

Revelation Topical Study

Introduction

Along with *Revelation Interpreted* by Gene Burns, these topics or subjects are offered as expanded lessons on the various visions of John the Revelator. These lessons are best illustrated to assist the mind to conceptualize the settings and therefore better understand the subjects. For this reason there are many graphics throughout to assist the eye and mind.

These notes were prepared over a number of years using the writings of Pastor Russell and Bible Student resources as well as credible histories to develop the explanations and imagery. These are Gene Burns' own notes and without revision by the compilers. He often used these subjects for lessons delivered to Bible Student congregations.

These topics are also found on the internet at:

www.revelation-today.com

That internet resource also links directly to much of the referenced sources, including text from *Studies in the Scriptures* and other writings of Pastor Russell. This Adobe Reader format uses a navigation index for which to branch to all the topic sections. Within the text are also direct links that advance to related pages with further details. This generic Adobe format also allows for text-searching throughout the entire document, marking the text or otherwise to print selected segments in a page format without accessing the internet.

With this goes the Christian love and prayers of the compilers with gratitude for those who have labored long in the harvest field. We trust the lessons will be a blessing for the John Class to "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life." John 5:39. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." 1Thessalonians 5:21.



THE STORY OF THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD

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Part I

“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.” Revelation 1:4, 5

Grace and peace is extended to all the saints from three sources. We rejoice in this greeting even as we puzzle over just exactly who is sending it. God we recognize and Jesus Christ the faithful witness we know, but

Who or what are these “seven Spirits who are before His throne?”




Our curiosity is aroused. Did you ever get a greeting from a source you did not know? It leaves you a little embarrassed. So this “grace” and “peace” which is being sent to you from the “seven Spirits who are before His throne” present an air of mystery. Let us hope that when we are finished we may together have a clearer understanding. You may actually know more about these “seven Spirits” than you thought you knew.

 <p>John on the Isle of Patmos</p>	<p>Revelation 1:4 is a vital text in understanding how Revelation was written.</p> <p>Sometimes we think that John was playing the role of a shorthand secretary who writes as Jesus Christ dictates.</p> <p>Such was not the case.</p>
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John saw Revelation 4 and 5 before he wrote chapter one. John injects into chapter one what he could not have seen until chapter four. For instance, it is in Revelation 4:5 that we are told about “seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.”

John recalls this vision and that these “seven Spirits of God” were before the great throne. However, in this chapter the “seven Spirits” were stationary. They were not sent forth and no greetings were mentioned.

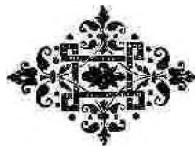
John saw the vision of Revelation 5:6 in which he saw a “Lamb” with “**seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.**” The “seven Spirits” are now identified with the Lamb. We have now been given **three different descriptions of these “seven Spirits of God.”** It is not until Revelation 5:6 that the “seven Spirits” are SENT FORTH.

<p>1. Revelation 4:5</p> 	<p>“Seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.”</p>
<p>2. Revelation 5:6</p> 	<p>These same “seven Spirits” are identified with the Lamb and are called “seven horns”-The power of the Lamb in the “seven churches.”</p>
<p>2. Revelation 5:6</p> 	<p>The “seven horns” are with “seven eyes”-the far-seeing wisdom of the Lamb expressed to the “seven churches.”</p>

Revelation 4:5 speaks of the “seven Spirits” as “**burning before the throne,**” but they were not yet sent forth. They would not be and could not be sent forth until the Lamb was found “worthy” to open the “seven seals” and release the information contained therein.

There is “but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him: and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” 1 Corinthians 8:6 As long as the Lamb had not been slain, the “seven Spirits of God” just “burned before the throne” as “lamps” or “torches.” They were a part of God’s plan and purpose, but they were not sent forth. They were not activated.

So we see a stationary vision in Revelation 4, but in Revelation 5 the Lamb is energized and through him the “seven Spirits of God” are “sent out into all the earth,” to gather His elect from the “four winds of heaven and the four corners of earth.”



“The Words of Him Who Has the Seven Spirits of God and the Seven Stars”

“And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars.”

Revelation 3:1



Here we learn that John saw Revelation 5 before he penned this verse. It is important that we understand this, because it helps us realize that the whole of Revelation is not given in absolute time sequences.

Revelation 4 and 5 were seen and absorbed by John before he wrote Revelation 1 and 3. Only God possessed the “seven Spirits of God” in Revelation 4. Then we find the worthy Lamb in Revelation 5, who is described as the “Lamb” as though it had been slain, “with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth”

John comprehended the message of Revelation 5 before he penned Revelation 3. John, therefore, wrote with a great deal of understanding. He had absorbed the vision, and then subsequently recorded it.

The same is true of John’s Gospel. Nearly one-quarter of his Gospel covers the last day of Jesus’ life. John gives details no other Gospel writer supplies. Chapters 13-19 of John’s Gospel have an intense focus on the last day of Jesus’ life.

John was the only disciple to stay with Jesus through the last night, and who absented himself perhaps for no more than an hour while Jesus was carrying the cross. Except for John’s report, we would not have known what transpired during Jesus’ last night. Only Jesus’ enemies would have been the witnesses. John seems to have total recall, recording Jesus’ discourse and his complete prayer in John Chapter 17.

Even though John was very old when he wrote Revelation, he did not lose his total recall or his artist’s eye for detail. Whether this was John’s natural ability alone or whether the holy Spirit strengthened his natural abilities, we are glad John did not miss any details. **John was heaven’s choice to give us the Revelation of Jesus Christ.**



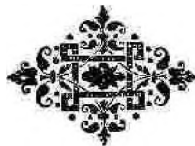
We learn in Revelation that Jesus has both “the seven Spirits of God” and the “seven stars.” **Who are the “seven stars?”**

Revelation 1:20 says, **“The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.”** Jesus holds the “seven stars” in his right hand. That is a place of power.

It would be a tragic mistake to ignore the “star” or “angel” of the period of the church that we live in. Any insubordination on our part would be a grave offense to our Master.

Let us be careful not to imbibe the world’s infatuation with power and influence. The Scriptures tell us, “Let each esteem others better than themselves.” In our time many are chafing with the thought that anyone could be used of God in a higher way than himself or herself

As a case in point, the woman’s movement is constantly attacking the Bible for excluding women from the pulpit. It has become an obsession. The devil is still at work telling the modern Eves that God is withholding from them worlds of power and light. They want and are partaking of the “forbidden fruit” again. The media has fanned the flames of ambition and power lust in all classes of society to the hurt and downfall of this present evil world.

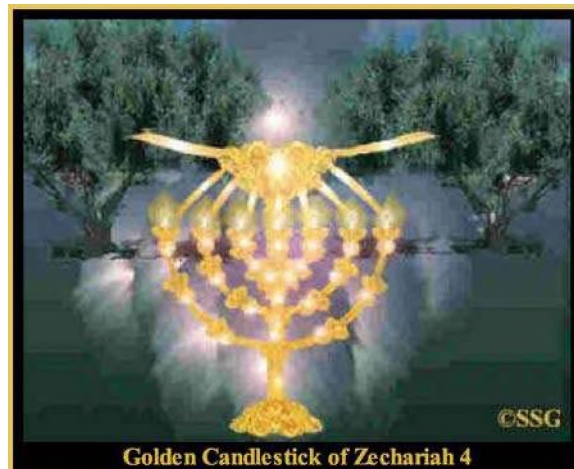


A Golden Candlestick with “Seven Lamps” and “Seven Pipes” and “Two Olive Trees”

“I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof:

“And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.” Zechariah 4:2, 3

The lesson is very clear and similar to Revelation in depicting the seven stages of the one Gospel church. We see the source of the churches sustenance. It is the two olive trees (the Old and New Testaments) on either side of the “candlestick.” There are two “golden pipes” bringing the “oil” from the trees to the candlesticks.



“What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?

“And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

“Then said he, These are the two anointed ones [the Old and New Testaments], that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.” Zechariah 4:12-14

The church’s source for sustenance is the “oil” from the two “olive trees” or, as in Revelation 11:3, the two witnesses of the Old and New Testament. Just as lamps need to be cleaned and maintained, so the church has needed angels or messengers to trim their lamps to get the true light and not a carbon-filled smoking flame that gives off more smoke than light.

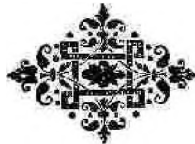
When I was a boy, we had kerosene lamps. The wicks needed to be cut and trimmed. As wicks burned, they became filled with carbon, and the kerosene could not flow through the carbon choked end. Then it would start burning more wick than oil, giving off smoke, soot, and very poor light. Left this way, the wicks would burn out.

Even the pure oil of these olive trees cannot burn through a carbon-choked wick. Likewise, as the light of the Lord’s Word burns through human wicks, our humanness gets in the way. Our carbon-filled personalities begin to give off smoke and soot. Instead of the pure light of God’s Word shining forth, we have soot-filled creeds and carbon-filled personalities giving forth more black smoke than light.

The Lord knew this and engaged “seven stars” or “seven messengers” to trim the lamp of God’s Word in each stage of the church, a very necessary service. The light would be the light of the Lord’s Word in each time and place. Happy are those who can receive it and walk in its light. But there are always some who say the old smoke and soot light was better.

Zechariah 4:10 refers to “seven eyes.” **“Those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.”** These “eyes of the Lord” represent the far-seeing wisdom or perfect wisdom of God which provides the churches with Heavenly Wisdom from above. God employs the eyes of His beloved Son in each stage of the church.

Hence, we read of **“A Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.”** Revelation 5:6 We see how Zechariah 4:10 and Revelation 5:6 speak in similar language.



“After This”–Rev. 4:1

“After this [the vision of the seven churches] I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter [that is, after the saints enter the open door and come up hither].” Revelation 4:1



The lesson of the open door indicates this “door” was not always open. Rather, it seems the “door in heaven” opens for the first time, and then the invitation is given to the John Class to enter through this “door” and to “Come up hither.”

What a wonderful privilege is here extended to the saints. What an honor! It is not the great and mighty people of earth who are invited—only the John Class. Imagine the splendor as John ascends through this open door and sees the glorious vision of the throne scene reserved for those who love him.

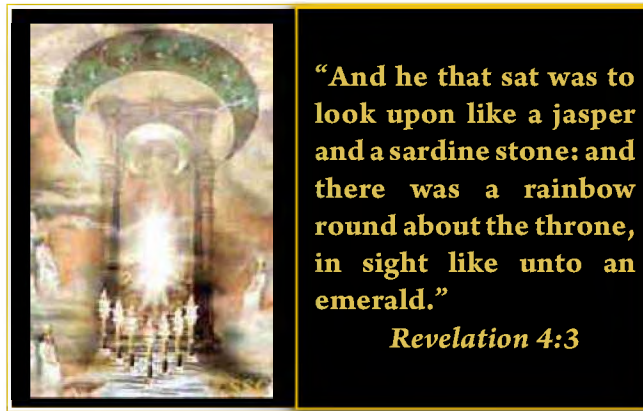
The first voice mentioned in Revelation 4:1 refers most likely to Revelation 1:10 in which John says, **“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day [the Sabbath day, the Millennial day], and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet [the King’s court majesty].”** The same voice in Revelation 1:10 is engaged in Revelation 4:1, which shows us the throne scene of God. Appropriately, the majestic regal sound of a trumpet is employed to describe this vision.

“And immediately I was in the spirit, and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.” Revelation 4:2

John could not enter through this door in the flesh, but in the spirit-begotten condition, the John Class sees God’s throne and glory.

We see God’s glory in the Divine Plan of the Ages. Many in the churches today cannot see God’s glory. They see a throne in heaven, but on it they see a triune god, vindictively casting unsaved souls into a burning hell. Not much glory is there?

The One seated on the throne is none other than the Lord God Almighty. The throne represents God’s Divine government, which is in complete control of all things animate and inanimate, except for sinful mankind. Even here, in the outworking of God’s Plan, heaven and earth shall alike be under God’s control and dominion.



“And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.”

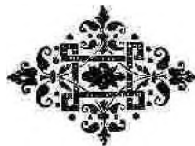
Revelation 4:3

“Jasper” here probably represents a diamond. In Revelation 21:11 the jasper is said to be as clear as crystal. God is portrayed as translucent as a diamond. This seems to compare favorably with John’s description of Him, saying, “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” 1 John 1:5

Paul supports the same thought in 1 Timothy 6:16, saying, God “dwells in unapproachable light.” Because God’s true glory could not be seen by anyone in the flesh, John is shown the nearest thing to describe God’s glory and purity.

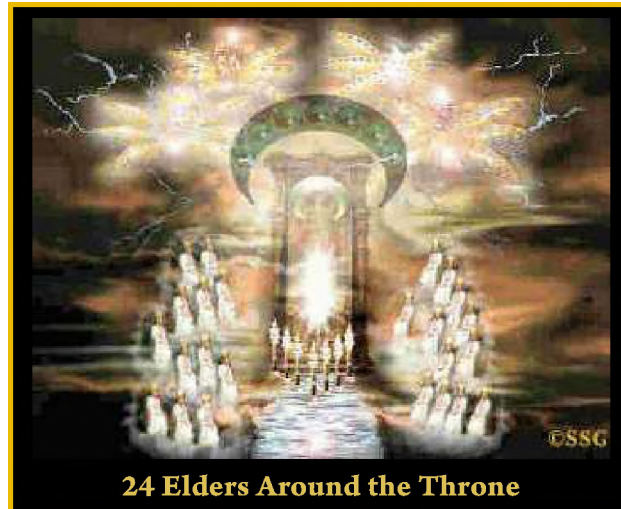
God is also described as being a “carnelian” stone, or a “sardine” or ruby—pure and translucent, but also red in hue. Red pictures love as shown in the ransom. Around God’s throne is a rainbow of emerald green representing God’s enduring or everlasting qualities.

The John class in the spirit-begotten condition is given a high and exalted view of God and His eternal government as seen from His glorious throne. This vision of God and His throne must never leave us. Only our knowledge of God’s plan through the ages, enables us to see God in such transcendent glory. It is a plan that promises “glory and honor for everyone that doeth righteousness.”



Twenty-Four Elders

“Round the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clad in white garments, with golden crowns upon their heads.” Revelation 4:4



We understand the twenty-four thrones represent the foreordained twenty-four courses of the priesthood. In 1 Chronicles 24:1-19, David divided the service of the priests into twenty-four divisions. This method of service continued until Zechariah's time.

In Luke 1:8, 9, we read, “Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, according to the custom of the priesthood.” It was when Zechariah's division was on duty that the angel visited Zechariah to tell him of the birth of John the Baptist.

It is our understanding that the twenty-four thrones represent the regal authority of the twenty-four offices of the glorified church. The twenty-four elders represent the (6,000) saints who occupy each office. In other words, 24 x 6,000 would be 144,000.

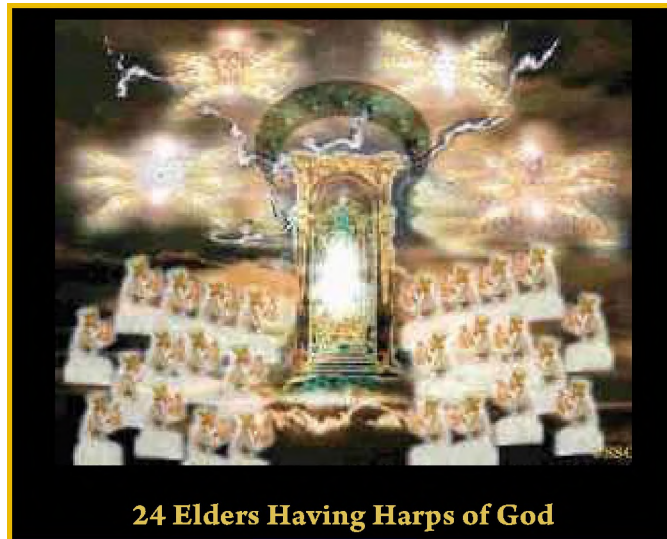
In the type, the rotation of priests in office was necessary because of the heavy task of offering countless sacrifices. The priests needed a long break after such intense service. In the antitype, we may conjecture, the world will be better served by having contact with different courses of priestly saints.

Each course of priests will bring a particular excellence to the office, as well as a different pool of experience and sensitivity. The rotating courses of priesthood may ultimately touch all the families of earth.

David also divided the singers and musicians into twenty-four courses. They, like the priests, served their turn of office.

In Revelation 5:8 we are told that the **“twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps.”** Hence, the “elders” have “harps.” **There is a difference between having a harp and being a harp.**

Revelation 15:2, 3 says that the saints **“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.”** The elders and the saints both have harps.



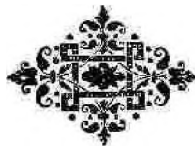
24 Elders Having Harps of God

What are harps? The Word of God. The “elders” are not the Word of God, but the elders have the Word of God. In *THE NEW CREATION*, Vol. 6, p. 233 we read:

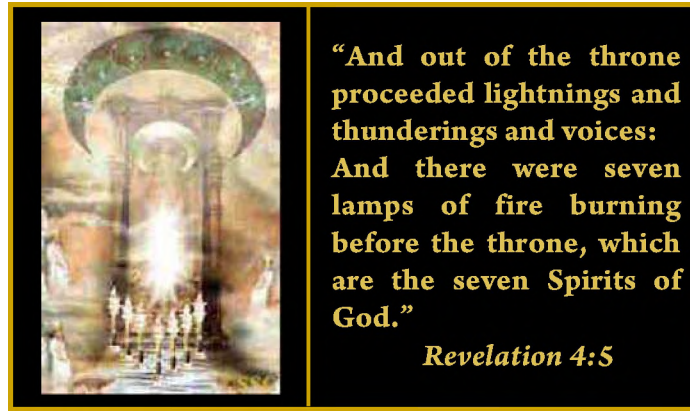
“And, thank God! we find that harmony existing, so that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments constitute what the Lord himself designates ‘the harp of God.’ Revelation 15:2 And the various testimonies of the Law and the prophets are the several chords of that harp, which, when tuned by the holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts, and swept by the fingers of the devoted servants and searchers after divine truth, yields the most enchanting strains that ever fell on mortal ears.”

The “harps” are the Word. The elders **have** “harps.” They **are not** “harps.” The elders are not the Word of God.

* [See “Casting Down Golden Crowns” for Detailed Explanations](#)



Seven Torches of Fire



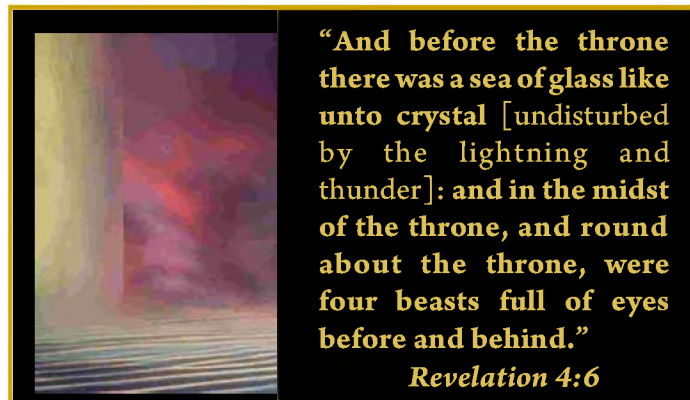
The “seven Spirits” of God are before the throne. This is the verse John refers to in Revelation 1:4 when he conveys the greetings of the “seven Spirits which are before his throne.”

There is a stark contrast here. You have the throne scene up to this point being very staid and tranquil like a sea of glass. Then, in Revelation 4:5 the tranquility is interrupted by “lightnings and thunderings and voices” coming from the “Throne.”

