which reason they will not be *"found written in the book of life"* [Rev.20:15].

It is wonderful how the Holy Spirit anticipates error. False prophets claim that the wicked dead will have a chance to be saved after death. What chance is intimated here? Pray tell. *"The book of life"* is opened in full view.

Search is made in that infallible record by the Just Judge for the names of the wicked; but not one is found there. If they were written in the book of life, they would not be wicked, and they would not have remained in the graves to be raised at the end of the millennium. They will not be judged out of the book of life, but out of the things recorded in "*the books*." They will be "*judged EVERY MAN according to their works*" [Rev.20:12]. The sad inevitable finale is that if anyone was not found, having been written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire" [Rev.20:15]. The past perfect tense of the participle **written** (GEGRAMMENOS, Greek) proves positively that all names in the book of life will be recorded long before that final judgment day. Indeed, note when they were written [Rev.17:8]. "*The book of life*" will there be opened to prove finally and forever the justice of God in consigning the wicked dead to their deserved eternal abode.

"*Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire.*" Hell (**HADES**, Greek) is only a temporary imprisonment of the wicked dead until the great judgment day; after which there will be no more graves and no more hell. The phrase "eternal hell," used by some preachers, is not Scriptural. The lake of fire will be their unending abode. "*This is the second death,*" as distinguished from the death of all men on the cross; "*for we thus reckon,*" said Paul, "*That if One (Christ) died for all, then all died*" [2Co.5:14]. "*Christ died for...*" all the ungodly, all sinners, all His enemies [Rom.5:6, 8, 10]. God counts man's death with Christ on Calvary the 1st death. Thank God! Those who accept the 1st death will escape the 2nd death. Those who admit and accept the judgment of their sins in Christ's death as just, "*shall never come into judgment,*" the judgment of the wicked; for they will have "*passed out of death into life*" when they believed on Jesus unto salvation [Joh.5:24]. God is just; He cannot punish again those who accept their punishment in the death of His Son. The phrase "*hell fire*" [Mat.5:22] is **GEHENNA FIRE** (see Jam.3:6).

My Brother's Keeper

The road was long and the street was wide,
 While rain was falling on ev'ry side.
 The wind was whistling loud and bold,
 As I wended my way thru the damp and cold.
 And as I walked, there right in my way,
 Was a spindling lad that blustery day,
 Carrying a golden-haired baby boy,
 And happily laughing, like he was a toy.
 I stopped to speak in crossing the street.
 "Isn't he heavy, that baby so sweet?"
 "No, he's not heavy," he said with a smile.
 "He is my brother, I'll carry a while."
 O what a lesson for you and for me—
 To help our own brother whate'er he be.
 We are his keeper midst turmoil and strife.
 Let us be kinder on the highway of life.

Mary M. Bodie

Revelation 21 falls into 3 interesting portions: ☐The New Universe, • The New Jerusalem, and ☒the Glorious Bride of the Lamb:

The first 4 verses of Revelation 21 introduce the Holy City. Revelation 21:9—22:5 give a detailed description of the Holy City. Revelation 21:5-8 contains concluding remarks similar to those recorded in Revelation 22:17-21.

1. NEW UNIVERSE

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and the sea is no more.”
[Rev.21:1 RV]

In spirit, John stands at the end of the Millennium and the end of time and introduces us into the eternal state, but he goes no further than an introduction. The new heaven and earth are reconstructions of the former, a coming forth from the terrible dissolution which Peter records [2Pe.3:10-13] into the condition of incorruption and unchangeableness. Its inhabitants shall enjoy not only righteousness and peace, as during the millennium, but also ineffable bliss. In the most absolute sense, there will be the “*restitution (reconstruction) of all things*” [Act.3:21]. God exclaims, “*Behold, I make all things NEW*” [Rev.21:5]. Accordingly, there will be no more sea. Was there no sea in the beginning? The first words of Scripture are, “*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth*” [Gen.1:1 RV]. As to the earth, God “*formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain (a waste, a vacancy), he formed it to be inhabited*” [Isa.45:18]. But Genesis 1:2 says, “*The earth was without form (a waste) and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep.*” Genesis 1:6-10 intimates that the watery condition did not exist when the earth was first made. At any rate, here is a fine spiritual truth. Today, the sea speaks of troubled masses. “*The wicked are like the troubled sea*” [Isa.57:20]. But in that coming day there will be no more trouble (note Rev.21:4).

2. NEW JERUSALEM

“And I John saw the city, the holy, New Jerusalem coming down from God out of the heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband?” [Rev.21:2 Greek]

This is the city for which Abraham looked 4,000 years ago [Heb.11:19]. This is “*My Darling*” for which Jesus longed before times eternal [Psa.22:20 and 35:17]. In his vision, John beheld this same company 1,000 years before, not “*as a bride adorned,*” but as “*the armies of heaven*” [Rev.19:14]. At the beginning of the millennium, it will be said, “The marriage of the Lamb is come and His Wife hath made herself ready” [Rev.19:7]. Then for 1,000 years, He will be known as the **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**; His Bride ruling con-jointly with Him; for “*He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet*” [1Co.15:25]. Christ will reign as God Almighty. Then and not until then, “His

name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace" [Isa.9:6]. Then He, together with His Bride, having subdued all things unto Him (the Father), shall be subject unto Him forever, *"that God may be all and in all"* [1Co.15:24-28].

During the eternity past, the glory of the Son was that He was *"equal with God,"* because He was God (compare Joh.17:5 with Phi.2:6). His glory during His coming 1,000-years rulership will be that He, as a Man (His Bride sharing that honor with Him), shall reign as Sovereign. Finally, Christ must have a recompense for emptying Himself of His first glory and identifying Himself with mankind that He might redeem men and save them. That eternal glory will be, that throughout the coming ceaseless ages He will be the Head of a Divine Human Creation wrought by clothing humanity with divinity, and thereby bring the creature into full harmony with the perfect will of the Holy Creator. He will bring the fruit of His sacrifice into the closest possible relationship with the infinite God.

In these 2 closing chapters, we are reminded constantly of **GOD AND THE LAMB**. Through all eternity, we will worship **GOD AND THE LAMB**. And that will be *"according to His eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus"* [Eph.3:11].

"And I heard a great voice from heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men." [Rev.21:3]

All the saints will constitute that gigantic tabernacle, or Divine Place. The tabernacle ("tent of meetings") in the wilderness in Moses' time was Jehovah's place of meeting with men then [Exo.25:8]. That was a shadow of the Holy City here mentioned. While Jesus was on earth, He was God's tabernacle among men. *"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself"* [2Co.5:20]. *"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father"* [Joh.14:9]. Then in the absence of Jesus, His followers have been Jehovah's habitation: *"I will dwell in them and walk in them"* [2Co.6:16]. And, finally and forever, the blood-washed throng will be the glorious dwelling place of the triune God in the city in the sky. What a great marvel.

God does not set that tabernacle in heaven but brings it down out of heaven. Oh, how near to earth the eternal throne will be. That tabernacle is a Holy City, and that city is The Bride of the Lamb and her companions.

And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful." [Rev.21:5]

"Behold, I make all things new," is a very meaningful statement. There will be absolutely nothing old in the eternal state. *"The former things,"* the fading, perishable things; all things marred by sin, will have *"passed away."* It will be the new creation in the fullest and most glorious sense.

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." [Rev.21:7]

This verse is a great and final encouragement. Hosea 11:1 is a sidelight on this verse: *"When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called my son out of Egypt."*

Exodus 4:22 declares that *“thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, my firstborn.”* But these Scriptures were also fulfilled in Christ [Mat.2:15]. As Adam and all his progeny are termed the **OLD CREATION**; so Christ, the last Adam, and all the countless fruit of redemption are termed the **NEW CREATION**. This new creation, with Christ as its Head, will be regarded as God’s triumphant Son, the Father’s last-born; for all who believe must be overcomers in some measure. All the redeemed, viewed as one whole, *“inherit all things.”*

“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” [Rev.21:8]

The striking and eternal contrast between the destiny and condition of the righteous and the unrighteous is indicated by setting Revelation 21:8 over against Revelation 21:7. Verse 8 records 8 classes, which include all the Christ-rejecters, who will be cast into the lake of fire. Here, the number 8 speaks of *“frail humanity”*; 4 multiplied by the number of division (2), the number 4 being 2 times 2. And from that burning lake there will be no egress. Jesus calls that lake **A FURNACE OF FIRE** and **GEHENNAH FIRE**. He says it is an **ETERNAL FIRE**, *“eternal punishment”* as set over against *“eternal life.”* Study Matthew 13:42, 18:8, and 25:41, 46. In these citations the word **hell** is not **HADES** (the temporary abode of the wicked) but **GEHENNAH**, their final eternal and unchangeable abode. It is simply silly to limit these Scriptures to the valley of Hinnom, which was a faint picture of the lake of fire. The fleshly mind is enmity against God, takes sides with the devil, gives God the lie and denies the eternal *“damnation of gehennah”* [Mat.23:33]. Its *“tongue is set on fire of gehennah”* [Jam.3:6] and wrests the Scriptures to its own destruction. Scripture is logical. If there will be a happy home for believers on Jesus; there will be also a prison for unbelievers. And, if the one is eternal; why is not the other? Though it is no longer popular, yet it is still true: *“He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned”* [Mar.16:16].