Lightning is bright and illuminating. As the flashes of light proceed from the throne, they raise voices and controversial thunder. This is the reaction to God’s flashes of light.

The “**seven lamps of fire,**” or torches, burning before the throne, embody “seven Spirits” or teachings of God. Hence, the “**sevens lamps of fire**” in essence are **seven teachings or messages or spirits from God.** That’s part of our answer. The “seven lamps” or “lampstands” are the “seven churches” we are told in Revelation 1:20.

The scene turns tranquil again concentrating on the throne.



The “**sea of glass**” portrays **God’s purity and righteousness.** It was illustrated in Solomon’s temple with the giant laver. Jesus taught, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”

This vision emphasizes the eternal aspect of purity and righteousness in the divine purpose. There can never be sin pollution here. God has a large universe, but not one square inch to spare for sin or sinners.

The idea that God is going to provide for sinners in a hell of torment is absolutely ridiculous. That would mean God would have to provide a part of his universe to house them and keep them. No! All the wicked will God destroy when his work is complete. God has zero tolerance for sin. Those who sympathize with sin persistently can have no place in God’s everlasting kingdom.

The four “Living Creatures,” representing the four attributes of God, are on each side of the throne. They are “**full of eyes**” which look forward and backward. **The eternity of the future and of the past is clearly seen. He who “inhabits eternity” also sees into eternity.**

There have not been and will not be any conditions which our God could not or cannot harness to redound to His glory. The far-seeing wisdom of God guarantees his sovereignty. There never have been any emergencies with God, nor will there ever be.

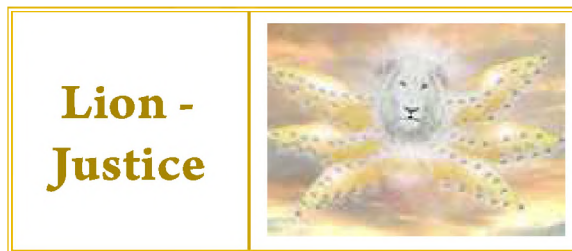
Part II

“Four Beasts [Living Creatures]”

“And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.” Revelation 4:7



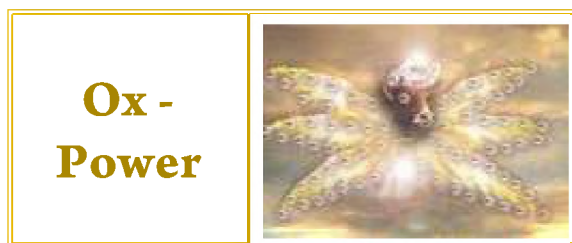
These four “beasts” or “living creatures” represent the four attributes of God—perfect justice, perfect power, perfect love and perfect wisdom.



The lion is the king of beasts. We notice that David sat upon the throne of the Lord. Justice and judgment are the habitation of God’s throne. David was of the tribe of Judah.

Our Lord was David’s root and branch. Hence, we read that it was “The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof,” Revelation 5:5. No one was found worthy to open the book until this “Lion of the tribe of Judah” appeared. He was worthy. He was just and could meet the requirements of justice.

In the real world, the “lion” helps keep the balance of nature. Man originally was to accomplish this task. But because of sin, he lost his dominion and control over animals. Hence the need of carnivores. Without them we would be overrun with rabbits and squirrels and deer and countless other creatures who multiply rapidly. The lion serves as the ultimate predator who serves to keep a kind of just balance in nature until man again takes dominion of earth.



The second “Beast” or “Living Creature” is like a powerful ox. The ox served back then as tractors do now. They were the source of power in plowing or pulling carts. The molten sea or laver of the temple was placed on twelve cast oxen, three oxen holding up each side with their heads facing outward. (See 2 Chronicles 4:3, 4.) Here the water of truth was upheld by the power of “twelve oxen.”

“As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle.” Ezekiel 1:10

We notice a strange difference in Ezekiel 10:14: **“And every one had four faces: the first face was the face of a cherub, and the second face was the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.”** Notice the ox is not mentioned. It is spoken of as a cherub.

What is a cherub? Possibly it is an ox. Ezekiel 10:22 seems to confirm this: **“And the likeness of their faces was the same faces which I saw by the river of Chebar, their appearances and themselves: they went every one straight forward.”** This is a reference to Ezekiel 1:10 where Ezekiel saw the vision by the river Chebar. (See Ezekiel 1:1.)

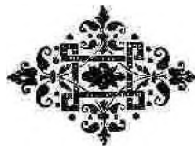
The cherubim of the Tabernacle may have been, in fact, oxen with wings. Oxen have horns and horns are symbolic of power. Remember the horns of the altar, or the power of the altar.



Here the divine quality of love is seen. Man was created in the “image of God.” As God is love, so man was to be love. He will be love when he returns to the family of God.



The eagle is noted for its far-seeing vision. They tell us the eagle can see a mouse from a mile high. We believe the flying eagle is used to illustrate the fact that if you want to see far you need to be up high. The eagle perched in a tree would not have the far-seeing vision, as one flying high. The landscape would obscure its vision. So this far-seeing quality of an eagle would illustrate God’s wisdom which plans for eternity without the possibility of failure.



“Four Beasts [Living Creatures] Had Each of Them Six Wings”

“And the four beasts [living creatures] had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which WAS, and IS, and IS TO COME.” Revelation 4:8

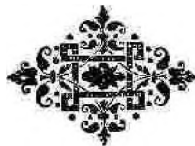
The “four beasts” [living creatures] have six wings. Wings go in pairs. You never saw a bird fly with one wing. Two wings are necessary for flight.

The expression, “**WAS and IS and IS TO COME**” seems to imply these three pairs of wings operated in the past, are operating in the present, and will be operating in the future. The wings are full of eyes, far-seeing wisdom, to insure that God’s purpose and glory are fully served in all time, eternity, past and present and future.

It reminds us of God’s awesome power and omniscience. There is nothing unknown or anything God is not equal to. God’s “two wings” through all time maintain the sovereignty of God. They protect His subjects and carry forth His plan with unerring purpose.



These four “beasts” [living creatures] never cease to sing: “**Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty.**” The *Alexandrine* MS says “Holy” three times. Most MSS say “Holy” nine times. The Living Creatures constantly affirm God’s completeness in these four Holy Attributes of justice, wisdom, love and power. While the word “holy” means complete, we understand the completeness referenced to be in these four attributes.



Isaiah 48:9-11

“For my name’s sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.

“Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

“For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? And I will not give my glory unto another.”

Here God speaks of how He restrains His anger, not for Jacob’s sake, but for His own sake and glory. That was the very reason for which Moses entreated God, so that the nations might not say that God led His people out of Egypt but could not bring them into the Promised Land. God’s glory would have been impugned. God rightly accepted Moses’ appeal. Here He says the same thing through Isaiah. He cannot give His glory to another.

In the world, executives who seem always on hand to take credit for all that goes well, never seem to be able to take responsibility for the wrong. In Watergate, Nixon tried to play innocent, until he could not talk his way out of his guilt. Nixon’s subordinates went to jail while Nixon was pardoned. He tried to escape his responsibility.

The same was true with Irangate. Reagan and Bush claimed they were out of the loop. All these things mysteriously happened without their knowledge or consent, even though they were totally in charge. The subordinates were chastised, but Reagan and Bush claimed no responsibility.

Well, dear friends, that could never happen in God’s Kingdom. His own attributes hold God Himself responsible for maintaining perfect justice, love, wisdom and power. God could never place the blame on His subordinates.

God assumes full responsibility for His universe. He cannot give his glory to another.

He Himself was always responsible, is responsible and will ever be responsible for all things in His everlasting dominion.



This does not mean God cannot delegate power and authority to others, mainly to His beloved Son. It does mean, however, that no matter how much authority and power He delegates to others, He will always bear the responsibility for all things in His infinite universe. God’s four attributes will accept no scapegoats. God can never be less than totally responsible for His everlasting dominion.



Isaiah 6:1, 2

“In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord [probably Jesus is referred to, see *THE ATONEMENT BETWEEN GOD AND MAN*, Vol. 5, p. 47] sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

“Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.”



We notice again the pairing of wings. In this picture the wings seem to serve another purpose. Two wings cover the Lord's face. His face is hidden from men. Just as when Jehovah would lift up his countenance upon Israel, it symbolized his favor and blessing.

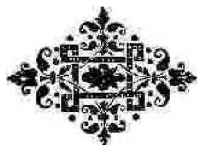
When he turned his face away from them it was usually their period of punishment. When the LORD JESUS covers his face from men, they cannot see his countenance and his favor is turned away from them.

With “twain he covered his feet.” The feet of Jesus are his body members which make contact with the world. Isaiah says regarding these feet:

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.” Isaiah 52:7

It is the feet of the Christ at this end of the age who are engaged in such glorious work. These poor feet are beautiful to God and to the risen Christ, but the world holds them in contempt, even as they did the Master. The feet members should be beautiful in our eyes, as we see them with painstaking efforts trying to walk in the footsteps of the Master and bearing witness to the glorious plan of the ages.

“With twain he did fly.” Two wings carry forth the mission of Christ. We believe these two wings are closely identified with the Words of the Old and New Testaments. Our Lord moves irresistibly forward in carrying out the Holy Word. Not a jot or tittle fails of fulfillment. Heaven and earth could pass away more easily than for any part of God's Word to fail. God has placed the carrying forth of His plan in the hands of His beloved Son.



Part III

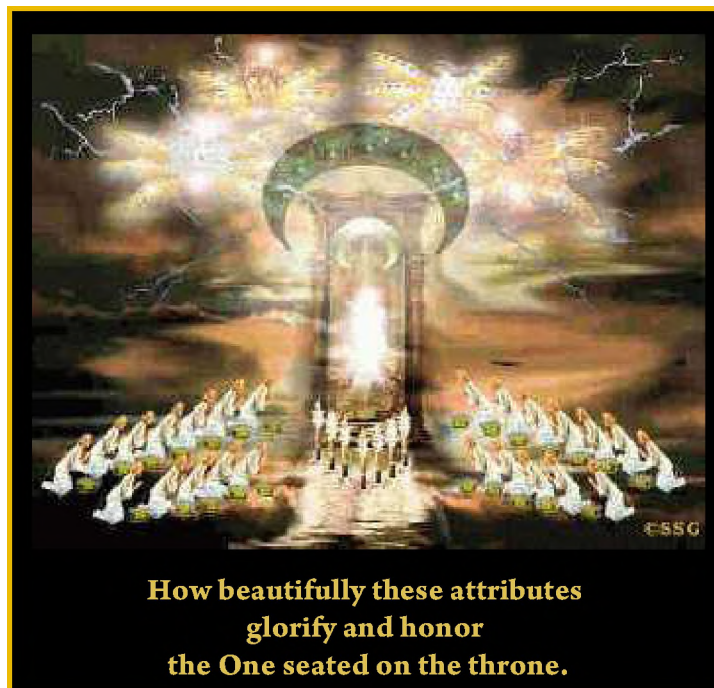
“Glory and Honor” to Him Seated on the “Throne”

“And when those beasts [living creatures] give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,

“The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne.” Revelation 4:9, 10

The “four living creatures,” which are the four attributes of God, give glory and honor and thanks to Him on the throne. God’s own heart qualities glorify and honor him. Virtue is its own reward. These attributes are thankful God does not violate his justice, love, wisdom or power. If He did, there would be conflict and immediate disharmony.

We see what evils are created in the world when justice is laid aside, when love is locked out, when wisdom is turned to deceit and exploitation, and when power is used selfishly. How terrible it would be if God acted like sinful man in even the slightest way.



How Can the “Twenty-four Elders” Fall Down Before God’s Throne?

The “twenty-four elders” appear here even before the Lamb was slain. How can this be? This may seem a problem. We might think the church could not be mentioned before the Lamb is slain and glorified.

However, just as David created the twenty-four courses of the priesthood before the temple was built, so God had foreordained this priesthood when he foreordained the Lamb to be slain from the foundation of the world. In other words, the “twenty-four elders” here are the elders elect and foreordained in God’s plan. They do not exist in person in this vision.

In the outworking of God’s plan the day will come when that which God has foreordained and those who are called to this foreordained office will become one. That which was foreordained and those who are elect and ordained will merge into reality. They exist in God’s purpose in Revelation 4, not in reality.

How can they fall down before Him seated on the throne, casting their crowns before him? What is the calling of the church that comprises these “twenty-four elders”?

Ephesians 1:14 tells us the answer. We are called for the “praise of His glory.” That is the primary reason why we are called and chosen and required to be faithful. Anyone interested in glorifying himself or herself will not be a part of this company. No! No! No!

When these “twenty-four elders” “cast their crowns before the throne,” we understand this to be an act of deference on their part. It is an acknowledgment that their power and authority comes from the One on the throne. That is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. It is not false modesty. It is an acknowledgment of reality.

In Revelation 4:11 the “twenty-four elders” sing, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

The Alexandrine MSS omits the phrase, “and were created.”



The basis for God’s praise is well founded. No blind evolutionary process has brought about all creation. It exists and was created by the One on the throne. It is proper that this truth be acknowledged always by all.

The expression, “for thy pleasure they are and were created,” is rather peculiar. How could they exist before being created? If we have the correct reading here, we might say that some things exist in blueprint stage before they are created. Even the purpose for being is determined. That purpose again is, that they should be for the “praise of His glory.”

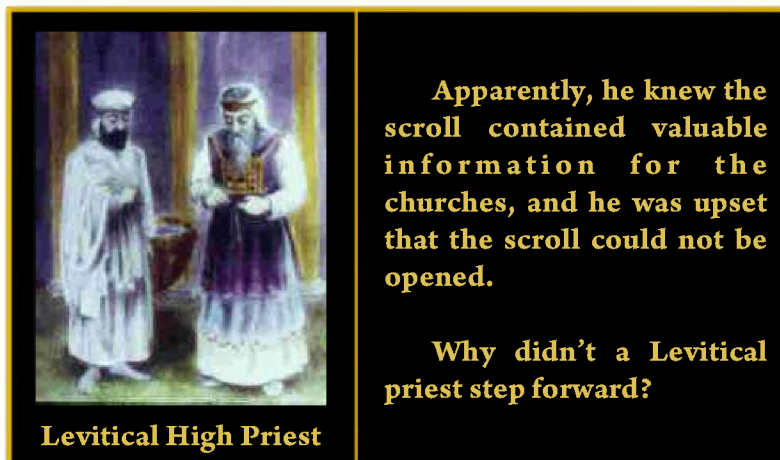


A Scroll Written Within and on the Back



Here the scene changes and we begin to see activity and movement. First we see a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals in the hand of Him seated on the throne. Then a “strong angel” proclaims with a loud voice, “Who is worthy?” It seems no one can step forward to meet the angel’s demands.

As John looks on he becomes very sorrowful, and weeps because no one was worthy to open the scroll and loose the seals. The vision was so real to John that he becomes emotionally involved to the point of uncontrolled weeping.



Then one of the “twenty-four elders” said to John, “Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof,” Revelation 5:5.

Who was this kindly elder? If it represents a course of the priesthood, who might it be?

We believe the Apostle Paul, who was the spokesman for his course of the priesthood, was the elder speaking. Paul showed in Hebrews 7:14-16,

“For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.


“And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,

“Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.”

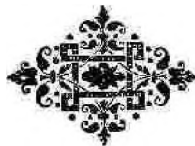
In Romans 15:12, Paul quotes from Isaiah 11:10:

“There shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.”

In these two quotations Paul identifies Jesus as the worthy priest replacing the priesthood of the Law arrangement. Yes, he is worthy. He is glorious. He is “a priest for ever.” Paul tells us additionally that he is a priest who is able to justify.

 <p>Mercy Seat in Most Holy</p>	<p>“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:</p> <p>“Bywhom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”</p> <p>Romans 5:1,2</p>
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Hence, Paul, the elder representing a course of the priesthood, identifies Jesus as the “Lion of the tribe of Juda.” None from the Levitical priesthood were worthy or could bring justification. In the appointed time one stepped forward from Judah and prevailed to open the seals.



A Lamb Standing, as Though It Had Been Slain

“And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the EARTH.”

Revelation 5:6

Again, the focus is on the Lamb. The Lamb still has not been engaged, but is standing there as though he had been slain. Now usually a slain Lamb would not be found standing, would it? It would be lying there as though it had been slain. Hence, this pictures the resurrected Lamb, who lives, but who was dead.



The Lamb is then pictured with “seven horns and seven eyes.” Usually a lamb would not have horns. Only a grown ram would have horns, but then it would only be two horns. This Lamb has “seven horns.”

If that isn’t enough to command our attention, we are confronted with the fact that each “horn” has an “eye.” This is unlike anything we have ever seen. We believe the **“seven horns” signify the power of the Lamb throughout the seven stages of the church and the “seven eyes” represent the far-seeing wisdom of Christ to the churches.** Christ is our wisdom. He is our power. Jesus said, “Without me you can do nothing.”

After identifying the “seven horns” and “seven eyes,” we are told these “are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the EARTH.”

Why aren’t they sent forth into seven churches? Why are they sent out into all the EARTH?

This whole vision is very much like a play with various stages as the story develops. While the offices of the “twenty-four elders” are foreordained, and the qualifications of the “elders” who fill these offices are also foreordained, the persons to fill those positions have not yet been selected out of the world at the time of this vision.

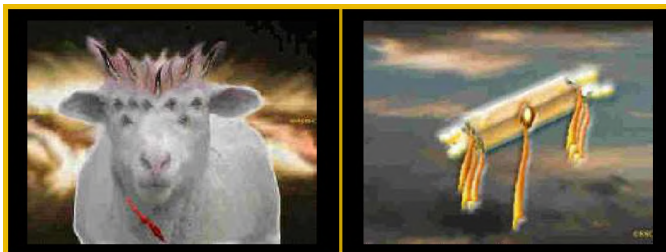
When they are called and chosen, they will be a part of the “seven churches” spanning the Gospel age. We must always remember that the foreordained “twenty-four elders” and their offices existed in the plan of God before the persons to fill them existed.

Here we see the power and wisdom of the Lamb. They go forth into the world to select the “elders” for the foreordained offices. **Hence, in each stage of the Gospel age the “seven Spirits” go forth to call and elect the church.** Hence, the need for power and wisdom.

The Lamb Takes the Scroll

“And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

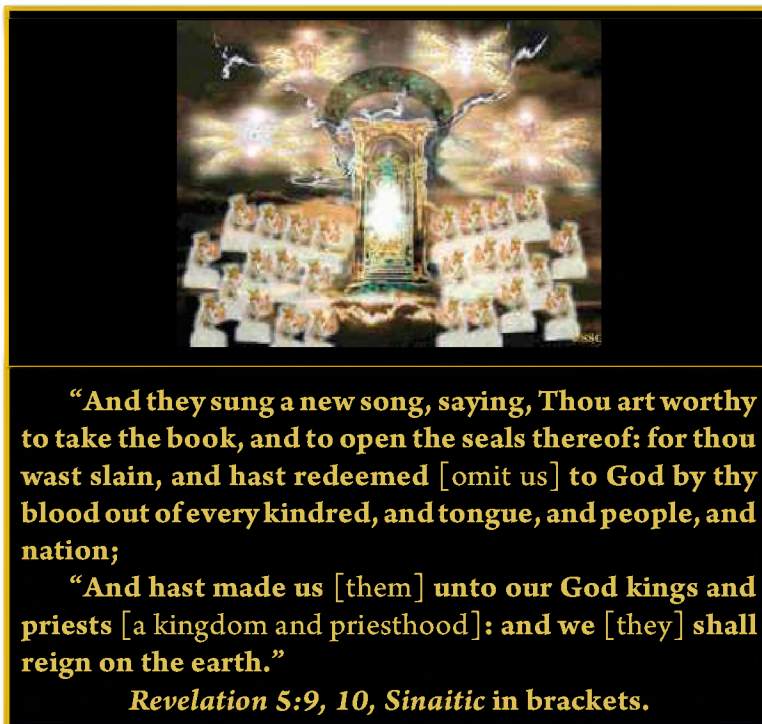
“And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints.” Revelation 5:7, 8



We notice it is the “Lamb,” and not the “Lion,” that takes the scroll from the hand of the One seated on the throne. The Lamb dominates the scenes in Revelation.

The four living creatures, the four attributes of God’s justice, power, love and wisdom, fall down to acknowledge the Lamb, because He meets the same standards as His Father. The “twenty-four elders,” who at this point are only the foreordained priesthood, also acknowledge the worthiness of the Lamb because he meets the Divine standards. They also have “golden vials [bowls]” full of incense to be offered with the prayers of the saints.

From this point, the vision moves forward combining the called and chosen saints with the office of elders they have been called to.



We believe it is the elders who claim that they were “redeemed” “to God” by the “blood” of the Lamb. It is certainly they who are made a kingdom and a priesthood who will reign upon the earth. It is easy to see how they are given over to praising the Lamb.

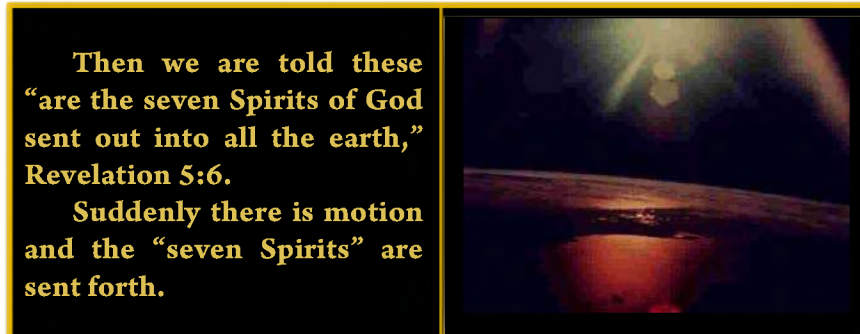
Now our study is not about the “twenty-four elders” and the “twenty-four thrones.” We have only locked in on them temporarily to give a basis for understanding this whole vision.

Part IV

“The Seven Spirits of God”

We notice the evolution regarding these “seven Spirits.”

- First they are described as **“seven lamps of fire”** burning before God’s throne.
- Then they are said to be **“the seven Spirits [or teachings] of God,”** although not yet sent forth from the throne.
- Then in Revelation 5 we see the slain “Lamb” standing before the throne, with **“seven horns”** and **“seven eyes.”**



**Then we are told these
“are the seven Spirits of God
sent out into all the earth,”
Revelation 5:6.**

**Suddenly there is motion
and the “seven Spirits” are
sent forth.**

Why aren’t they sent to the saints of the “seven churches?”

Because the saints need to be called out of the world first. When they accept the call and consecrate, then the “seven Spirits” will speak to them. Hence, these “seven Spirits” of God and of the Lamb begin calling the saints while they are still in the world during each stage of the church.

We believe chapters 2 & 3 were written after chapters 5-7 were seen. In other words, Jesus, the “worthy Lamb,” opens the seals before writing to the “seven churches.”

Supposing Revelation 2 and 3 were written before Jesus read the messages and the information of each seal. How unfortunate it would be, because it would mean he wrote the “angels of the churches” before he had clear knowledge and information of each period. That is unthinkable. Hence, we see Revelation is not written always in the sequence that we might suppose.

We know Jesus had the “seven Spirits of God” when he wrote to Sardis in Revelation 3: 1, for he says: “And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars.” This proves that Jesus saw Revelation 5 through 8:1 before he sent his messages to the “angels of the seven churches.”

We believe Jesus saw and interpreted the scroll sealed with “seven seals” after which he wrote to the “angels of the seven churches.” Jesus is the one to open the scrolls and seals. He, therefore, saw what would transpire during each period of the church. Upon being imbued with such knowledge, he then wrote with great illumination to the “angel” of each church. Does that make sense?

We see that Revelation was written to conceal from the many what it reveals to the saintly few. That is why sign language is employed and why sometimes sequences are transposed.

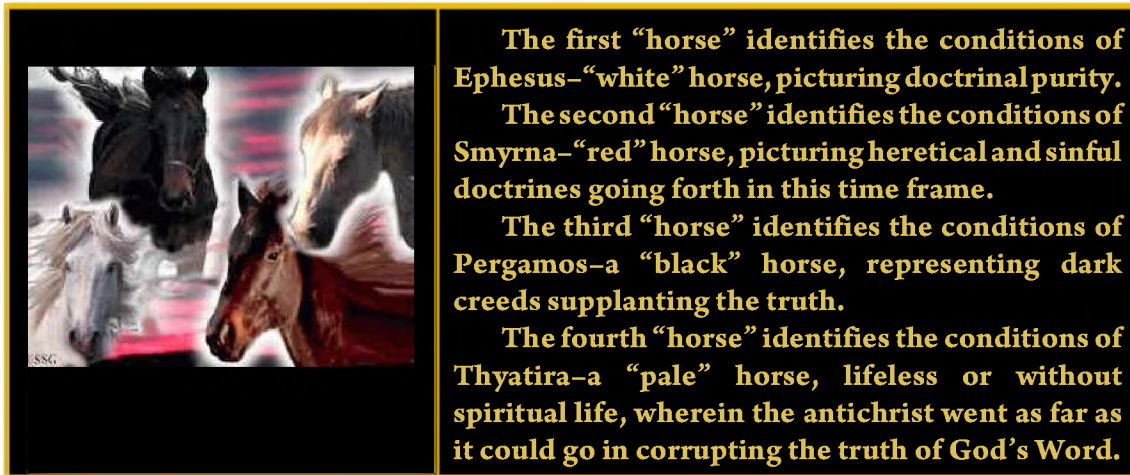


Are the “Seven Spirits of God” the “Seven Messages” to the “Seven Angels?”

Very often we hear explanations that deal with these “seven Spirits of God” which associate these “seven Spirits” with the seven messages to the “seven angels of the seven churches.”

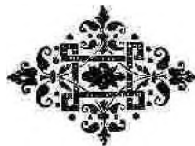
We think there is merit to this application, but it does not get to the core of the matter. It approximates the answer, but is not the real essence of it.

When we look at the messages to the “seven churches,” there is both rebuke and praise. In the first four “seals” we are shown “a horse” riding forth.



We see the deteriorating conditions facing the first four stages of the church. Obviously, the “seven Spirits” of God and of the Lamb were not for the apostate elements within the church. Apostates have been in all seven stages of the true church throughout the Gospel age. They are the planting of Satan in the church. Satan’s purpose was to either destroy or to apostatize the church of God.

The point we are making here is, there are many within these “seven churches” for which the “seven Spirits” of God and Christ would have no message. God’s messages in all seven stages of the church are ultimately to the overcoming saints. It is to these saints that the “seven Spirits” of God and Christ are addressed.



What Are These Seven Spirits of God and Christ?

We believe the “seven Spirits” of God are contained within the seven messages to the seven churches. Notice how Jesus sends forth his message to the seven churches. Jesus does not tell John to write to the church of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.

John is told to write to the “ANGEL” or MESSENGER of each church. Without exception, the message is sent to the “ANGEL” of each church. Jesus held these seven messengers in his right hand, Revelation 1:20, and he does not ignore or bypass them.



Like a big corporation which has many departments with department heads, we see there is organization to the New Creation. Christ does not speak to the churches directly. He does so through the “angel” of each church.

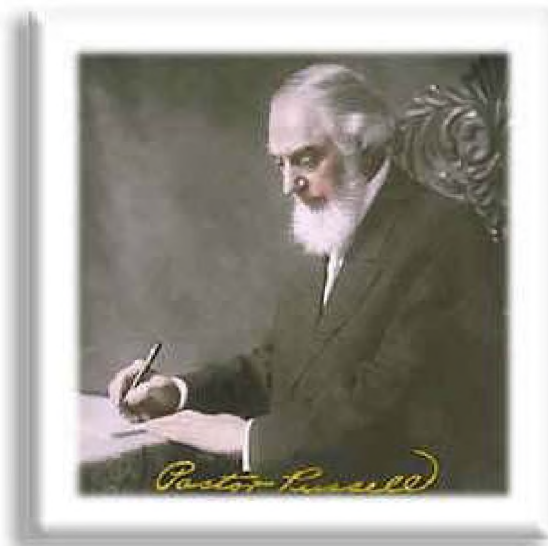
This tells us something. Instead of expecting Christ to deal with us directly, we must be prepared to receive his instructions through his appointed messengers. This may sound parochial and old fashioned to some. Some may even chafe at the idea that Christ would choose a chain of command employing apostles, messengers, teachers, pastors, evangelists, and prophets to represent Him before the church.

However it may sound, it is the very word of the Lord. (See Ephesians 4:11, 12; Revelation 1:20.) We not only need to have total dedication to the Word of the Lord, but we need to have a meek and subordinate spirit. In the quest for individualism and self-expression, we are in danger of losing the true spirit of humility and subordination.

If God and Christ chose to deal with us using various levels of servants, why should this cause us such disquietude?

There is danger that a cavalier spirit of insubordination may be at work among the Lord’s people. It irks some to think that God and Christ could use anyone else in a higher capacity. However, this is how God and Christ have chosen to deal with the church in all seven stages. Let us not resist the holy Spirit.

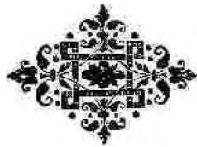
It is humbling to accept that others have been chosen above us. More people have been offended with God’s method than any other single factor. If God and Christ chose to deal with everyone on an equal basis, there would be millions upon millions that would respond. Yes, they would live and die for Christ, if only he would use them and speak through them directly. But this is nothing more than pride. God has chosen the best method to develop the New Creation. Let us not resist the holy Spirit.



Charles Taze Russell
7th Angel to the Laodicean Church

If Bro. Russell was not the “angel” of the Laodicean church, we should not rest day or night until we found out who was the “angel” of Laodicea. Then we should park on that messenger’s doorstep trying to learn all that we could from him.

Fortunately, most of us believe we know the “angel” of Laodicea. Therefore, we should continue using the six volumes and Tabernacle Shadows as Christ’s meat in due season. Does this seem oppressive? Clearly, the very word of the Lord places such constraints upon us.

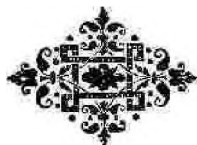


At Last the “Seven Spirits of God”

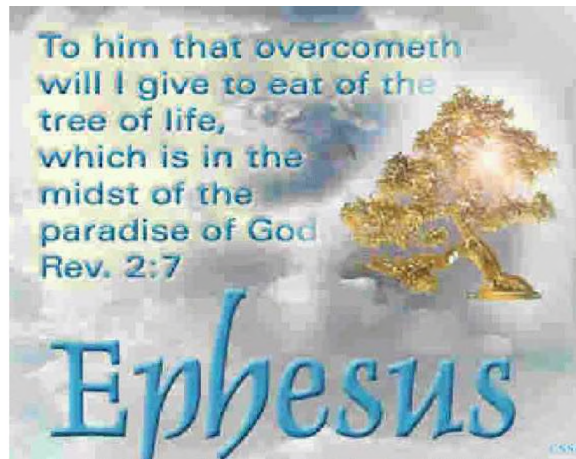
Once more we ask who are these “seven Spirits of God”?

This time we shall give you our answer. Let us look again at the messages to the “seven churches” of this Gospel age. Let us bypass the general exchange given to each church with its commendations and criticisms.

You will notice at the end of each message given to the “angel” of each church that there is an exceeding great and precious promise given by the **Spirit to the churches**. Here is where God and Christ speak directly to you and to me and to all the members of the body of Christ. Nothing stands between you and the Spirit’s exceeding great and precious promise. Well, maybe that is not exactly true. There is one small matter that limits these seven promises. That is the matter of “OVERCOMING.”



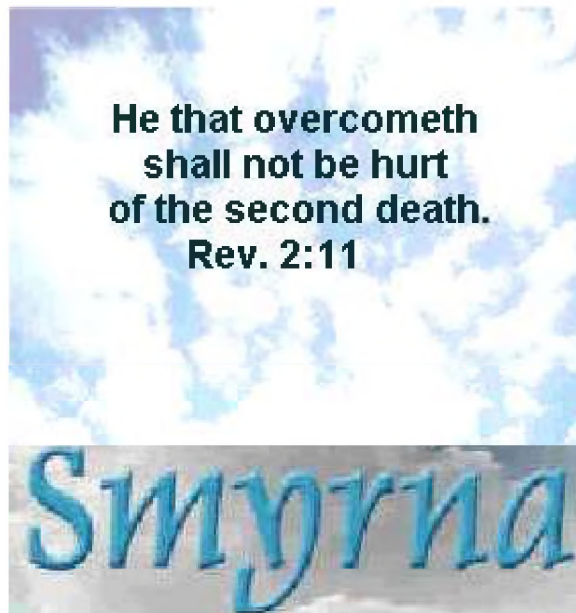
***Seven Promises of the Spirit
to the “Overcomers”***



The promise is perpetual life in the paradise of God.

The earthly paradise in Eden was only a token paradise compared to the true paradise where God dwells. Eden will have to be replanted and cultivated again to return to its former glory.

The “paradise of God” exists in full glory and is ready to receive all the “overcomers” of this age.



Second death will have no power over the overcoming church. They will not be on trial or in danger of judgment. Their trial will have been successfully completed. They shall then be rewarded with immortality, to have life within themselves even as Jesus has been given life within himself.

To him that overcometh
will I give to eat of the hidden
manna, and will give him a
white stone, and in the stone a
new name written, which no man
knoweth save he that receiveth it.
Rev. 2:17



Pergamos

The “hidden manna” was incorruptible. The natural food, which we all eat, is perishable and corruptible. If we do not eat it within a certain number of days it must be thrown out. The “hidden manna” is forever. Those who eat it will have everlasting life.

The “white stone” carries with it two thoughts. First, it is the seal of the holy Spirit in our hearts forever. They would split a white stone in half and this would become a symbol of friendship. When these two stones were fitted to each other it would identify that the two stones were really one and the bearer of this stone was united with the other bearer of the broken stone. This, then, is more than a promise of life. Rather, it is a guarantee that the “overcomer” will have a special relationship to the One on the throne.

Also, the “overcomer” will receive a “new name.” Probably a pet name, peculiarly fitted to each overcomer, but one which will show God’s affection.

And he that overcometh and
keepeth my works unto the
end to him will I give power
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.
And I will give him the
morning star. Rev. 2:26-29

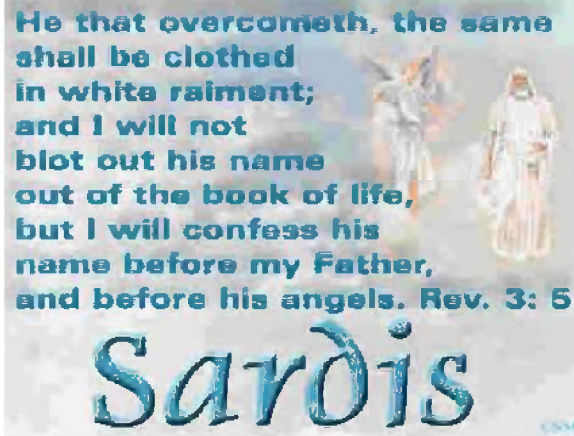


Thyatira

Additionally, they will receive the “morning star.” Would you like the bright and morning star? We know that Jesus is that “bright and morning star.” Revelation 22:16 He is not yours for the asking. Rather, he is yours for “overcoming.” What wonderful promises the “Spirit” gives.

Many followers of Christ have grabbed for power over the nations throughout the age. They have engaged in unholy wars, killing and scheming and plotting to gain power over the nations, to no avail.

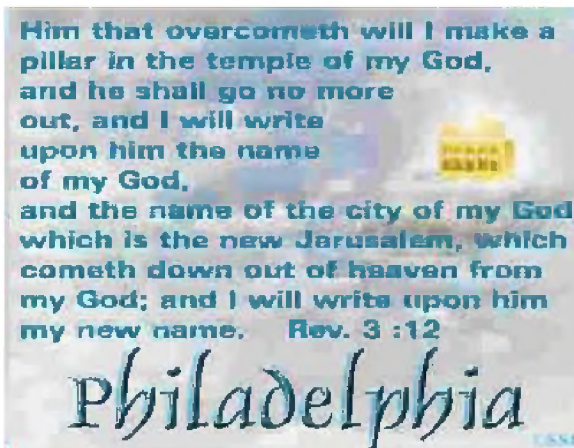
God has promised this position to the “overcomers.” When they receive that power they will not do as the churches have done, that is, cozy up to the civil governments to live deliciously with them. No, they shall “dash the nations to pieces like a potter’s vessel.”



The overcomers will no longer need the robe of Christ's righteousness. They shall be clothed with their "house from heaven" and possess inherent righteousness.

The "overcomers" will have the unspeakable joy of having Jesus confess them before his Father and before his angels. Only a celebrity could be treated with such distinction. That is certainly the red carpet treatment.

While we are on this side of the veil, our names are written in the Lamb's book of life on a probationary basis. This means our name could be blotted out. Once in grace not always in grace. Normally, a blotter dries the ink, but Jesus' blotter will wipe our name out of the "book of life" if we do not "overcome."



Here the "overcomer" is promised a vital place in the true temple of God, the Christ of God. A pillar cannot be removed while the structure exists.

They will also receive the name of Jesus' God written indelibly upon them. Also, the name of the city of Jesus' God, the New Jerusalem. They will also receive Jesus' new name written upon them, the name of the glorified Christ.



Just as Jesus had to overcome before he sat down with His Father in His throne, so the saints must overcome before they can sit down with Jesus in His throne.

A place in the throne of God and of the Lamb is just too great to comprehend. We live with such limitations while we are overcoming, but then power and glory and honor will be ours. Oh, not to surfeit ourselves with, but to use to glorify our Father in Heaven.

So the “seven Spirits” of God first originate with God “before the throne.” They are then given to Jesus, as though a “Lamb slain” to send forth with “horns” of power and “eyes” of wisdom into the world. As the call to become partakers of the divine nature goes forth with exceeding great and precious promises, the saints are gathered throughout the seven stages of the church. As these come into Christ they are then in line to hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Finally, the “overcomers” of the Gospel age are rewarded with these seven promises fulfilled. The elders who were foreordained become, at last, the ordained and living members of the Christ of God. The plan of God reaches its grand fulfillment when the “overcomers” receive these unspeakable promises.