3. THE GLORIOUS BRIDE OF THE LAMB

“And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. Having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” [Rev.21:9-11]

Revelation 21:9 records the 5th Vision Viewpoint. The 8 preceding verses describe the eternal state. But the following verses picture The Bride as seen during the millennium.

The city, the great, the Holy Jerusalem will be pervaded with dazzling splendor, *“having the glory of God.”* Its Luminary is like a stone most precious, like *“a jasper stone (crystal-like)”*; because *“the Lamb is the lamp thereof”* [Rev.21:23]. Observe that the city is a *“prepared”* city—literally, *“having been prepared as a bride having been adorned for her husband.”* Yes, we read in Revelation 19:7 that the Lamb’s wife has *“made herself ready.”* How? She

hearkened to the voice of the Father and inclined her ear to His Word; thus, she forgot her own people and her Father's house, putting His Son first in her devotions. She accepted Him as her Lord and worshipped Him. She became **ALL GLORIOUS WITHIN** by the effectual working of the Word as she believed. Her clothing became of "*wrought gold*" [Psa.45:13].

The "*bride adorned*" is the city itself. If The Bride is a company of saints, what constitutes the adornment? Two facts suggest that her adornment is also a group of saints:

1ST, the enormous dimensions of the Holy City; and

2ND, where is the innumerable multitude of Revelation 7?

How can that great innumerable company be said to adorn The Bridal Company? The various meanings of the Greek word **KEKOSMEMENEN** help us to see how. **KEKOSMEMENEN** means "*marshalled, decked, adorned, embellished, honored, or ornaments.*" By the Shulamite's entire separation unto her beloved, she compelled the highest esteem of other women. The daughters exclaimed, "*Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women...that we may seek him with thee*" [SSg.6:1]. Again, we read, "*The daughters saw her and blessed her; the queens and concubines and they praised her*" [SSg.6:9]. They honored her by calling out, "*Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun and terrible as an army with banners?*" [SSg.6:10]. After she was married and left for her wedding trip, they shouted aloud, "*Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee*" [SSg.6:13]. That is a rich picture of how other saints become an ornament of The Bridal Company.

Full overcomers, the Philadelphia or brotherly love believers, learn the Lord in the deepest and largest sense. They really become the 5 senses to the rest of the body. They **see** as Christ sees, having "*dove's eyes*" [SSg.4:1]. They **hear** as Christ hears, their ears having been fastened to the gateway of God's will. They "**taste** and see" the Word of God [Psa.34:8]. They are of "*quick understanding (scent)*" [Isa.11:3]; for "*he that is spiritual discerneth all things, yet he is discerned of no man*" [1Co.2:15]. They **feel** the deepest pangs of heart, being wounded, torn, and crushed; dying daily [1Co.15:31]; led as sheep to the slaughter [Isa.53:7]; being "*full of eyes before and behind*" [Rev.4:6]; understanding the ways of Jehovah in the past and His plans for the future, they enter so deeply and minutely into the things of Christ, that they "*fill up that which is behind of the afflictions (touch) of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church*" [Col.1:24]. Their usefulness is in a hidden way. Such saints are comparatively few in number. Nevertheless, their words and their writings are quoted. Their doctrine is studied and proclaimed. Their full surrender, their whole-hearted devotion, their holy walk in Christ; these all speak loudly and effectively to other saints who stand aloof from them in worship and service because the way is too narrow for them. What the faithful, self-sacrificing, true-hearted saints are to the whole Church will not be known until the book of rewards is opened. Then the effulgent glory of The Bride will shine forth in the exhibition of the help that the great majority of believers will have received through her life and ministry here.

Paul said to the saints at Philippi that ye are “*our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing* (glorying)” [1Th.2:20].