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

This is repeated seven times. These seven promises of God and Christ are the “seven Spirits of God.” It is like a huge magnet drawing the “overcomers” to their final destiny of glory and honor and immortality. As Peter declares,

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature.” 2 Peter 1:4



The Seven Churches of Revelation

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<u>Ephesus</u>	<u>Smyrna</u>	<u>Pergamos</u>	<u>Thyatira</u>	<u>Sardis</u>	<u>Philadelphia</u>	<u>Laodicea</u>
“First, Desirable”	“Bitter Affliction”	“Earthly Heighth”	“Sacrifice of Labor”	“Prince of Joy”	“Love of A Brother”	“Just People”
33-70 AD	70-313	313-1157	1157-1367	1367-1517	1517-1874	1874-?
Paul 35-64 AD	John 70-100	Arius 313-336	Waldo 1157-1217	Wycliffe 1367-1384	Luther 1517-1546	Russell 1874-1916
7 Golden Candlesticks	First & Last, Dead and Alive	Sharp 2-Edged Sword	Eyes like Fire, Feet like Brass	Livist and Art Dead	Key of David	Amen, Faithful & True Beginning of Creation
Left 1st Love	Synagogue of Satan	Antipas	Jezebel	Come as Thief	Hast Little Strength	Lukewarm
Nicolaitanes	Tribulation 10 Days	Balaam & Balac, Nicolaitanes	Depths of Satan	Defiled Garments	Keep from Hour of Temptation, Hold Fast Crown	Gold Tried, White Raiment Eyesalve, Knock at Door, Sup with Him
Tree of Life	Crown of Life, Not Hurt of 2nd Death	Hidden Manna White Stone, New Name	Rod of Iron, Potter’s Vessel Morning Star	White Raiment, Confess Name to Father	Pillar in Temple, Name of God, New Jerusalem, & New Name	Sit in Christ’s Throne

For more detail, click on individual Church name.



STORY OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES

The Book of Revelation contains the story of the “seven churches.”

While the story is history for the most part, it was prophetic, written in advance to prepare the saints for their trials. The Lord Jesus knew the experiences each stage of the church would have. He sent a message to the angel of each church to prepare the saints.



What did the angels do?

In Revelation 8:6 we are told: **“And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.”**

The “angel” of each “church” had a “trumpet.” When he received his message from Jesus Christ, the duty of the “angel” of each “church” was to deliver his message by blowing a “trumpet.”

We are not told what the “trumpet” messages were. We are only told what followed when the “trumpet” message was delivered. Each message was given to prepare the faithful of each period to endure the trials and circumstances that would be peculiar to their time and place.

To illustrate, Jesus delivered a message to Israel. The Gospel tells us what happened when Jesus and his disciples preached in Israel. Few people, some 500, became his disciples. Many others thought Jesus was a prophet and a good man.

The religious leaders found themselves exasperated with Jesus, who was neither a priest nor a Levite, and who had no credentials they could identify. Yet, Jesus assumed the role of a great religious teacher.

The religious leaders found themselves hating Jesus and wishing to kill him. He threatened their authority, and that made their blood lust run high. The things that happened while Jesus preached, or trumpeted his message, are very similar to what happened when each of the seven messengers blew his trumpet.

Each message delivered by a trumpet was an action. The events that transpired, once the trumpet message was given, became a reaction.

The “seven churches”—who are they?

What do you think when you read about any one of the “seven churches?” Do you think each church contained only saints? Did it include some unfaithful Christians? Did it include any “tares”? Did it include some of the second death class?

The Greek word *ecclesia* means—“a called-out people.” All who respond to being called out of the world would constitute the church. Some in the church are faithful to their calling and can be called **saints**. Others, less faithful, at least for a time, may be considered the **Great Company**. Most of those in the church would probably be “**tares**,” the planting of Satan, although in times of persecution there would be fewer “tares.”

When Christianity became popular, the “tares” became the overwhelming majority. Not having the Lord’s Spirit, “tares” are unresponsive to the whole truth. They outnumber the spirit-begotten and become a powerful block within the church, hindering and obstructing what the holy Spirit is endeavoring to accomplish. The fourth class are the “**wolves in sheep’s clothing**,” the servants of Satan who entered the church to feed upon the flock.

The “**wolves**” are identified in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15:

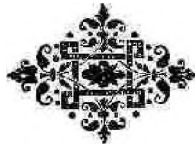
“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

“Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”

The message to each of the churches, which is always given through an “angel,” represents a general condition pervading in the church. It does not tell you what each individual saint in each church is doing. However, the general condition will have an enormous effect on the saints. If they can understand what is happening in their time and place, it enables them to discern more clearly the way they must take.

Those who are not alert and responsive to the Spirit’s instructions will find themselves hindered and weakened. The “tares” may find the “angel’s” message disruptive and respond in kind. The “wolf” leaders will be outraged with the truths being proclaimed in their time, even as they were in Jesus’ time.



The Apostle John

John received the visions of Revelation while exiled on the Isle of Patmos. He was very old, but still keen of mind and had total recall of the visions.

We do not know whether he was naturally so gifted with memory or whether the Lord impressed these visions so forcefully in his mind that he would not forget the details.

We think it was a combination of both his natural gifted memory and the power of the holy Spirit that made John such a perfect tool for the Master's use.

John wrote his Gospel and his epistles in his old age.

We see no conflict with him also writing the most dramatic book of the Bible—the Revelation of Jesus Christ.



Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos

John had an artist's eye for detail. Therefore, we must pay attention to the details.

Every time the devil imprisoned the saints, it resulted in greater blessings coming to the church. Paul's imprisonment enlarged his ministry by not limiting his influence to the local churches personally, which would soon be lost or become twisted and fuzzy.

When Paul was imprisoned, he addressed the churches in a most excellent and enduring way. Nearly two thousand years have passed since Paul's mighty pen was laid down in death, but oh, the power of his writings!

So it was with John's imprisonment and exile. The most powerful message of the Bible has come down to us through the ages with all its force and vitality undiminished.



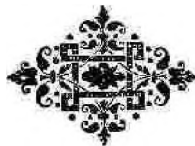
The Seven Churches

It is alleged by history that John was later freed from Patmos and that he personally visited the “seven churches of Asia.” This would have been a total circuit of about 235 miles.

Revelation 1:9 indicates this, saying, **“I John ... was in the isle that is called Patmos,”** as though he had since left. If that were true, the Revelation message reached each of the literal churches in some form at that very time. Either way, the natural churches served to picture the seven stages of the Gospel Church.

If Ephesus pictured the church of Paul’s day, John’s message came a little too late. However, when the message was to be delivered to the “angels” is not mentioned. Like any play, the message could reach back in time as well as into the future.

Paul, who had visions and revelations more abundant than the other apostles, was, therefore, able to deliver his “trumpet” message to the Ephesus church. The Revelator takes the reader back before the “Lamb” was slain in this narrative, so we see how stories may reach back as well as forward with equal ease.



Church of Ephesus

Revelation 2:1-7

**Roughly from CE 33-70
Marking the fall of Jerusalem**

Ephesus—First or Capital of the Province

According to Thayer, Ephesus was “a maritime city of Asia Minor, capital of Ionia and, under the Romans, of proconsular Asia, situated on the Icarian Sea between Smyrna and Miletus.”

The chief splendor and renown of Ephesus came from the temple of Artemis, which was reckoned one of the wonders of the world. It is fitting that God’s true temple should have its beginning in this first or capital city of the region with a false temple.

Hardly anyone in Ephesus knew of God’s true temple. Now, two thousand years later, who knows of Artemis? It was burnt and rebuilt and finally destroyed, and the world is better for that destruction. Meanwhile, the true temple is majestically nearing completion.

It is wonderful to be on the winning side even though that does not exempt us from being opposed and maligned. The thought of “first” derives not so much from the Greek meaning of Ephesus as it does from the fact that it was indeed the “first” city of the province.

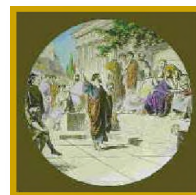


**Statue of Artemis
2nd century A.D.**

The “angel” of this church was Paul. However, it is important to remember that Peter had assumed the leading role in the Jewish church on the day of Pentecost. It was Peter who opened the Gospel door to the Gentiles.

As the work among the Jews became overshadowed by the greater work among the Gentiles, it fell to Paul to be the messenger.

Paul wrote the epistle to the Hebrews, endeavoring to prepare the Jewish Christians for the demise of their nation, temple and the Jewish Law arrangement. Hence, it was Paul who was the messenger to both Jews and Gentiles in the church.



Apostle Paul

Peter and Paul covered this era, with Paul singularly at the forefront once he began his ministry. The time frame of this period is subject to interpretation because nothing in the text gives a clear definition of the time covered. However, from Pentecost until the fall of Jerusalem does seem a special period of time—the most robust and dynamic for preaching the Gospel and establishing Christian churches in the region.

We can understand how some may mark the fall of Masada in CE 73 or how others may view this time frame to extend to John’s closing days. However, CE 70 seems to be the time when the leadership of the church at Jerusalem was broken.

Many of the apostles had been martyred or in flight. Clearly, great changes were precipitated here, and the status quo ended. The fall of Masada ended all hope that somehow the past conditions of the Jewish nation could be regrouped or recreated.

“I know thy works, and thy labor, 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.” Revelation 2:2, 3

Jesus takes extravagant notice of the works of each of the churches, and, for the most part, was much pleased with this early church of Ephesus. The fall of the beloved city ended the Jewish Christian dominance. With both Peter and Paul martyred, and with Jerusalem in ashes, the Gentile Christians and even the Jewish Christians were left clinging to John as the last outpost.

In Ephesus we find false apostles making an appearance and Nicolaitanes grasping for ascendancy. The Nicolaitanes were allegedly followers of Nicolas, who may have been the proselyte of Antioch, who was chosen to be one of the seven deacons to wait on tables (Acts 6:5).

He may have fulfilled the meaning of his name, which is, “conqueror of the people.” He started out as a servant of the church, but may have become an ambitious leader with his own agenda. This always becomes a problem when any of the Lord’s people create their own agenda.



Church of Smyrna

Revelation 2:8-10

Roughly from CE 70-313.

The Apostle John is the most likely angel to this period of the church.

The mantle seems to have passed from Paul to John. With Peter and Paul both martyred and the church at Jerusalem destroyed, there must have been intense pain and uncertainty felt in the whole Christian community. A certain restructuring of necessity must have followed.



**Apostle John
on Isle of Patmos**

The church at Jerusalem had been the hub of the whole Christian world. Its fall would send shock waves to all the churches and would also give rise for ambitious leaders to step forward into roles of leadership for which they were ill-suited. The Lord knew this would happen.

“And unto the angel [John] of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and 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 for ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.”

Revelation 2:8-10

Toward the end of this period, During the ten years of Diocletian's closing reign from CE 303 to 313, bitter pagan persecution occurred.

Many faithful martyrs died in this long and bitter pagan assault on Christians.



**Roman Emperor Diocletian
245-313 A.D.**



Christian Martyrs in the Coliseum



**Roman Coliseum,
place of Christian persecutions.**


However, it was not the pagan persecution alone that made life bitter. Within the church, false leaders arose grasping power and prominence. Even the leaders of pagan Rome became enamored with them. Gibbon says of the later days of the church at Smyrna—

“The corruption of manners and principles, so forcibly lamented by Eusebius, may be considered as not only a consequence, but a proof of the liberty which the Christians enjoyed and abused under the reign of Diocletian. Prosperity had relaxed the nerves of discipline. Fraud, envy and malice prevailed in every congregation. The proselytes aspired to the episcopal office, which every day became an object more worthy of their ambition. The bishops, who contended with each other for ecclesiastical pre-eminence, appeared by their conduct to claim a secular and tyrannical power in the church” (*THE TIME IS AT HAND*, p. 292. Reprinted 1983, Divine Plan, P.O. Box 144, Edison, NJ 08818).

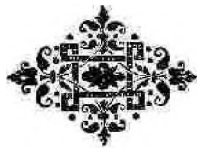
We see the fulfillment of the words: **“I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.”** Revelation 2:9 Yes, they claimed to be Jews or spiritual Israel, but they were not. The church had become infested with men who were seeking to use Christianity for their own purposes.

There was power and status to be found in the church, and those who had the same ambition as Satan found opportunities to fulfill that ambition. Alas, the true Christian found persecution from the pagan forces without, and corruption eating like a canker within.

However, the Lord observed: **“I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich).”** Revelation 2:9 Yes, a faithful nucleus was “rich” in faith and in the eyes of God. To these the encouragement is given:

<p>“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 [years]: Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” <i>Revelation 2:10</i></p>	
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To the overcomers rich promises were given for which they must wait until the “first resurrection.” Those seeking personal gratification and power often found it, but that would be their only reward. None awaited them in the resurrection, for they were nothing more than “tares” at best and “wolves” in the worst scenario.



Church of Pergamos

Revelation 2:12-16

Roughly from CE 313-1160.

Pergamos, according to Dr. Young, was “A celebrated city of Mysia, near the river Caicus. Here parchment was first perfected, and a library of 200,000 volumes formed, which was eventually sent to Alexandria.

Pergamos also had a famous temple of Esculapius, who was represented under the figure of a serpent. Clearly it was elevated intellectually over other places, but as the Revelator observes:

“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.” Revelation 2:13

Arius is commonly believed to be the messenger of this era.

Until this period of time there was enough respect for the apostles, and especially for John, to keep some semblance of Christianity in the leadership.

However, when Constantine took over the church and made Christianity the religion of the empire, persecuted Christianity was lifted from the scaffold to the throne.

Only two bishops voted with Arius against the Athanasian heresy. Not that the bishops who voted for it truly believed in Athanasius’ arguments, but they trivialized the meaning of their vote to curry the emperor’s good graces. This set the stage for the demise of the doctrine of Christ.

For his faithful stand against the Nicene Creed, Arius and two other bishops were banished.



Arius (c. 250-336 A.D.)

“Undaunted, Arius composed a rival creed to that of Nicea which so impressed Constantine that he was recalled. But on the very day of his installation ceremony in Constantinople, Arius died suddenly under suspicious circumstances, leading his friends to suspect he had been poisoned.”

(The Seven Churches of Revelation, by Charles F. Redeker, 1989, p. 12.)

The stakes were high. Once bishops tasted the sweetness of power they were not going to let anything threaten the gains they had secured with Constantine. It is strange how so-called Christians have shamelessly done so many vicious and evil things in flagrant violation of the Christian law of “love.”

Arius defended the truth on the nature of God and Christ. He also stood against the ascending aspiration of the bishops to become enthroned, refusing, as he did, the Episcopal throne of Alexandria. His learned and blameless Christian lifestyle made Arius an example to the flock, and even his enemies could not fault him in this area.

Fittingly, the temple of Esculapius, employing the figure of a serpent, indicated this was Satan's dwelling place and that he was capable of using his false apostles to martyr Arius.

Generally, Satan is the prince of darkness but when he wishes to cast himself into an angel of light he can prepare conditions to grind out 200,000 volumes of learning as at Pergamos. All kinds of information were generated here to make the Gospel less distinctive.

“And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges.” Revelation 2:12

Here was a powerful reminder to Arius and all the faithful to stand squarely with the One with the “sharp sword with two edges”—the Old and New Testaments. It is significant that the Nicene debates centered on the Word of God concerning the nature of Christ.

It should have been an easy victory for the truth because Constantine was not the least qualified to determine the Scriptural weight of arguments presented. The Athanasian double-speak seemed the best route for Constantine to side with because it provided a foggy philosophical explanation that even pagans might find trouble understanding and even more trouble in refuting.

There sometimes are advantages to a lack of clarity. The legal profession makes much use of foggy contracts that the average person simply surrenders and signs on the dotted line, hoping for the best, later learning some bitter lessons.

“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 Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.

“Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.” Revelation 2:13-16

Despite the efforts of the faithful to resist the rising aspirations of those who wanted central power invested in an earthly head, the pope, the tide was coming in and their efforts could not prevent the antichrist influence.

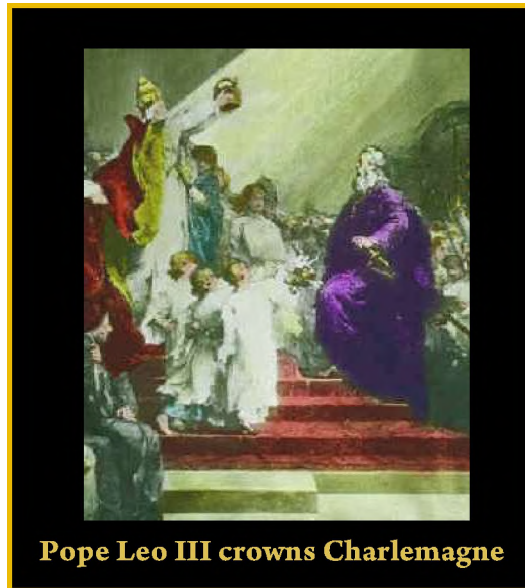
Additionally, there were two other forces at work.

First, the doctrine of Balaam was a calculated endeavor to seduce God's people into false worship, so God would punish them.

Second, the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, the tendency to wrest the power from the congregations and centralize it with the bishops.

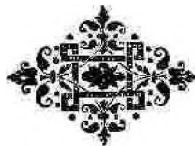
The clergy and laity here emerged and the churches no longer were autonomous. They now were controlled by bishops, by councils and synods, and by the devil himself. Yes, the devil crowned the winner pope.

It is during this period that the antichrist arose and established itself in power. First, it crushed the truth and turned Christianity into a central religious ruling authority. Following this, the false church, under Pope Leo III, crowned Charlemagne the “Roman Emperor” in CE 800. There began the long and terrible reign of the Holy (?) Roman Empire. The noonday of the papal reign was the midnight of the world.



The message to this church was to “repent.” How difficult that would prove when the church was having unparalleled success in centralizing power within and being accepted by the world as the queen of the civil powers. Before the antichrist, lay an open road to power and riches and glory.

None of this was conducive to repenting of their sins. All the corrective mechanisms God had placed within the church had long since been destroyed. No deception is stronger than self-deception. Here the church viewed its great rise to power and glory as evidence that Heaven was smiling upon them. The delusion was complete.



Church of Thyatira

Revelation 2:18-25

Roughly from CE 1160-1378.

The general consensus is that Peter Waldo was the messenger of this period.

Waldo produced the first translation of the four Gospels into modern French. The next two messengers would translate the Bible into a common language to spearhead further reforms.

Waldo was a rich merchant of Lyons, France, who decided to advance true Christianity with Biblical knowledge. He shunned the luxurious lifestyle of the church and advocated simplicity of life and adherence to Biblical teachings.

In CE 1156, Waldo wrote *The Last Age of the Christian Church*. He and others were alerted to the brevity of life by the sudden death of a friend in 1157. In CE 1160 Waldo met with citizens at Lyons to begin his ministry. In CE 1170 he had sold all his goods and had given the proceeds to the poor.

Waldo formed a lay ministry of evangelists composed of propertyless and celibate men. They were known as “The Poor men of Lyons.”

They seemed to be a breath of fresh air to the world at that time. The Waldensians and Albigenses gathered followers who were subsequently driven into Italy and the Alps while their faith spread throughout Europe.



Peter Waldo (d. 1217)



A Waldensian merchant reveals his Pearl of Great Price — the Scriptures.

“And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass.” Revelation 2:18

The church had splendid leaders dressed in ermine and gold, but the Son of God had searching eyes of “fire” that penetrated into the hearts of those who claimed to worship him. He could see their sins. Christ’s feet were of “fine brass,” showing that those who walked with him were justified and pure.

“I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.” Revelation 2:19

The work which Waldo and his followers had begun, grew into significant dimensions. The Waldenses and Albigenses had a tenacity that prospered in spite of the terrible persecution of papacy. God does not overlook the faithfulness of His people.

At the same time there were many in the papal system that must have had a conscience that was being suppressed as they saw the pain and persecution that old system never tired of perpetrating. It is not human to be so cruel. God speaks to those with some conscience in these words:

“Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel [the unfaithful church], which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants to commit fornication [with the civil powers], and to eat things sacrificed unto idols [man-worship].” Revelation 2:20

There was a lot of collective guilt within the church of that time. They “suffered” these things because it was the easiest thing to do, to remain quiet while the wicked system did wickedly. This is succumbing to the “roaring lion [Satan]” and not resisting him steadfastly in the faith.