THE IMPOSING WALL

“And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.” [Rev.21:12]

Similarly to the earthly Jerusalem, the heavenly Jerusalem will be surrounded by a wall. It will not be a wall of mineral stone, but a wall of saints, whom Peter calls “*living stones*.” It will measure exactly 144 cubits (a cubit being “a man’s measure” or the distance from a man’s elbow to his fingertip). They are wholly of Israel; for upon the angels that guard the gates are inscribed the names of the 12 tribes of the sons of Israel. Doubtless, they will be the 144,000 which were sealed in Revelation 7 and are seen standing before the throne in Revelation 14.

The “*twelve gates*” agree with the entire Word of God, that all Divine Blessings to the whole world came through Israel. “*As concerning the flesh, Christ came*” of Israel [Rom.9:5]. Through their fall, salvation and the riches of Christ have come to the Gentiles. “*How much more thru their fullness? For if the casting away of them (Israel) be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?*” [Rom.11:12, 15].

The kings of the earth, those who shall reign over the earth, and those who shall reign over the saved nations “*do bring their glory and honor into*” the city. But they must come in through the gates, even through Israel; for “*gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there*” [Rev.21:24-25].

The word **twelve** is unspeakably full of meaning here.

- It is the number of Divine Government and it was the prevailing number in Jehovah’s first kingdom on earth, namely, the 12 tribes of Israel. Before it was divided into 2 tribes and 10 tribes, the duration of the Kingdom was 120 years (10 times 12).
- Solomon had exactly 12 officers over his realm; and, he had 12,000 horsemen.
- Jesus ordained 12 apostles, who shall sit on 12 thrones and reign over the 12 tribes of Israel.
- There were 12 legions of angels at the Master’s service if necessary.
- There are 12 signs in the zodiac.
- The sun rules by 12’s.

- There are 12 months in the year, 12 times 30 days in a year.
- There are 12 hours in a day [Joh.11:9]; 12 times 5 minutes in an hour, and 12 times 5 seconds in a minute.
- The duration of Gentile dominion is 12 times 210. With this same climacteric number 12, God will introduce the eternal ages.

The number 7 represents the fullness of time, or dispensational completeness, in God's dealings with man; that is, the fullness and completeness of the results of redemption.

- He began with 7 creative days and will climax the 7 ages of time with the Millennial Age.
- Revelation abounds with 7's, commencing with the 7 churches and closing the Gentile Times with the 7 last plagues.

But where the figure 7 ceases, there the figure 12 begins; for 12 is the expansion of 7, which is 3 plus 4, while 12 is 3 times 4. Wonderful! Time ends with dependent humanity (4) added to Deity (3) equaling unchangeable perfection (7).

Jesus Christ will have *"put down all rule and all authority and all power"* [1Co.15:24]. Then humanity, by the Infinite One, will exhibit to the uttermost the absolute and eternal dominion of Jehovah...God all and in all. God is 1 as to nature and 3 as to personalities, both speaking of His indivisible unity, power, and glory. In fact, 12 is the highest number of actual value. 13 is simply 6 plus 7. 14 is 7 plus 7, or 2 times 7. 15 is 3 times 5 (the number of Deity multiplied by the number of grace). 16 reminds us of weakness, being 4 times 4, in which Deity is absent. Hence the large figures of measurements here are 144 cubits and 12,000 furlongs (both multiples of 12).

"And he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height are equal." [Rev.21:16]

The shape of the city will be cubical, which speaks of perfection, solidity, and durability. **GOD AND THE LAMB** being the glory of that city, God dwelling in man will be displayed eternally in every direction. The context indicates that the heavenly city will come down over the earthly Jerusalem; no doubt, the two will be merged into one. It seems too wonderful to expect; but evidently the *"new earth"* will finally be the throne-room of Jehovah (see Rev.21:3). It is no marvel that Satan is striving to hold his dominion of the world.

What makes a city? In the natural, a city is made up of houses and the people make the city. Likewise, the New Jerusalem will be constituted of redeemed people. Their glorified bodies will be the *"mansions"* (*"houses from heaven"*) in which they shall dwell [Joh.14:2 and

2Co.5:1-2]. Thus, the saints themselves will make up the city, which will be the eternal habitation of Jehovah.

THE SPLENDOR OF THE CITY

"And the building of the wall of it was jasper; and the city was pure gold like unto clear glass...And the twelve gates were twelve pearls. Every several gate was one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." [Rev.21:18, 21]

Observe that 3 classes of the rarest minerals are employed to express the wealth, the beauty, and the dazzling splendor of that city. They express also the solidity and imperishableness thereof. The degrees of Christian development here on earth will be on exhibit there forever. Some will compose the city and street of gold; some the wall of jasper and others the gates of pearl. A street suggests activity, being the place where the inhabitants of the city move. There being only 1 street ("*the street*") indicates the one-accordness of the saints in glory in their glorious activities of worship and praise toward the triune God.

"And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones." [Rev.21:19]

Twelve precious stones in nature are used to picture the unutterable value and preciousness of Christ in the saints unto God Himself. As certain saints will adorn (garnish) The Bridal Company [Rev.21:2], so certain other saints will embellish those who constitute the foundation. Possibly the 144,000 of Revelation 7 and 14 will be those "*precious stones*." Following is a description of the 12 stones, with their meanings.

1. **JASPER** A very precious stone. The jasper of Scripture corresponds with our diamond and is clear as crystal. **Jasper** means "*He will be made prominent*." The crystal-like brightness and preciousness of Christ and the pure transparency of His character will be displayed in His saints. These qualities are seen in them now; how much more when they have their glorified bodies.
2. **SAPPHIRE** A very beautiful stone, sky blue; sometimes red, blue and yellow mixed in an exquisite blend. It is incomparably precious [Job 28:16]. The pavement of the God of Israel is likened to a sapphire stone [Exo.24:10]. **Sapphire** means "*telling out, a recounting*." The exquisite beauty and heavenliness of Christ will shine forth through sapphire saints. Bear in mind that all these garnishings are pertaining to Israel. The brightness and glory of the Bridegroom, which will shine forth through The Bride, must of necessity be far greater. Therefore, the city is "*pure gold*" and the street is "*pure gold*."

3. **CHALCEDONY** A gem, variegated with divers colors in the form of clouds. It is copper-like. **Chaledony** speaks of the “*durability of the glory of Christ*” which will be exhibited in His people; not as a fading veneer; but an eternal embellishment.
4. **EMERALD** A beautiful gem, green without mixture. The **emerald** figures “*the resurrection*.” That is, the resurrection life and power of Jesus Christ will be displayed in the immortal and incorruptible bodies of the saved. The new creation, life out of death, is the result of redemption.
5. **SARDONYX** Resembles the sardius and onyx stones, the onyx stone being like a fingernail, suggestive of health. The glorified humanity of Jesus will be thus on exhibit forever.
6. **SARDIUS** It is of a reddish color, approaching white. **Sardius** means “*ruddiness*,” which is suggestive of the unfading newness of the new creation—“*all things new*.”
7. **CHRYSLITE** A golden stone, yellowish green, very transparent. The glory of the resurrection of Christ will show forth through the chrysolite garnishing of His glorified people.
8. **BERYL** A jewel of sea green or bluish-green color. **Beryl** signifies “*she will impoverish*.” It will be manifested in the saints by the resurrection and translation power of Christ that the devil has been impoverished (displaced) to make room for them in the coming glory.
9. **TOPAZ** A yellowish or pale, dead green. Topaz means “*affliction has fled away*.” “*God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes*” [Rev.21:4]. In topaz believers will appear the eternal proof that “*Himself took our infirmities and bear our sicknesses*” [Mat.8:17].
10. **CHRYSOPRASUS** A golden leek; that is a stone like a leek in color, is akin to the chrysolite. It is of a bluish hue or green with golden brightness. **Chrysoprasus** signifies “*golden or divine achievement*.” The Divine Achievements of the cross and of the operations of the Holy Spirit will stand out in bold, bright relief for God to glory in; and, for angels to wonder at forever.
11. **JACINTH** A precious stone of the color of the hyacinth; also like an amethyst, violet in color. This gives prominence to the royalty of Jesus Christ, seen in the redeemed, though He once dwelt in a body of limitations on earth.
12. **AMETHYST** The glorious climax is reached in the last of these brilliant stone settings, the Amethyst. It is violet,

bordering on purple, composed of strong blue and deep red. The **amethyst** is called "*The dream stone*" or "*I shall be brought back as from a dream.*" The right to reign will be seen in the kingliness of the blood-washed. Our Lord will occupy His throne, earned by the sacrifice of Himself; after the many years of patient waiting, it will be as if it had been but a dream. After the millennium, instead of Christ and His people appearing as a gigantic "*full-grown man*" [Eph.4:13] or the battle-clad "*armies of heaven*" [Rev.19:14], they will be seen as a majestic, cubical city, expressive of rest from labor; peace after war; prosperity unchanging; and enjoyment undisturbed, unceasing, and eternal. It will be inconceivably wonderful and glorious. There will be no need of sun or moon; for the glory of God and the Lamb will illuminate it; and the city will be to the nations a gigantic luminary [Rev.21:23-24].