“And I gave her space [360 years, from 1160 to 1520, Luther’s trial occurred June 1520, where 41 of his propositions were condemned as heretical and he was pronounced a heretic. This ended all hope that the papal church under Pope Leo X would repent.], to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

“Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

“And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.” Revelation 2:21-23

Somehow retributive justice never seemed to catch up with the papal reign of terror. Here is the promise that it would. Actually, with Luther’s reformation the papacy saw itself exposed. That reformation ended with the French Revolution. The papal head was wounded and almost slated for death. The uninhibited power of the papacy to persecute seemed to have been broken here. Who could have believed that priests of the Catholic Church would be led away to the guillotine and the pope taken to prison where he died?

“But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

“But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.” Revelation 2:24, 25

To those who would not bow the knee to the wicked church and who had not known the “depths of Satan,” the Lord did not lay any extra burden. Apparently the faithful of this period had the Lord’s care and sympathy. He just wanted them to “hold fast till I come.”

Yes, during his second presence, the true church would be triumphant and the antichrist church would be destroyed.



Church of Sardis

Revelation 3:1-4

Roughly between CE 1378-1528.

Sardis was a city of Asia Minor, formerly the capital of that wealthy monarch Croesus, king of Lydians.

It is difficult to ascertain the meaning of the name Sardis, but Benjamin Wilson in his appendix of the Diaglott provides a different explanation than the traditional “**that which remains.**” He says it means “**prince of joy.**” While this was not a joyous period for the true people of God, it was a time when Christ’s sacrifice, who indeed was the “Prince of joy,” began to be seen as a “once for all” sacrifice.

“And unto the angel [Wycliff] of the church in Sardis write: These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God [Jesus has the “seven Spirits of God” here even though he does not receive them until Revelation 5:6], 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.

“Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.” Revelation 3:1-4

The “Sardis” messenger was John Wycliff of this period.

Significant changes began taking place when Wycliff commenced his ministry. The year of the Schism was 1378, when two popes claimed to be head of the church—one in Rome and one in Avignon. The Schism provided an opportunity to see what the papal church was all about.

Up until 1378, Wycliff had been occupied in a mixed way with religious and political matters. However, 1378 marked the turning point for him, when he focused only on doctrinal matters.



John Wycliff (1320-1384)

Wycliff published the New Testament in English in 1378 and finished the Old Testament before he died.

He also wrote some 200 articles mainly defending the ransom. Wycliff spoke out against the doctrine of Transubstantiation, the main teaching of the Catholic Church.



1440 edition of hand-written Wycliff Bible.



Page from the Wycliff Bible

Wycliff's success may have been due in part to the problems the papacy was having with two popes striving for ascendancy.

They had enough of their own problems within, without trying to quench the brush fires started by Wycliff.

Three papal bulls were issued before the Great Schism to deal with Wycliff's alleged heresy. The very year Pope Gregory XI died, both Urban VI and Clement VII (Robert of Geneva) claimed to be Christ's vicar.

At Wycliff's trial, two powerful princes accompanied him, to prevent his execution. The Lord prevented the powers of darkness from destroying the needful work of this Reformer.



Wycliff's trial in London in 1377



Wycliff before the Council

Wycliff had attacked the doctrine of Transubstantiation that took away the efficacy of Christ's one sacrifice for sin. However, this period was not a happy time for conversion to take place. While the Bible emerged in English, few Bibles were available and still fewer people could read.

It was at this time that Revelation 8:13 began, and the **first of three "woes" began to be heard by the inhabitants of the earth.** Conditions were such that people who really wished to step out of the shackles of false religion, were made uncomfortable by the flashes of light emanating at that time, but not able to fulfill their desire to have a true conversion. This period, while it brought some light, did not provide the conditions necessary for Christian conversion and growth on a larger scale. Even the Lutheran reform of 1517 did not provide a strong climate for reform until 1528. No one knew how the Reformation would eventuate.

***"When They Shall Fall,
They Shall Be Holpen with a Little Help."
Daniel 11:34***

The year 1528 was not only a critical year for Protestantism in England, but also in Germany. Charles V, Roman emperor of Germany, had risen to power, and this emboldened Pope Clement VII (Giulio De' Medici) to induce Charles V to limit the spread of Protestantism.

Under the proposed law, no Protestant was to convert a Romanist to the reformed faith, nor would it be allowable for Protestantism to spread to other countries. It meant for all Protestants, an end such as the Huguenots came to in France, the suppression of the Renaissance with its "increase of knowledge," and the end of the prosperous and comparatively enlightened civilization of modern times.



Huguenots at St. Bartholomew's Massacre

The future of the whole world, and of the Divine Plan, was at stake! A general war was barely avoided to destroy Lutheranism. Philip Landgrave of Saxony discovered the plot, took arms, and in 1528 forced indemnity from a Catholic bishop. Other princes of Germany stood with Philip (*MARTIN LUTHER*, Vol. II, p. 486).

Quoting from *MARTIN LUTHER*, by Dr. Peter Bayne, LL. D., Vol. II, p. 486:

“These (the princes of the reformed faith) were inflexibly determined that the decree of the majority should not be assented to. Philip of Hesse, John of Saxony, Markgraf George the Pious of Brandenburg/Anspach, the Dukes of Lunenburg and Brunswick, the Prince of Anhalt, and the representatives of Strasburg, Nurnberg and twelve other free cities, **entered a solemn protest against the prospective revolution. They were called Protestants!** All to this hour, who claim that Truth shall be unveiled, and that no Pope, or Kaiser, shall congeal the ever-advancing stream of progress and improvement, may take an honorable pride in tracing their spiritual descent to the intrepid Philip and the magnanimous and simple-hearted John.”

“The Diet of Spires, on the 27th of August, 1526, they [the papists] succeeded in practically obtaining their object. The Edict of Worms, which had so long hung as a fiery portent and menace of coming wrath in the political firmament of Germany, was not swept finally from the heavens, but it was veiled in softening clouds of compromise and reservation” (*MARTIN LUTHER*, Vol. II, p. 455).

The more liberal papists were willing to let those areas where the Reformation had taken hold remain, and only wanted to stop the Reformation from spreading to new areas. This was unacceptable to Protestants. However, it gave Protestants a legal position in Germany. Then, in 1529 another Diet of Spires was held. The reactionary papist leaders would have forced the Diet of 1526 back to the old Edict of Worms with this provision:

“Where the Worms Edict had been enforced, it was, they urged, to be maintained; but all further propagation of the reformed doctrines, all religious innovation whatever, was to be forbidden, pending the assemblage of a General Council. That is to say, the friends of reformation were to accept defeat where their adversaries declared themselves in the ascendant, and at the same time to abjure all thought of progress” (*MARTIN LUTHER*, by Dr. Peter Bayne, LL.D., Vol. II, p. 484).

This papal plot formed the basis for Protestants to form the League of Schmalkald, Feb. 27, 1531 and again in 1537 when the reforms drew up articles of common belief (*ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA*, 1945 edition, Vol. 20, p. 80). This League formed a Protestant wall of defense against the alliance of Charles V and Pope Clement VII **to contain the Reformation.**

Also, in 1528 Henry VIII of England wished an annulment from his wife Queen Catherine of Aragon, aunt of Charles V. When the papal representatives Cardinals Compeggio and Wolsey did not grant Henry VIII his desires, he began moving England away from Rome.

Bad news for Pope Clement was coming from two fronts:

- (1) the Protestant wall of defense in Europe, and**
- (2) England's turning fortune away from Rome.**

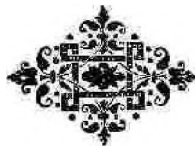
In this critical time we see the window of opportunity opened to spread the Reformation far and wide. It could not be contained or restrained any longer.

The period between 1378 and 1528 is the “five months (150 years)” of Revelation 9:5 in which “death” or conversion eluded the honest-hearted. They endured the “scorpion” sting which did not kill or convert them, but only succeeded in tormenting their hearts and minds with the realization that the door of opportunity for reform had not opened sufficiently for many of them to enter.

The help that came to the Reformers was due to the troubled conditions of the Papacy. First, Pope Clement VII found himself engaged in warfare with the army of Charles V. He was taken prisoner and was finally released in 1527. He came out from prison wiser, but not less hostile to Protestants.

Fortune smiled upon Pope Clement VII when “Charles [V] linked himself in bonds of family relationship with Clement, by bestowing upon Clement’s nephew, Alexander de Medici, the hand of his natural daughter. Such was the Treaty of Barcelona, signed June, 1529, by which the Vicegerent of Christ cut in before his allies and secured golden terms for himself” (*MARTIN LUTHER*, Vol. II, p. 483).

This reconciled Pope Clement VII and Charles V and also provided a basis for reconciliation between Charles V and Francis I of France. The losses sustained by the pope in losing England and the Reformation factions were rewarded by a better hold on Europe. This gives us a preview of what was going to happen in the Philadelphia church.



Church of Philadelphia **Revelation 3:7-12**

Roughly CE 1517-18 to 1878.

“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.

“Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” Revelation 3:7-11

Martin Luther, 1483-1546, was in all probability the messenger of the Church of Philadelphia.

The Lord promised that the door of Reformation could not be “closed.”

No matter what the papal powers tried they still could not stop the reforms. The “door” was stuck open.

We need not conclude that only brotherly love characterized this era. It is filled with violence and struggle.

However, this period is without blame from God and indicates the faithful of this period were responding in ways pleasing to the Lord.

The Reformation, though assailed from many quarters, could not be contained.

The One with the “key” of David (the Beloved), opened the door. It could not be shut.

For the papacy he shut some doors they could not “open.”



Around noon October 31, 1517, Luther nailed the 95 Theses to the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg



A study of this period shows how wonderfully the Lord overruled affairs so that light could not be extinguished. There was favorable response to the light shining in the reforms that occurred. One must contrast this period with the reign of terror of previous periods, wherein papacy crushed and destroyed so many hapless victims.

It must be remembered that the Reformation was religious in many ways.

But it was also a civil revolt against the excesses of the papacy and emperors who ruthlessly conspired against any reform.



Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms

The powers of darkness did indeed try to “shut” the door of the Reformation, but could not. The reform movement had only a “little strength” and a desire to keep God’s “Word.” It was only the power of God that kept it from floundering.

Jesus reminded the religious leaders that they would see “the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven” (Matthew 26:64). Here the faithful are promised that their persecutors would “**come and worship humbly before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee**” (Revelation 3:9). What a wonderful promise!

The church of “Philadelphia” was promised a blessing. They were to be “**kept from the hour of temptation.**”

What was this “hour of temptation”? It was to be a time when many voices would be calling. A time when truth would be available, but when a thousand voices would be calling in all directions.



Luther Burning Papal Bull



Luther Preaching at Wartburg

Knowledge, true and false, would explode everywhere. Only those who knew the voice of the “true Shepherd” would not be fooled into following the myriad of false shepherds. The early days of the Reformation provided the privilege for people in general to follow the Reformers. People were simply marching behind leaders, without a great deal of knowledge or understanding.

However, **when the Bible Societies began publishing Bibles in 1804 and onward, the world was filled with Bibles. Compulsory education enabled people to finally enter the “open door” of true Bible knowledge.**



Bible Societies

The last days of “Philadelphia” were a marvelous period. The response to the Bible was beautiful. Christians began to blossom like watered flowers. **Those labeled laity became awake to the message of the “priesthood of all believers.”** However, this period would witness a massive distribution of error to dilute the Reformation truths.

We believe that the **seals, the trumpets and the churches are contemporaneous.** Consequently, we read of the sixth trumpet in Revelation 9:15:

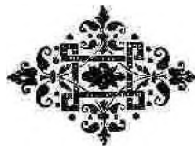
“And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour [the hour of the harvest under Bro. Russell’s ministry], **and a day** [*day* is not in the *Sinaitic*, but should it be? It might refer to Mr. Barbour from 1876-1877 in his “*Herald of the Morning*” and “*The Three Worlds*”], **and a month** [probably William Miller, from 1844 to 1874], **and a year** [Martin Luther, from 1517-18 to 1878], to slay the third part of men [separate the faithful right-hearted from the anti-Christ spirit].”

The year represents 360 years, the month 30 years, a total of 390. We believe this period covers **from CE 1528 to 1918.** Ezekiel 4:1-6 shows a similar siege against Israel (nominal spiritual Israel, particularly papacy) for the same 390 year period, but also shows that 40 years of siege were to be laid to Judah (Protestantism) which probably occurred from 1878 to 1918.

“And the angel [our Lord] which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

“And sware 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 [*chronos*, 360 years] no longer.” Revelation 10:5,6

The 360 years of the Philadelphian church from 1517-18 ended in 1878. The time for the consummation of the age and the “harvest,” which is to be the end of the age then came. In Revelation 10:7 we read: **“But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished.”** Hence, it is in the following Laodicean period that the climax of the Gospel age is reached.



Church of Laodicea

Revelation 3:14-20

Roughly from 1878 to the End of the Harvest

The messenger of Laodicea was Pastor Charles Taze Russell.

He not only returned many of the truths lost through the centuries, but started a systematic and topical study of the Bible that brought the entire weight of the Scriptures to bear on most Biblical subjects.

The reader watched the truths emerge verse by verse as the testimony of God's Word was collected, while harmonizing the Bible as never before.



Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916)

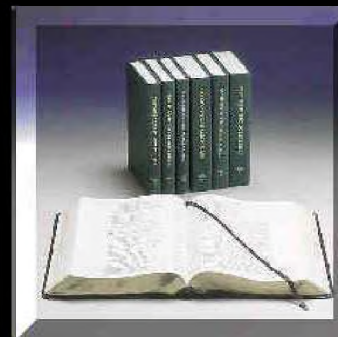
Never were doctrinal truths made plainer to the general student of God's Word.

Not only was Bro. Russell a critical student of God's Word, but he began a ministry which lasted some 40 years.

He incorporated a full company of believers on all levels to help accomplish the work of harvest.

His management skills enabled him to get every believer's shoulder to the wheel.

The work accomplished far exceeded the potential for such a small company of saints.



**Studies in the Scriptures
Keys to Topical Bible Study**

While the harvest of the "wheat" continued, and still continues, albeit with less dynamic leadership and results, the work is still managed by the Lord of the harvest who knows what must be done to gather in the last grains of "wheat."

"Laodicea" is said to mean "justice for the people," or "judged people," and "just people."

This period, then, has to do with a people judged or just and to whom justice would prevail. This period is unique, and differs from all others. In this harvest, God rejected the great body of nominal believers, and calls his faithful out into a condition of separation.

The saints are called out of "Babylon." Most of the reformers tried to reform the Mother Church or Protestant factions. The Laodicean period, while it called for repentance, asked the true believer to separate from Babylon the Great. Small numbers left their church affiliations and joined the Truth movement. However, they did not all come out clean.

The truth movement, therefore, went through periodic siftings. Those who had some special interests, or who had a special agenda, were led by the nature of siftings to leave or try to make another movement. The dynamics of the truth movement were responsible for its growth and influence, far out of proportion to its actual membership.

“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.

“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

“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.

“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent.

“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 sup with him, and he with me.” Revelation 3:14-20

The condition described is rather pathetic for the Christian community.

They fancy themselves as being in a splendid condition and fail to realize that from God’s vantage point they are “poor” and “blind” and “naked.”

However, the highlight of this period is that the “Lord is standing” at the door and will enter into every heart that will open unto him.

These may feast with the Lord who brings the supper, the best “meal on wheels” in our time (Luke 12:42).



The harvest is the “end of the age” (Matthew 13:39).

This was to be a time of separation of “wheat” from “tares.” The time for them to be together was ended.



The “wheat” is to be gathered into the Gospel Garner. The “tares” are bound together in bundles. They obviously like being “bundled” because it gives them the allusion of strength and greatness. However, the “tares” fail to realize this “bundling” will lead to their being piled high and burned as “tares,” or as professing Christians.

The “tares” look at the small clumps of “wheat” with disdain. They actually prided themselves in being bundled into large church organizations, and then in having these church groups join in Federated groups such as the World Council of Churches. Little do they realize this massive grouping is nothing more than piling high the “tare” bundles to be burned to their profession of being Christian. One of the ways the “tares” will be burned is when they come to realize “what is the real church of Christ” (*Reprint 5951, par. 3*).

The end of the “harvest” will find the remaining saints placed in a position to make a strong defense of the Truth acting as the “sword” of his “mouth” (Revelation 19:15).

We believe 1878 was the time when “Babylon” was cast off or “fallen” from God’s favor. No longer could “Babylon” be God’s mouthpiece.

Revelation 18:1, 2



Not only are the “tares” separated, but also before the harvest ends Elijah must be separated from Elisha. The “wise virgins” must be separated from the “foolish virgins.” The harvest will not end before this happens.

The story of the “seven churches” covers the Gospel age, consummating in the triumphant completion of the true church of God. Each of the seven churches saw the Lord calling to his sheep and guiding the faithful. To all the churches were given the seven “spirits” or promises of God. All the promises were theirs. Jesus Christ, after opening the seven “seals,” knew what would transpire and was thus able to prepare the “angel” of each church appropriate warnings and encouragement that would sustain the faithful while reprimanding the wicked.

The ending of the seventh church will see the separation of the “wheat” and “tares” completed. Then “shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” Matthew 13:43

Victory, victory, victory at last comes for the true church.

All the “exceeding great and precious promises” will at last be realized by the “more than conquerors” of the Gospel age.

This will be the crowning moment in God’s eternity, when at last He has His jewels for an eternal possession.

In Zephaniah 3:17 we read: “The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.”





THE STORY OF THE SEVEN SEALS

Revelation 6:1-8:1

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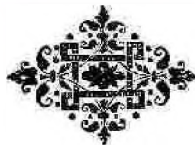
The Third Seal

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Part I

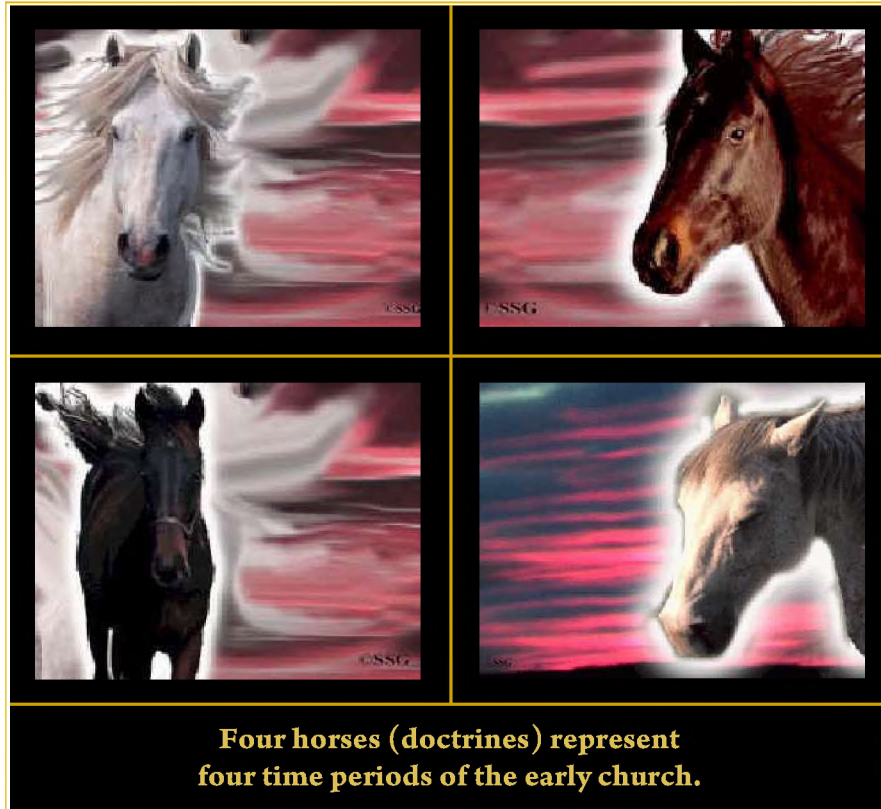
The seven seals contained secret information known only to God until the Lamb was found worthy to open the scrolls and to look on the contents. What is contained therein was only for the eyes of the Lamb.

However, through his kindness and willingness to share this information with the saints, we find the conditions and circumstances that would take place in the time frame of each seal. Most of the seals tell of the antichrist's activities and lend encouragement to the saints of each period.

First Four Seals

The first four seals describe how the four horses (doctrines) of the early church time periods changed from white to red, then to black and finally to pale. This doctrinal deterioration was brought about by the influence of antichrist.

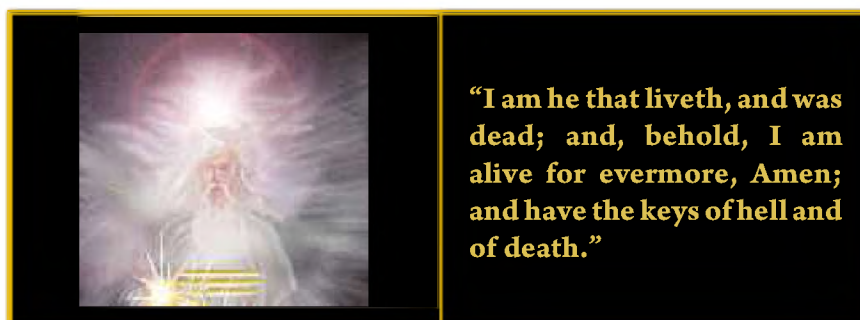
The most commonly held view usually describes these four horses of the Apocalypse as an end-time Armageddon scene. Nothing could be further from the truth.



These four horses describe the first four stages of the church. It is not an end time vision at all. It makes nice magazine covers to picture death and hell riding dramatically forth into the world. However, the truth be told, the first horse and horsemen refer to the historical situation in the Ephesus period of the church. The next three horses and horsemen pertain to Smyrna, Pergamos and Thyatira, respectively.

The story of these first four seals is the decline of pure doctrine and the ascent of false teachings. Notice that Jesus does not try to head off the apostasy as it thunders forth. Rather, he strengthens the faithful and encourages them with wonderful promises.

The evidence seems quite clear that Jesus, the Lamb, opened the seven seals before he wrote to the angels of the seven churches. Jesus said in Revelation 1:18, before he wrote to the angels of the seven churches,



The resurrected Lamb that opened the “seven seals.”

“And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

“And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.” Revelation 5:6, 7:

The “Lion” of the tribe of Judah prevailed to open the book. Notice the change of metaphor. It is not the Lion that opens the seals. It is the Lamb who receives the book or scroll. The Lamb opens all the seals.



Just because the messages to the seven messengers appear first in Revelation is no proof that Jesus sent his message to each angel before he opened the seals that covered the events of each church. Revelation was written to conceal from most people its message, as well as to reveal to those living near to him.

Hence, the “seven Spirits of God” are first described in Revelation 4, but in Revelation 1:4 John gives us the greetings of these seven Spirits.

“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.”

This proves John saw Revelation Chapter 4 before he wrote Chapter 1.

“And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; these things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God.” Revelation 3:1

The seven Spirits of God were shown to be before God’s throne in Chapter 4, but were transferred to the Lamb in Revelation 5:5, 6, and who is then said to have these “seven Spirits.” Through him they were to be “sent forth into all the earth.” This confirms the principle that “all things” are of the Father “by the Son” (1 Corinthians 8:6).

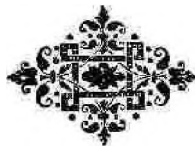
At the time of sending his message to the “angel” of Sardis Jesus says that he “hath the seven Spirits of God.” All “seven Spirits” are sent to all the seven churches, but one at a time. They are sent through the Lamb who was declared “worthy.”

What was Jesus going to do with the knowledge opened to him in each seal? He would prepare each stage of the church against the dangers facing it through its “angel.” Secondly, he would place before all the churches the promises of the “seven Spirits.”



Jesus inserts one of the “seven Spirits” messages to each stage of the church at the end of each letter. That is how they are all sent forth into “all the earth.”

Jesus has two objectives with each message. Warnings are given to the apostates and marvelous promises to the faithful, to encourage and strengthen them.



Part II

Who Opens and Reads the Messages of the “Seven Seals?”

To understand the story of the “seven seals” we need to understand who is worthy to receive and open the “seven seals.” No one was found worthy before Jesus to “open the book, and to loose the seals thereof.”

At last “the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof” (Revelation 5:5).



The “Lion of Judah” does not actually open the scroll. The metaphor changes. The “Lamb” who opens the seals, however, is the same person. Hence, it was to be opened to our Lord’s eyes, for he alone was worthy “to open the book” and “to look thereon.” It is not our privilege to do so. However, the Lamb has invited the John Class to share some of the insights of what is contained on these scrolls.

We get a second-hand look at this sealed information through the angel showing it to John. Not because we are “worthy” to look thereon. The “worthy Lamb” has, in his mercy and kindness, allowed us a peek into these “sealed” mysteries.

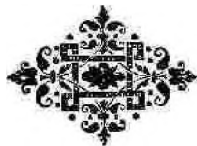
We must always remember that this information was secured by the “worthy Lamb” at great cost to himself. He alone “is worthy.” It is with great mercy and condescension on his part that we are given such information.

We must never forget this information was designed primarily for the “Lamb” himself. He was to look upon the “scrolls” and to be privy to the information contained therein. When he understands each “sealed” message, he then sends a message to the “angel” of each church.

Admittedly, the story of the “seven churches” precedes the story of the “seven seals” in the Revelation narration. In reality, however, Jesus opened each seal and received the information contained therein before he wrote to the angel of each “church.”




It was necessary for Jesus to receive and understand the information on these “scrolls” so he could speak respecting the needs of each church. It was his responsibility to care for the saints in each period. He fulfills that responsibility by addressing each “church” through its angel.



The First Seal

“**And I** [the John Class] **saw** when the **Lamb** opened one of the seals, and **I heard**, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, **Come** [and see—*Alexandrine* omits].

	<p>“And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Revelation 6:1, 2</i></p>
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“I”	The John Class.
“Lamb”	Our Lord Jesus in resurrection glory.
“First seal”	The period covered is from approximately CE 33-70. The “angel” of this period is Paul. (Peter may have been in the forefront of the church until Paul became active).
“One of the four beasts” [actually ‘Living Creatures’]	The attribute of God’s power.
“Come”	Action instructions for the vision to unfold.
“White horse”	Pure doctrines of the early church.
“He that sat on him”	The rider, an ambitious class wishing to gain power in the church.
“Had a bow”	Enabling the rider to project their influence beyond their own powers for evil.
“Crown was given him”	Symbolizing authority that came to the ascending “mystery of iniquity.”
“Conquering, and to conquer”	Taking control and subjugating the church to its quest for power and glory.

These symbols graphically illustrate the condition in the early church. Paul said in 2 Thessalonians 2:7: “The mystery of iniquity doth already work.”

The early church provided an opportunity for ambitions to be fulfilled, for status among those in authority, for recognition, and for ingratiating their own agenda. The devil was quick to infiltrate the church with his children.

Hence we read in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, Paul the first messenger is speaking:

“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

“Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”

We do not have to look far even in the early church to find a class who wanted to use the church, not to enrich the New Creation, but for its personal agenda.



Jesus warns the “angel” (Paul) of the Church of Ephesus, about this ambitious class within the church, the planting of Satan. Oddly enough, even using pure teachings that were largely accepted, this class tried to advance their own agenda. If they had attacked the fundamental teachings of the early church, they would easily have been recognized as apostates.

However, by outwardly adhering to the true doctrines as a cloak, they could sedulously work to draw disciples after themselves. They used the “bow” to send out their poison arrows to kill true Christianity and replace it with a carnal spirit. Paul realized how a carnal spirit was at work destroying the church at Corinth.

Paul observes their condition saying: “Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ” (1 Corinthians 1:12).

By lining up believers behind personalities, they were busy dividing and subjugating followers into different camps.



Apostle Paul Preaching Christ

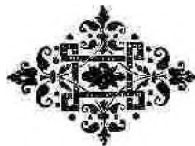
What was wrong with following Paul, Apollos, Cephas or Christ?

Nothing was wrong in itself. However, this created a party spirit and therein lay its wickedness. False leaders wanted a party spirit so they could form their own party. Paul did more to keep these false leaders at bay than any other apostle of that time.

While the apostles lived, false teachers were exposed. Some of them were dealt with rather severely. We read in 1 Timothy 1:20: “Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.”


In Titus 1:10, 11 we read: “For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake.”

These deceivers could not overthrow the authority of the apostles, so they kept up a constant barrage calculated to wrest the truth to accommodate their quest for recognition and power. Their patience and doggedness paid off. This element grew through the centuries and ultimately became enthroned in the church.



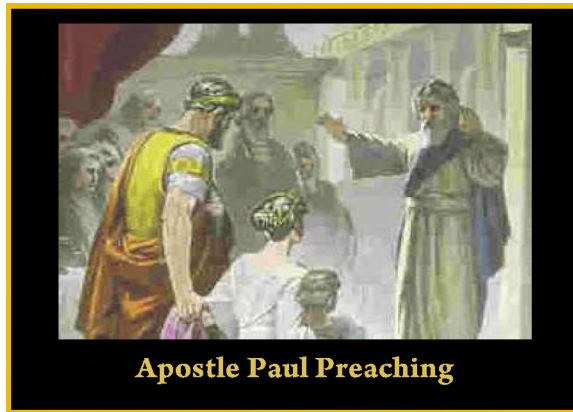
The Second Seal

“And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come [and see—*Alexandrine* omits].

	<p>“And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Revelation 6:3, 4</i></p>
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“He”	The Lamb.
“I”	The John Class.
“Second seal”	The period is approximately from CE 70-313. The “angel” is John.
“Second beast” [‘Living Creature’]	The attribute of God’s love.
“Come”	Action instructions for the vision to unfold.
“Red horse”	The pure doctrines now became polluted with sinful heresies.
“Him”	The rider, the apostate element in the church.
“Power”	To take away peace with troubling doctrines and teachings.
“Kill”	The ability to expel or ostracize those who refused false teachings.
“Great sword”	The Scriptures greatly abused and misrepresented.

These symbols indicate the steady decline of truth in the church. When most of the apostles lived, false teachers were not able to subvert the doctrines easily.



They had to work covertly and avoided confronting the apostles directly. When only John was left, he was still able to put down heresies. However, the boldness of apostates in the church increased.

In 3 John 9, we read: “I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.” If this boldness existed while the beloved John still lived, imagine what happened at his death!

If Diotrephes could ostracize and expel the beloved John from his congregation, we see how quickly this apostate element began the work of destroying the truth, introducing Greek philosophy, and limiting truth in the congregations. This was the period of the ascent of the bishops to power and stature.

Bishops began to rule, and the autonomy of the congregations was soon lost. The rise of the clergy found them carefully separating themselves from the laity. The Word of God needed to be defined and explained in councils and synods. The laity were subjected to the bishops. The rise of antichrist had little resistance in the church. It needed only to tread carefully with Pagan Rome.

The second seal revealed how the battle for truth would be lost. When John died, an open road appeared before the antichrist. Riding the “red horse” of sinful doctrines and teachings, the conquest of the antichrist still found pockets of resistance in faithful leaders. They were able to move forward by confusing many with brilliant entreaties, using Greek philosophy and worldly wisdom to ensnare the confused masses.

The nature of Christ was heavily under siege in this period. It paved the way for Greek philosophy to bring in many errors on the nature of man, fashioned after pagan concepts.

The angel of Smyrna was warned and he prepared those who knew the voice of the “true Shepherd.” It is amazing how small errors led to greater errors. Soon many lost their way, being beguiled by false teachers.


John revealed what was happening in his time. “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.” 1 John 2:19

If this was happening while John still stayed the course for the church, we realize that great carnage would follow the Apostle John’s passing. It did.



The Third Seal

“And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come [and see—*Alexandrine* omits].

	<p>“And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. “And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.” <i>Revelation 6:5, 6</i></p>
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“He opened”	The Lamb opened.
“I heard”	Literally, John, who represents the John Class at the end of the age.
“Third seal”	Approximately from CE 313-1160. The “angel” is Arius who nobly struggled to hold the truth on the nature of Christ.
“Third beast,” [actually ‘Living Creature’]	The attribute of God’s Wisdom.
“Come”	Action instructions for the vision to unfold.
“Black horse”	Doctrine of darkness on the nature of God and Christ.
“He that sat on him”	The apostate leaders.
“Pair of balances in his hand”	To suppress the truth and also to ration it to others.
“Voice in the midst of the four beasts,” [living creatures]	Our Lord.
“A measure of wheat [about a quart] for a penny”	A day’s wages, starvation for bread of life. The ransom truths were in short supply and greatly misrepresented.
“Three measures [quarts] of barley”	A day’s wages for barley truths on Christ’s resurrection and person were in better supply. <i>Lev. 23:11, 15-17</i>
“Hurt not the oil”	The holy Spirit, which still preserved the truth itself to the faithful.
“Wine”	The “wine” doctrine of Christ’s suffering and death could not be denied.

The “third seal” witnessed a “black horse” riding forth in the Pergamos period, which covered approximately from CE 313-1160. In this period the “black horse” doctrine beclouded the truth on the nature of God and Christ, finally leading to the trinity and the mean spirited tendency that went with it.

We cannot help but observe that most departure from the truth was attended by a vicious spirit bent on persecuting all those who would not submit to false doctrine. Love is always kind. Love may be firm without being malicious.

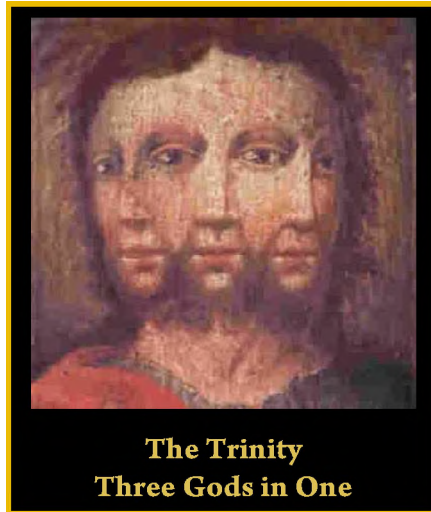
The antichrist element never worried about being kind. A mean spirit attended the rise of antichrist. One needs only to open the pages of history to see what horror followed the “grab” for power as the antichrist rode roughshod over those who stood in its way.



We note that the “wheat” truth that denoted the ransom was in extremely short supply. The doctrine of the mass had taken away the base of the sanctuary, the doctrine of the ransom, from the knowledge of the people.

The “barley” truth, the teaching of the resurrection of Christ, was in better supply. God’s Justice decreed that the “oil” of the holy Spirit should not be “hurt” and its influence on the faithful should not be interfered with. Also, the “wine” doctrine of Christ’s suffering and death were not to be hurt or hindered.

When Constantine accepted Christianity, the once persecuted church ascended to power in the Roman Empire. Many church fathers became intoxicated with power and were gradually corrupted by it. The saying, “Power corrupts—absolute power corrupts absolutely,” seems to characterize the rise of antichrist.

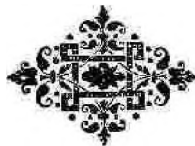


What started out as confusion on the natures of God and Jesus added more confusion with the doctrine of the mass, the immortal soul, burning hellfire and ruthless persecution for those who might question these doctrines. The kingdom that was to come at Christ's return was transmuted into the "kingdom now."

The church began its reign without the Lord. See what they had wrought—nothing but havoc. Oh, how the antichrist sought for power. When Satan rewarded his followers with power, they behaved like children of the "wicked one."

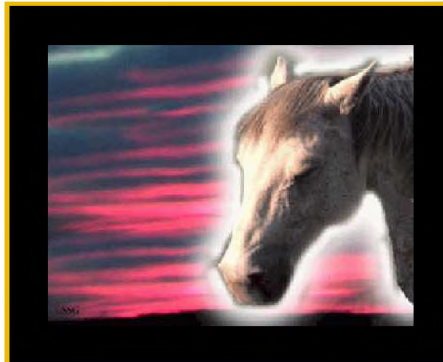
Arius, the "angel" of this third seal, strove to keep purity of doctrine on the nature of God and Christ, but he was banished. When Constantine became impressed with Arius' later presentations and was about to restore him to power, Arius died suddenly! Many believed he was poisoned.

Constantine wanted a united Christian religion to strengthen his Empire. The antichrist elements feared Arius threatened the unity they were offering. Power-lust will accept any conduct that guarantees staying in power. We see how religious politics led to the crucifixion of our Lord.



The Fourth Seal

“And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come [and see—*Alexandrine* omits].



“And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.”

Revelation 6:7, 8

“He”	The Lamb.
“I”	The John Class.
“Fourth seal”	The period is approximately from CE 1160 to 1378. The “angel” is Peter Waldo.
“Fourth beast,” [actually ‘Living Creature’]	The attribute of God’s justice.
“Come”	Action instructions for the vision to unfold.
“Pale horse”	Doctrine devoid of any life-giving qualities.
“His name”	The writers identification.
“Death”	The apostate element perverted truth so it could no longer sustain spiritual life. Death resulted.
“Hell”	Spiritual lifelessness.
“Them”	The apostate element.
“Fourth part”	The Roman Empire, the place where the apostasy was center stage.
“Kill with the sword”	Ostracize or destroy true Christians by the misuse of God’s Word.
“With hunger”	By limiting spiritual food.
“With death”	Ostracism and persecution, and not recognizing as Christians, those who resisted.
“With the beasts of the earth”	By uniting with civil powers and persecuting Christians.

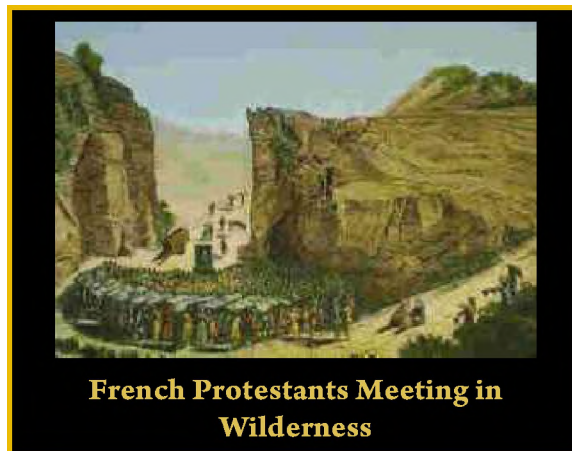
The fourth stage of the church and the fourth “seal” covers approximately from CE 1160-1378. The “angel” of this period is Peter Waldo. Papacy was now ruling with a high hand. The “pale horse” doctrines caused widespread spiritual death.

All the false doctrines—the trinity, immortal soul, burning hell-fire, the mass, the clergy and laity divisions, the kingdom reigning now, etc., were not only all absorbed into the church, but became grounds for persecution of those not willing to be persuaded by the antichrist. This left conditions in the church very sad indeed. The apostate element was now reigning in power.