THE FINALE [REV.22]

"And he showed me a river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."
[Rev.22:1-2]

We might wonder if there was no reference to the Holy Spirit in the description of the Holy City. But here it is: A pure "*river of water.*" Ezekiel 47 speaks of this same river as flowing out from the earthly Jerusalem during the millennium. Here we have mention of the 3 Persons of the Godhead: God, the Lamb, and the Holy Spirit. In John 7:38, the 3rd Person is called "*rivers of living water.*"

Also, as the river figures the Spirit; so "*the tree of life*" figures Christ "*which bare twelve manner of fruits and yielded her fruit every month.*" A variety that satisfies fully and yielded monthly, simply means that the saved will be dependent upon the Lamb during the unchanging and unceasing cycles of eternity (3 times 4) with 12 being the absolute number of Divine Rule.

"AND THE LEAVES OF THE TREE ARE FOR THE NURTURING OF THE NATIONS" (Greek). As Jesus Christ is more to some saints today than to others (**BREAD** to some and only **MANNA** to others); likewise He will be the nourishment as "*fruit*" to some and as "*leaves*" to others. It is surprising that the Greek word **THERAPEIA** should be limited to **HEALING** by translators. **THERAPEIA** means "*a waiting on, service, attendance, a fostering, nurturing, attending in sickness, medical treatment, and 5 other things*" ([LIDDELL AND SCOTT](#)). Thank God there will be no need of healing medicines in eternity; but the eternal preventative, the Tree of life—the Lamb of God, will be there. "*There shall be no more curse*" [Rev.22:3], carries the same thought; for the Lamb redeemed us forever from the curse (compare Gal.3:13-14 with Deu.23:22).

“And His servants shall serve Him” [Rev.22:3]. Today, some believers know the Lord only as a Master to be served; they have learned little of real worship and fellowship with Him. They will have the same place in the coming age. Others will have a far closer place with Him, even as they enjoy with Him now.

Often the **question** is asked, “Will we see God?” Here is the **answer**: *“They shall see His face”* [Rev.22:4]. **GOD AND THE LAMB** shall ever be before us in the eternal estate.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

“And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true.” [Rev.22:6]

The angel mentioned here and in Revelation 22:8 was mentioned before in Revelation 1:1 and 19:9-10 whom John mistook for the Lord Jesus.

These closing words cover the entire period of the millennial reign. Some items refer to its beginning, others to its close. The statements *“behold, I am coming quickly”* and *“seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand”* [Rev.22:10], indicate that in his vision John was standing at the end of The Church Age and heard and saw things pertaining to the eternal ages.

“Behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” [Rev.22:7]

This book begins with emphasis and ends with great emphasis. In Revelation 1:3, a blessing is promised to him that reads and to them that hear and keep its contents. Now, in this last chapter, a blessing is pronounced upon him that keeps these sayings. An exhortation is given not to “seal the sayings of this prophecy” and a severe threat is pronounced upon everyone who may *“add unto”* or *“take away from these words of the book of this prophecy”* [Rev.22:10, 18]. Note also that these closing words are given because the Lord says, *“Surely, I come quickly”* [Rev.22:7, 12, 20] and *“the time is at hand”* [Rev.1:3, 22:10]. How diligently then, we should ponder the sayings of this prophecy. How whole-heartedly we should believe them. How fervently we should proclaim them to all. Read Revelation 22:17.

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” [Rev.22:11]

Men determine their eternal condition and doom by their own choice while mercy is offered to them. Mercy’s call will cease and mercy’s door will close with the close of Christ’s 1,000-year reign. Nothing can change the weal or woe of men after that. The eternal fixedness of man’s destiny is then settled forever. Revelation 22:12 is the Lord’s final announcement of rewards, which He will grant to those who believe during His reign, and to all His saints forever: *“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”*

"For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." [Rev.22:15]

"Dogs" here mean "wicked, beastly men" (compare Psa.22:16 and 1Co.15:32). That shows the Holy City and the new earth will be the eternal abode of the blood-washed multitudes. "Without" means the "outer darkness" of which Jesus spoke in Matthew 8:12. Probably that will be some planet somewhere, which can never come near the new heaven and the new earth.

"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star" [Rev.22:16]

Seven times our blessed Lord breaks forth in this last chapter by the personal pronoun "I" to assure us that He has spoken. His identity is unmistakable: "**I am the Root and the Offspring of David.**" As to His Deity, Christ was before David; as to His humanity, He came after him. He was **THE ALPHA, THE BEGINNING, THE FIRST**. He announces Himself also to be "*the Bright and Morning Star,*" for whom Israel is looking. Together with His heavenly people, Jesus will be "*the Day Star*" indeed, the incomparable Luminary of the saved nations [Rev.21:23-24]. Thus, he will truly be **THE OMEGA, THE ENDING, THE LAST**.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, COME." [Rev.22:17]

The Holy Spirit has not failed to give a final invitation to all men during this Church Age. The Bridal Company cooperates with Him in this call. Everyone that hears the summons is bidden to pass it on. Jesus Christ proclaimed "**WHOSOEVER**" in His first message [Joh.3:16]. The Holy Spirit proclaims "**WHOSOEVER**" in the last message, because it is not the will of God that any should perish.

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." [Rev.22:18-19]

This refers to false teachers, who misinterpret Divine Prophecy by adding their own prognostications thereto; or, by denying the written word. Such pose as prophets of the last days. For example they say, "The resurrection is passed already," or "Christ has already come and His kingdom is begun."

FAITHFUL FINALE

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." [Rev.22:20]

This has been the true attitude of every spiritual believer throughout this whole Church period. How much more should it be our cry "*as we see the day approaching*" [Heb.10:25]?

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen!" [Rev.22:21]

The Bible began with "*God*" and ends with "*our Lord Jesus Anointed.*" In the beginning there was power—"God created..." At the end there is grace and glory through His Son. Forevermore we shall worship **GOD AND THE LAMB.** **ALL THINGS NEW** will be eternally true!

THE BIBLE CALENDAR

1,260 is a very important number in the books of Daniel and Revelation. It is mentioned as *“a time, times and half a time”* (or dividing of time), and *“forty-two months”* and *“a thousand two hundred and three-score days.”* Its meaning is simple.

The Bible **month** has exactly 30 days and the Bible year has exactly 360 days. In Genesis 7 and 8 we learn that 150 days are counted from the 17th day of the 2nd month to the 17th day of the 7th month, requiring exactly 30 days to a month.

A *“season”* in Scripture is 3 months (90 days).

A *“time”* is 12 months of 30 days each (360 days).

“Times” (dual number in Hebrew and Greek) are twice 360 (720 days). Therefore *“half a time”* is 180 days. *“A time, times and half at time”* is 1,260 days (3½ years). Accordingly, *“seven times”* in Daniel 4 is exactly 7 years (2,520 days) (study Dan.12:7; 4:16, 25).

But **questions** arise:

- Why is our year 365 days long?
- Why do we have leap year every 4 years?

Scientists have found that the length of our solar year is 365 days, 5 hours, and 48 minutes and 46 or 48 seconds long. Therefore 1 extra day must be added every 4 years; so that 1 day is added to February, the shortest month.

As noted above, up to the time of Noah’s flood, the year was 360 days long (30 days to the month). Sometime after the flood (it is not known exactly when), the earth’s path around the sun became oblong, that is, longer than broad—like traveling around an egg. That fact accounts for our calendar year being longer than the Biblical calendar year. Doubtless originally that path was a perfect circle. **Question:** “What caused that change?” **Answer:** Satan is *“the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience.”* Rebellion against God, the rebellion of the devil and of men, caused that change. When Jesus Christ shall become universal Ruler and Satan is hurled into hell and the 2 wild beasts of Revelation 13 are cast into the lake of fire, the calendar year will be exactly 360 days long. The earth’s path around the sun will be a perfect circle.

About 606 B.C. God gave world dominion to the Gentiles. That was the beginning of the period called *“the Times of the Gentiles”* [Luk.21:24]. That year, Nebuchadnezzar became king of the Babylonian Empire. The Lord said, *“And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him and his son and his son’s son, until the very time of his land come; and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him”* [Jer.27:6-7]. The 10 tribes

of Israel had been taken captive into Assyria nearly one-hundred years before that. In 606 B.C., the kingdom of Judah (the 2 tribes) was carried as captive into Babylon. The entire nation of Israel will be subject to Gentile dominion until the Lord comes to inaugurate his millennial reign and deliver them nationally.