The “pale horse” doctrines had perverted the truth. Little was left to sustain spiritual life within the papal system. Peter Waldo succeeded in translating the Gospels into French and engaged followers called “the poor men of Lyons” to help distribute the Gospels. They also offered corrective criticisms to awaken those who would listen to the lethal state that the papal leaders had created. Waldo’s ministry became a lifeline to the right-hearted. Although hunted and persecuted, the Waldenses left behind a beautiful history of faithfulness.

God’s justice, the fourth “living creature,” invites the faithful class to view the workings of “Death” and “Hell” doctrines to see what the effects would be on the church. As they watched, they saw the apostate element take control over the “fourth part of the earth”—the Roman Empire which the apostasy had now secured as its kingdom.



They watched the faithful being killed with the “sword” or rendered spiritually lifeless by the misuse of the Scriptures. They observed “hunger” produced by papacy’s limiting the spiritual food supply in proscribing the Bible. They could also see “death” in the form of ostracism and persecution, if not actual death, befalling the faithful. To make matters worse, papacy united with “beasts of the earth”—the civil powers—to augment its lethal powers.

The Fifth Seal

	<p>“And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: “And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? “And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they [were], should be fulfilled.” <i>Revelation 6:9-11</i></p>
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“He”	The Lamb.
“Fifth seal”	The period is approximately from CE 1378 to 1518-28. The “angel” is John Wycliff.
“I”	The John Class.
“Souls under the altar”	Souls of the ashes of those sacrificed in death under the brazen altar in the court. The ashes are where the sacrifices are held in memory.
“Testimony which they held”	The faithful often were persecuted. Some were killed for their faithfulness to the truth which God had given them in their time and place.
“They cried with a loud voice”	Just as Abel’s blood cried out for vengeance, so this righteous blood needed to be avenged, which it is, as recorded in Revelation 16:5-7.
“How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood?”	The blood of the righteous must be accounted for in God’s dealings. However, the judgments must wait the proper time.
“On them that dwell on the earth”	Society in general, but especially on those in Christendom that are the children of those who persecuted the saints.
“White robes were given to everyone of them”	God judges these faithful and holds for them the righteousness “of the saints.”

<p>“They should rest for a little season”</p>	<p>360 years, covering from CE 1518-1878, when the resurrection of the “sleeping saints” would take place. We notice the resurrection would not occur under the fifth or sixth seal, but waited until the “seventh seal” in 1878.</p>
<p>“Until their fellow servants also and their brethren, should be killed as they were”</p>	<p>God waits until all the saints have been “sealed” before visiting the plagues, Revelation 16:5-7, when God finally moves to vindicate his people. The phrase “should be killed as they were” implies that the persecution and ostracism would continue until all shall be “fulfilled.”</p>

The “fifth seal” covered from CE 1378-1518-28. The messenger of this Sardis period was John Wycliff. The John Class is privileged to see what happened in this period of time.

It is a scene not pretty to behold, but at least the saints have the opportunity to look out of heaven’s window and see things the way God saw them. God is especially interested in the “souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.”



Observers on earth have little interest in God’s view of matters. Perhaps they feel a twinge of remorse when they read of the persecution of the saints in these various periods. But no one suspects how strict a keeper of records God is.

No righteous blood is spilled without His notice and no righteous blood will go unrequited. Today, as in the days of the Pharisees, they garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, to make a statement that God rejects. They said, as recorded in Matthew 23:30-32: “If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.”

Jesus uses their testimony against them saying: “Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.”

God in mercy has withheld the day of recompense, so as not to cut off previous generations. However, this evil conduct will be visited on the closing generation of the Gospel age.

The cry of “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” still goes up. It may seem that God has long forgotten the wickedness of the past, but he patiently stores up the day of vengeance in his heart.

God asks in Deuteronomy 32:34, 35: “Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures? To me belongeth vengeance.” God will require of this generation the righteous blood spilled even as he did of the Jewish nation (Matthew 23:34-36).



The Destruction of Jerusalem

The overthrow of that nation was the harvest of that whole Jewish age. Starvation raged within the city of Jerusalem. Only crucifixion awaited those who climbed over the walls seeking asylum. Those were the days of vengeance, which resulted in the destruction of the Jewish polity and the Jewish temple, with a terrible carnage in human life.

This shadows what awaits Christendom for spilling righteous blood throughout the age.

The faithful of the past were accorded “white robes.” Being judged righteous overcomers they have obtained the promise of “righteousness.” Revelation 19:8 says of the bride of Christ: “And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen; clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.”

The “souls under the altar” could not receive their reward then, but needed to wait in the ashes under the “altar” until their fellow servants had finished their course. The day of reward was realized in 1878, when the sleeping saints were resurrected.

They each had the “white robe” of actual righteousness given them. They will no longer need the robe of Christ’s righteousness for their justification in the days of their flesh. Those born of the “spirit” will have their own individual righteousness as perfected New Creatures.

The test of faith has been long and protracted, but eternity in everlasting joy awaits the faithful. “We shall be satisfied when we awake in thy likeness.”

Christendom will be visited with seven “last plagues.” During the “third plague,” which is poured out “upon the rivers and fountains of waters” turning them to blood, the Lord at last answers the cries from “under the altar.”

“And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

“For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

“And I heard another out of the altar [the Christ] say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.” Revelation 16:5-7

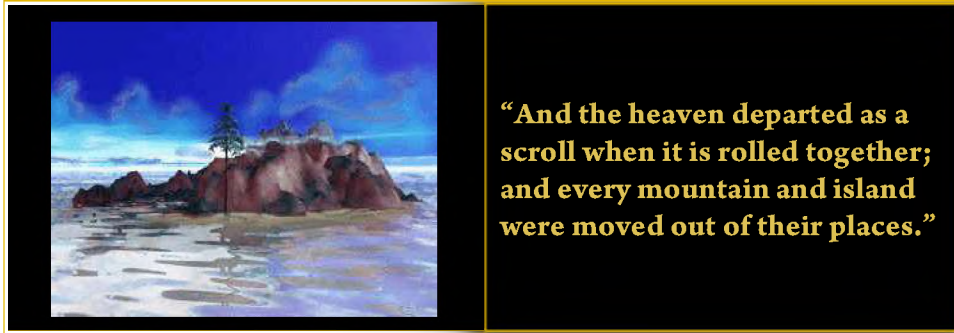
At precisely the right moment God is vindicated.



The Sixth Seal

“And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

“And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.



“And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

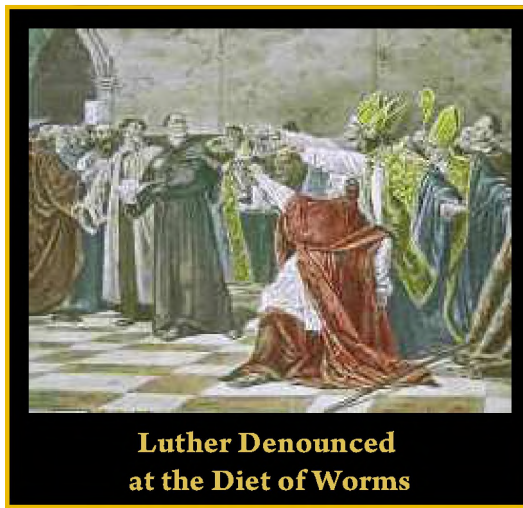
“And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

“For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”
Revelation 6:12-17

“I”	The John Class.
“He”	The Lamb.
“Sixth seal”	The “angel” of this period is Martin Luther.
“Earthquake”	Probably the French Revolution.
“Sun”	“Black as sackcloth of hair.” The Gospel light seen as through hair sackcloth, which is light suppressing.
“Moon”	Mosaic Law appeared bloody or barbaric.
“Stars”	Ecclesiastic leaders falling to the worldly level of philosophy, Christian citizenship and political level.
“Fig Tree”	Even as the Jewish nation threw off its immature show of character.

“Mighty Wind”	When surrounded by Titus (CE 70) or as it will do when surrounded by “Gog.”
“Heaven Departed as a Scroll”	The ecclesiastical powers separated into two parts as when a scroll is rolled together.
“Mountain”	Kingdom being moved or disrupted.
“Island”	Republic being moved or disrupted.
“Kings of Earth”	Political and financial rulers.
“Great Men”	Men of considerable influence.
“Rich Men”	Financially powerful.
“Chief Captains”	Military leaders.
“Mighty Men”	Leaders of labor.
“Bond Man”	Laboring classes.
“Free Man”	Small business and professional people.
“Hid themselves”	Sought refuge.
“Dens”	Secret societies, such as, Free Masonry, Odd Fellows, guilds, etc.
“Rocks”	Fortresses of society in the form of stocks, bonds, banks.
“Mountains”	Of the kingdoms of earth.
“Hide us”	Shelter and protect us.
“Face of Him”	Out from the face of Jehovah.
“Sitteth on the Throne”	Jehovah’s throne which Jesus also shares.
“Wrath of the Lamb”	Normally a lamb is not a very wrathful creature, but Christ is pictured as a terrifying opponent.
“Great Day of His Wrath”	The great time of trouble.

The sixth seal covers the Reformation period of Martin Luther, from CE 1518 to 1874-1878. This was a period of momentous change. The Reformation set in motion forces of change leading the people to freedom of thought. They began to rise up against the pompous clergy and corrupt governments.



**Luther Denounced
at the Diet of Worms**

The Reformation, which had given new freedoms in Germany and England and other countries of Europe, had been suppressed in France. This turned out to be a terrible mistake.

Even Charles the Fifth, who ruled in Germany during Luther's time, was careful not to antagonize powerful leaders who had endorsed Luther's religious reforms. This gave the nation a breath of fresh air. Other nations imbibed some of the spirit of reform. No longer would priestcraft and Papacy abuse the people.



National Revolutions

A new light emerged in the world. America had been born and declared its independence from Great Britain. America became the land of the free. Religious liberty was absolute. For the first time in centuries, a republic was born. There were no kings and no royalty.

Throughout Europe, the light shining from America awakened people to their oppression and exploitation by church and state. As the Reformation began an awakening throughout Europe, the papal church, together with royalty and aristocrats, kept a strangle hold on France.

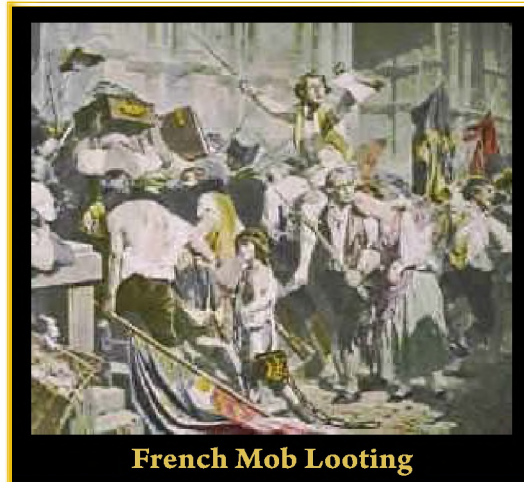
This became intolerable to the people of France. The nation exploded with a terrible revolution. The French people formed the "Third Estate."



French Revolution—Bread Riots

Led by men of letters with brilliant writing and preaching skills, the masses were inflamed. They exalted the Goddess of Reason and threw off all the religious restraints they had so long endured. The revolution singled out royalty and Catholic Church priests for the guillotine. The streets of France ran with blood.

In 1789 the enraged masses stormed the Bastille. This was one of many prisons that were notorious for the torture and cruelty inflicted upon those incarcerated. When the people saw first hand the inside of this monstrous prison, their passions were inflamed. They raged against the leaders, both religious and royal, with a vengeance and hatred.

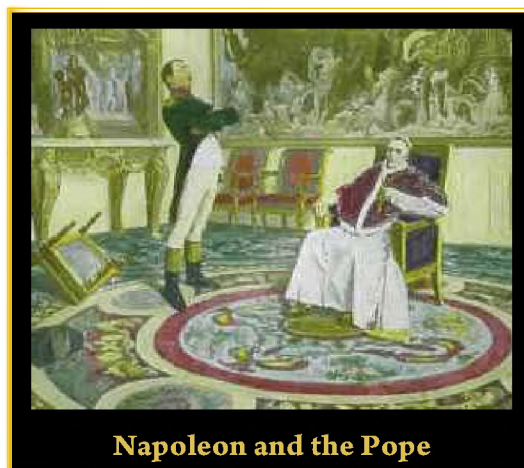


The Reformation had already dealt a lethal blow to papacy. However, the French Revolution was an additional deadly wound that should have caused the papacy to die.

However, in Revelation 13:3 we read: “I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast [papacy].”

Napoleon came along and betrayed the French Revolution by declaring the Catholic Church the religion of France. While he disliked the Catholic Church and humiliated it on every occasion, yet he needed to ameliorate his stance toward it to weaken the vice grip of surrounding nations that were seeking to destroy him.

Napoleon ended the hopes of France for a republic similar to America. He made himself and his family into a new line of French royalty. He also infused life into the moribund papacy. Neither of these were consistent with the French Revolution.

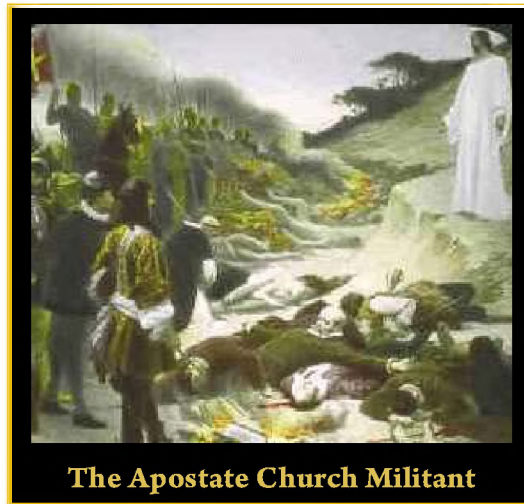


Under the sixth seal both the great Reformation and the French Revolution occurred. Of the two, it was the French Revolution that was the “great earthquake.”

The Gospel sun was darkened by an atheistic leadership that ridiculed not only the Catholic Church, but also all Christian religion and the Bible.

The “moon” of the Mosaic Law of the Old Testament was denounced as foolish and bloody. All those animal sacrifices were deemed barbaric.

The religious stars fell to the earth, many of them to be dragged toward the guillotine. As the Jewish nation “cast off” her untimely figs in CE 70 when shaken by Titus’ cruel attack on Jerusalem, so the French Revolution became a miniature portrayal of the final “earthquake” or revolution with which Christendom shall fall (Revelation 16:18).



Revelation 6:14 does not limit itself to the French Revolution, but only uses it to show how events will lead up to the final “great day of his wrath” (Revelation 6:17). The nominal spiritual “heavens” will depart as a “scroll when it is rolled together.” Scrolls are rolled at two ends.

Scrolls are rolled apart to be read, but rolled together to be secured. The “heavens” here represent the heavens of earth, not the “heaven of heaven” where God dwells.

The powers of spiritual control would try to secure themselves ultimately by rolling together. This would be when the “mountains” or kingdoms of this world will “depart,” as well as when the “island” republics will be moved “out of their places.”

As men see the great social struggle unfolding they seek shelter. “The kings of the earth” [actual rulers], the “great men” [of influence], the “rich men” [of the financial world], the “chief captains” [of military might], the “mighty men” [or leaders of labor], the “bondmen” [or laboring classes], the “free man” [of small business or professional people]—all seek refuge.

They all seek to hide or secure themselves in the “dens” [secret societies, such as, freemasonry, Odd Fellows, guilds, unions, etc.]. Others will seek refuge in the “rocks of the mountains” [or the fortresses of the kingdoms of this world, such as, League of Nations, military alliances, and ecclesiastical alliances]. (See *THE TIME IS AT HAND*, p. 139, par. 1 and footnote.)

Will it save them from the wrath of the “Lamb”? No.

When men seek the “mountains and rocks” to fall on them, they are not wishing to be crushed by them. Rather, the thought is that they want to be sheltered from the impending doom that the “Lamb” threatens during his presence, when he will systematically begin to destroy the kingdoms of this world. The nations sense the “great day of wrath.”

Armageddon is a word that everyone knows about. They all hope to delay it past their own day, hoping another generation will inherit it. While a lamb is not normally a wrathful creature, yet this “Lamb of God” referenced some twenty-seven times in Revelation, is a fearsome creature—the world can not stand before it!



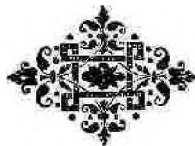
Notice, the French Revolution is only a prelude to the final “great revolution.” The story of the French Revolution is introductory here to the final collapse of the world in “the great day of his [the Lamb’s] wrath.” While we are told these things under the sixth seal, we need to understand that the French Revolution opens a window for the Revelator to tell us impending events that pertain to the end times.

Revelation 7 is not what occurs under the sixth seal, even as the “great day of his wrath” does not occur at that time. It is clear that it occurs in Revelation 16:16-21. The alert student cannot be misled here.

Revelation 7 is a parentheses which begins to unfold intimate details which in fact would occur during the closing days of the seventh seal. However, because the story unfolds so naturally in this context, it carries the reader along without his being able to look at his watch of prophetic events.

Chapter seven explains how the “four winds of the earth” will be held back to allow the completion of the “sealing” of the saints. The “great company” is shown and identified for us in chapter seven. Their happy ending is even described as when “they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat” (Revelation 7:16).

Our last look at them is when “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Revelation 7:17). This neither happens under the sixth seal or even in the early days of the seventh seal. Rather part of chapter 6 and all of chapter 7 is lifted out of the context and the reader is transported to some terrible as well as glorious scenes projecting into the future.



The Seventh Seal

“And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.” Revelation 8:1

“He”	Our Lord.
“Seventh seal”	The period is approximately from CE 1874-78 to the end of the harvest. The “angel” is Charles Taze Russell.
“Silence”	When “the Lord our God hath put us to silence, and given us water of gall to drink” (Jeremiah 8:14).
“Heaven”	The nominal heavens of earth or the religious ruling powers.
“Half an hour”	An undetermined yet short period of time, less than the full “hour” of the harvest or the “hour of temptation.”

The “seventh seal” is the last of the series, and covers the period from 1874–1878 to the end of the harvest. Bro. Russell is believed to be the “seventh angel” to the Laodicean Church.

It is rather unique that, while the harvest message was going forth far and wide and reaching millions by tracts, books, magazine circulation as well as a syndicated religious column published in hundreds of papers world wide, the churches were silent.

The Laodicean messenger was spreading the newly recovered truths of the Bible worldwide. The nominal system had neither new truth to give nor were they willing to rescind the old errors. In all other fields of science, knowledge has poured in a whirlwind pace. Everywhere the world was flooded with knowledge along all lines.

The time we are living in is known for its “information explosion.” This is true everywhere, but in the churches. They are preaching old Dark Age theology—hell-fire, immortal soul, the kingdom now, heaven is an escape from hell, and the trinity.



Dante’s Inferno—Frozen Section



Credal Theology—Hell Fire

None of these have a true biblical basis. Many are so ashamed to be preaching such dark theology that they prefer preaching on movie reviews or book reviews for their Sunday sermons.

Just as some old-guard scientists tried to defend their old teaching that the world is flat, so modern theologians try in vain to make sense out of flat theology that had roots in the Dark Ages and not in the Bible. They preach a failed theology, which cannot reach the vast majority of people. They simply cannot get themselves to own up to their failure rate in saving souls.