The 4 beasts of Daniel 7 symbolize that whole period of Gentile reign:

- The lion figures Babylon, 606 to 536 B.C.
- The bear figures Medo-Persia, 536 to 334 B.C.
- The leopard figures Greece, 334 to 31 B.C.
- The dreadful-terrible beast figures the Roman Empire, 31 B.C. to 638 A.D.

In scriptural figures, the entire time of Gentile rule is 2,520 years. Therefore, that period, should, according to Bible figures, have ended in 1914. Many believers have hoped it would and were expecting the Lord to come and catch us away. Why did He not come then? For these reasons:

- Our reckoning by 2,520 years is according to the Scripture calendar, of 360 days to a year. But we are living in Gentile Times when the years are $5\frac{1}{4}$ days longer. If we compute the time by our calendar, or solar measurement, that period should end about 1950. How is that? $5\frac{1}{4} \times 2,520 = 13,230$. Dividing that number 13,230 by $365\frac{1}{4} = 36\frac{4}{5}$ years. $1914 + 36 = 1950$.
- On what ground may we calculate thus? It is an established fact that the 69 weeks, or 483 prophetic years of Daniel 9:24-25, reach from 445 B.C. (Artaxerxes' command to Nehemiah [*Neh.2*]) to 33 A.D. (the death of Christ.) However, by the Bible calendar, the crucifixion should have occurred 7 years earlier. But by converting the Bible years into the equivalent number of our calendar years, the time according to our current calendar, we arrive at 33 A.D. This reckoning also proves that 33 A.D. is the correct date of the death of Christ. Other supposed earlier dates throw the calculations out of commission entirely. Jesus Christ was not born 4 years B.C., as some men claim.
- Furthermore, all time measurements in the study of Bible prophecy must be computed according to **the rule of 30 days to a month and 360 days to a year**. The figures in Daniel and in Revelation demand this. Then, they must be adapted to our times by transposing the years of 360 days each into the equivalent number of solar years of $365\frac{1}{4}$ days to a year, because the earth travels $5\frac{1}{4}$ days slower around the sun than it should. We should not be surprised at this.
 - God made the sun stand still a whole day that Joshua might gain a victory over his foes.

- For king Hezekiah, God also lengthened the day by 10 degrees (40 minutes).
- And, we read that *“the God of heaven changes times and seasons”* [Dan.2:21].

Thus, it becomes evident why the Lord did not come as soon as we expected Him. It is interesting to read that the Holy Spirit anticipated this disappointment. Hence the Apostle Paul wrote:

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward; for ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise; for yet a little while, and He that shall come will come and will not tarry.” [Heb.10:35-37]

“Oh!” you exclaim, “That was written to Israel.” Exactly so; but if the coming to them is delayed, is it not a delay to The Church also? The stretching out of Gentile Times postpones the beginning of the millennial reign of Christ, and thus the resurrection and translation of the body of Christ are pushed forward. “Are you not setting dates?” cries one, especially he who claims that The Church must go through The Tribulation period. We answer by asking, “Does he not thus set a date? We are not setting dates. We are simply naming dates already set in the Scriptures.” The prophetic reckoning of Daniel’s 70 weeks (490 years) by prophecy students has been proven correct. Daniel 9:27 only awaits fulfillment. Why may we not expect the other figures to be fulfilled?

We are not saying that 1950 A.D. will absolutely be the end of Gentile Times, but the fulfillments of prophecies and the religious and international conditions of the world point approximately to that date. What prophecies have not been fulfilled? Everything, every present providence urges us to be ready for Christ’s coming.

- Jesus says to Israel, *“Watch, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man will come.”*
- To The Church the Spirit says, *“Unto them that look for Him,” to them that “love His appearing,” to them that “keep the Word of My patience”* He will come.

The Thessalonians turned to God from idols to wait, not for The Tribulation time but for His Son from heaven. It is not stated how long, before the end of this age that Christ may come for the 1st Rank overcomers. Unto those who believe the prophecies and looked for the Messiah, like Simeon and the prophetess Anna, Jesus came. To such folk He will come again. The thrilling announcement throughout the book of Revelation is *“Behold, I come quickly.”* This is repeated 4 times [Rev.3:11; Rev.22:7, 12, 20]. Finally, He exclaims, *“Surely I come quickly”* [Rev.22:20]. To the Philadelphia saints He added, *“Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown”* [Rev.3:11].

THE CHART

"The Revelation of Jesus Anointed" chart information is found in 2 separate documents titled:

- 2NT66 Study Bk Rev 1942-27, CHART
- 2NT66 Study Bk Rev 1942-27, CHART Explained

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