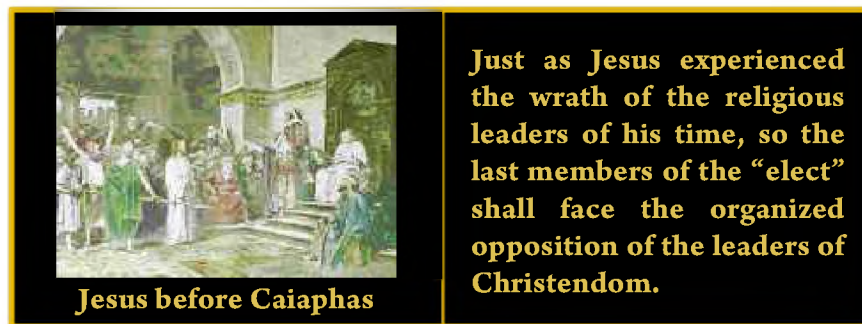
Then they try to make God share in their failed concepts of salvation that simply do not save the vast and overwhelming majority of the world. Nothing is so glaring as the colossal failure rate for billions of people because the church cannot reach them.

Thank God, he will succeed where they have failed. Because the message they preach is such a failure, it stands to reason God cannot be represented in their dark theology. God will have a 100 per cent salvation visited upon all men in the kingdom when he lifts the Adamic judgment of death and condemnation from off all of mankind. Then the blessings of restitution will prevail.

Under the “seventh seal,” the harvest message will culminate the work of the Gospel age. What a glorious time it is! The Church of God, the 144,000, will be sealed and glorified.

The “harvest is the end of the age.” While the “saints” carried the “harvest message” in the early days of harvest, oddly, the nominal systems were rather silent and more observers than actors.

However, this silence does not last. They seem bent on organizing for power and making a grand stand before being destroyed.



While the “seventh seal” is characterized by an impressive “silence,” yet it is interesting to contrast this with the blowing of the “seventh trumpet”—covering the same time frame.

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven [the spiritual realm of earth], saying, The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. ...

“And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come.” Revelation 11:15, 18

The “voices” in “heaven” are the voices of the saints, the representatives of Christ on earth. Their message is clear and concise. The “kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord.” Only the saints of this harvest time have been preaching such a message.

The nominal systems are a part of the “kingdom of this world” so this message is most unwelcome. They see themselves threatened. Yet, the message is true. It cannot fail of fulfillment.

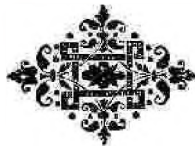
As the “kingdom” of this world disintegrates, so their place in it will also end. Their efforts to circumvent the demise of their power and station will be as effective as were the religious leaders in our Lord’s time. They were all swept away. So it shall be with the great nominal systems.



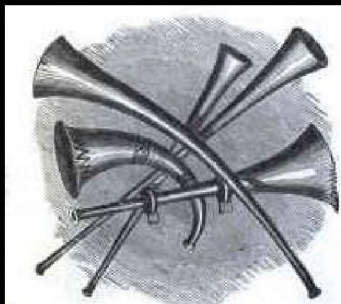


THE STORY OF THE “SEVEN TRUMPETS”

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Part I



Trumpets were used extensively in yesteryear to deliver critical messages. The trumpet sound carried further and clearer than the human voice. Therefore it was necessary to use the trumpet to signal what was to be done.

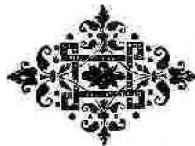
When Gideon defeated the Midianites, he used 300 trumpets in conjunction with a similar number of pitchers and lamps (Judges 7:22). His trumpet message signaled to the enemy that a vast host was charging down upon them, setting them into disarray. The enemy did not know that was all there was—just three hundred men blowing trumpets. You know the rest of the story.



Gideon's Band of 300

The trumpet was the means of delivering various messages. This is what the “seven trumpet” messages are all about. The “trumpet” messages are not recorded, so they must be filled in by history. The seventh “trumpet” message is the exception because we have in our time a complete record of the seventh message.

Revelation carefully records what happens when each “trumpet” message is delivered.



Revelation 8:2-5 Portrays Christ's Work During the Jewish Harvest— A Prelude to the Trumpets


“And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.” Revelation 8:2

The “seven angels” are the same as mentioned in Revelation 1:20: “The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.” Bible Students generally agree that the angels are Paul (who ascended over Peter as the messenger of the Ephesus period), John the Apostle, Arius, Waldo, Wycliff, Luther and Russell.

Some might submit a different list, but most Bible Students would agree with this list. While there may be other men who might measure up in some manner to those designated, it is important to pick out men who delivered a message to the Christian world which was heard and which caused reactions and repercussions in the time they were delivered.


The seven messengers were **given** “seven trumpets.” The messengers either had the ability or were given the ability to blow the “trumpets” provided.

The “seven trumpets” were divinely provided. This means these “seven angels” were placed in positions by the Lord so that their messages would be effective in reaching the Christian world at the appointed time. The “seven angels” could not deliver their message until provided with the means to do so. The same is true with the “seven last plagues.” Before they can be poured out, the Lord has to provide the “seven bowls” for delivering these judgments.

 <p style="text-align: center;">The Incense Altar</p>	<p>“And another angel [messenger, Christ] came and stood at the altar [God’s altar where acceptable sacrifice was offered], having a golden censer [the divine will to sacrifice as a New Creature his full ability].</p> <p>“And there was given unto him much incense [perfect ability and will, his two hands full, to offer to God], that he should offer it [fulfill his vows of consecration as a New Creature] with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar [where New Creatures’ sacrifices are made] which was before the throne [the divine authority].”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Revelation 8:3</i></p>
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This verse pictures Christ at the outset of his ministry presenting himself as our High Priest. In Exodus 30:7, 8 we learn that the High Priest offered incense twice daily when he dressed the lamps. The High Priest also offered two hands full of incense when he went in to make atonement with the blood of the bullock. Since blood is not mentioned, it indicates that this is not the primary focus of the story.

The lesson is that of acceptable sacrifice before the throne. On the Day of Atonement the High Priest offered “two hands full of incense,” showing his total powers being presented. Much “incense” is provided that Christ should “offer with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar.”

 <p>“And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Revelation 8:4</i></p>	<p>Our prayers would not be acceptable without the “incense” of Christ’s perfect sacrifice. “All saints” must, therefore, pray in Jesus’ name (John 14:13).</p> <p>The “golden censer” carried the fire needed to offer incense. God provided the trials and the circumstances through which our High Priest offered incense that was totally acceptable to God.</p>
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Because of Jesus’ sacrifice the prayers of Christ’s disciples ascended to God. Starting at Pentecost, prayers of the saints would be heard if they were offered with the “smoke” or memory of Jesus’ sacrifice. They ascended through Christ’s “hand,” or power.

“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 thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake.” Revelation 8:5

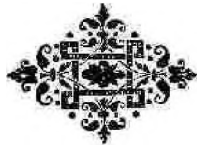
John the Baptist said of Jesus that he “shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Luke 3:16). Following the outpouring of his Spirit on his servants and handmaidens of the Jewish nation, the fiery judgments came upon the nation leading to the collapse of the Jewish polity in CE 70 and afterward.

The “voices” [proclamations], “thunderings” [controversies], “lightnings” [illuminations] and an “earthquake” [an earthquake occurred at Christ’s death and cast its shadow before it of the terrible shaking and demise of the Jewish nation] described the work of the Jewish harvest time.

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

Each of the “seven angels” [messengers] which had been provided with the means to deliver their message are prepared to sound forth their message in their appointed time. What they proclaimed is not stated. However, the history of each period helps us learn of their work and ministry.

The seven messengers were prepared to sound by having received a message from Jesus, who addressed the “seven angels” of the “seven churches.” Jesus, who had opened the “seven seals,” knew what conditions would prevail during each successive church, and was thus able to deliver the message through its “angel.”

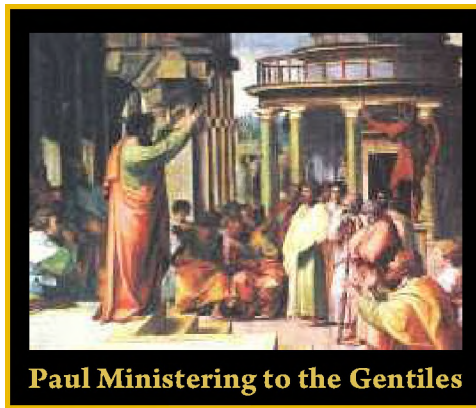


Part II

The First Trumpet— From Pentecost CE 33-70

“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.” Revelation 8:7

The first messenger was Paul, who ascended over Peter in ministering to the Gentiles and the church in general. In Acts 17:6, it is said of Paul and his associates, “These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.” The message of Christianity was a powerful influence on the pagan world. It first affected the “earth” class—or stable society.



Paul Ministering to the Gentiles

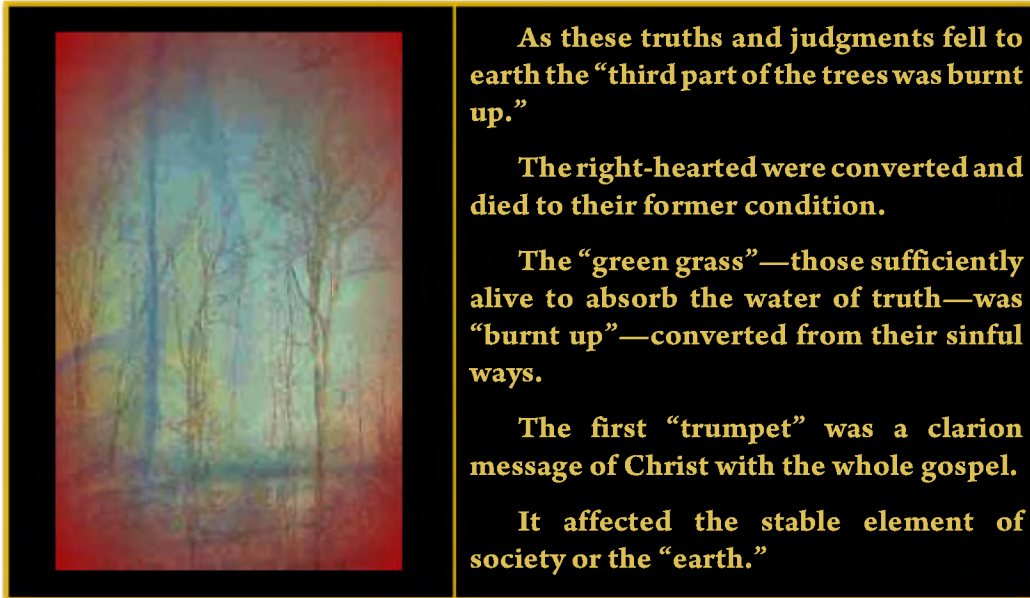
The first “trumpet” [Revelation 8:7] and the first “plague” [Revelation 16:2] both affect “the earth.” However, we notice a difference as well. The “trumpet” message in Revelation 8:7 awakens people to conversion from paganism or nominal Judaism. The first plague of Revelation 16:2 is “poured out” on “the earth” as punishment for worshipping the “beast” and its “image.”

Jesus said, “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword” (Matthew 10:34). The message of early Christianity preached by Paul and his associates was powerful.

The Roman Empire was debauched through demon religions and the endless love of pleasure. Slavery provided them with ease and their successful subjugation of other countries brought riches from taxation and plunder.

However, there was a measure of nobility left in the human heart. Not all have fallen equally since Adam’s transgression. There was a measure of godlikeness left in some hearts, and the message conveyed by Christians spoke to tender consciences. The qualities of mercy and kindness brought stinging reproof to many sensitive hearts.

As sin is a reproach to any people, so any message that censures evil comes as “hail” or hard truth. There was “fire mingled with blood.” The truth being witnessed to was accompanied by righteous, life threatening judgments. As people responded to the higher appeal of truth, it brought opposition and persecution. Darkness hates the light.



As these truths and judgments fell to earth the “third part of the trees was burnt up.”

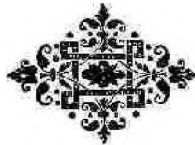
The right-hearted were converted and died to their former condition.

The “green grass”—those sufficiently alive to absorb the water of truth—was “burnt up”—converted from their sinful ways.

The first “trumpet” was a clarion message of Christ with the whole gospel.

It affected the stable element of society or the “earth.”

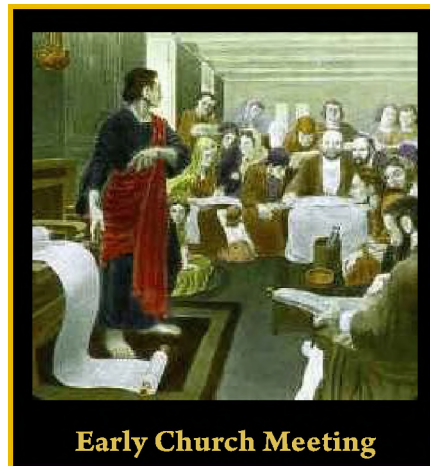
The right-hearted were called to repentance and renewal, whereas those who loved the licentious ways of paganism were antagonized and angered. It was the pure gospel preached by Paul and the early Christians that began to separate the right-hearted from the lovers of paganism or Jewish traditionalism.



The Second Trumpet— CE 70-313

“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.” Revelation 8:8**

The mantle passed from the Apostle Paul to the Apostle John, with his pastoral qualities. The churches that had been established in the first era were now maturing. Leaders, both good and bad, were arising in the church. Satan began to infiltrate the church with philosophy and doctrinal differences. The kingdom of Rome “was burning with fire,” being subjected to Christian conversion on a large scale.



Early Church Meeting

The Roman Empire was “cast into the sea” or brought in contact with the barbarians and restless masses, bringing the barbarians a blessing because within the Roman Empire, with which they mixed, was Christianity. The Christian influences had an inevitable uplifting effect on all in contact with it.

The “third part of the sea became blood”—or the right-hearted men of the restless barbarians became “blood” [dead to their former condition, being converted to Christianity].

The second “plague” of Revelation 16:3 was also poured out on the “sea.” Here the restless masses of poor and have-not people who had been struggling with the rich and powerful “became as the blood of a dead man” [which separates into clot and serum].

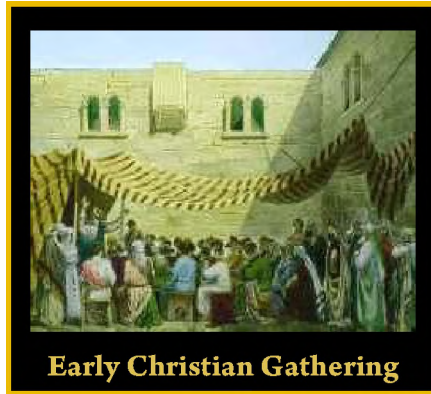
“Every living soul,” or the right-hearted, ceased their restless turbulent attitude, hopefully seeking meekness and righteousness. This was not a conversion to Christianity, but a willingness to accept that the Lord would deal with the inequities. While “blood” is mentioned in the “second trumpet” and the “second plague,” again we see a contrast.

The second “trumpet” causes death to paganism and conversion to Christianity while the second “plague” ended the turbulence of those in the “sea” condition, but not equally. Some were like the clot of a “dead” man’s “blood”—clot [radical groups] and serum [liberal groups].

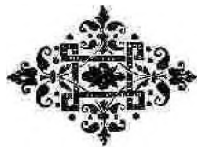
Again, there is a contrast. Revelation 8:9 (the second trumpet) speaks of the conversion of the right-hearted to Christianity, whereas Revelation 16:3 (the second plague) speaks of the separation of radical and liberal groups and of the “living souls” who “died” to their restless and turbulent condition by accepting meekly God’s judgment.

Returning to Revelation 8:9 the “third part of the creatures [people] which were in the sea [restless masses], and had life [spiritual vitality] died [or were converted].” This is speaking of the successful conversion of the right-hearted from among the restless masses.

“And the third part of the ships [the right-hearted in the temples of the Roman provinces] were destroyed” to paganism. Even though many of those converted proved more or less to be “tares,” still we see the growth of the Christian church with both “wheat” and “tares.”



John's ministry lasted from about CE 70 until to his own death in the late nineties. Yet John's pastoral leadership continued until around CE 313. John set the stage for a faithful ministry that brought tremendous growth to Christianity, even when persecutions raged. However, love was to give way to increasing numbers of bishops maneuvering for power and prominence. Satan's planting in the churches brought with it a class full of personal ambition that desired power and prominence.



The Third Trumpet— CE 313-1160

“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.” Revelation 8:10, 11



Council of Nice, A.D. 325

We believe the “angel” of this period was Arius.

He was a devout Christian who endeavored to refute errors introduced into the church on the nature of Christ.

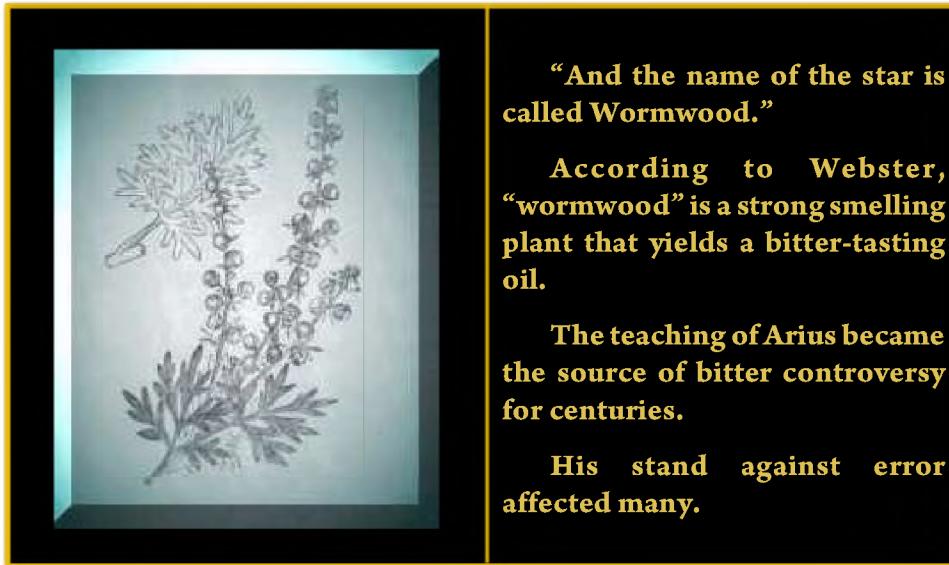
However, Constantine ruled against Arius, and he “fell” from “heaven [ecclesiasticism] burning as it were a lamp.”

“And it [the lamp of Arius] fell upon the third part [right-hearted] of the rivers [sources of religious teachings upholding Babylon], and upon the fountains of waters [the theologians and teachers—the sources of religious teaching].”

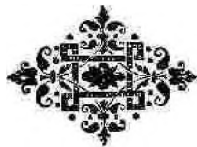
Please notice that the third “plague” or judgment is also poured out on the “rivers and fountains of waters” turning them into “blood,” that is, making them abhorrent or like death [blood poured out] (Revelation 16:4).

However, in the third trumpet no “blood” is mentioned, only that the waters were made “bitter.” The messenger’s message fell only upon the “third part of the rivers and upon fountains of waters” making them “bitter.” No, Arius’ message was not “bitter,” but the “third part” or right-hearted ones realized the “waters” they were drinking were “bitter.” They desired no longer to partake of such “waters.”

Here we see a difference between the third “trumpet” (Revelation 8:10,11) and the third “plague” (Revelation 16:4). Both are delivered to the “rivers” and “fountains of waters.” The effect of the “trumpet” message was to convert the right-hearted to Christianity while the “third plague” of Revelation made the theological “rivers and fountains of waters” like the river of Egypt—“blood” and abhorrent to drink—not a good day for the theologians.



Those with right hearts “died” to their condition in Babylon and were forced to stand with the Arian truth. This caused enormous conflicts in the churches, but the Roman authorities threw their weight against the teachings of Arius, and the pagan trinity carried the day.



The Fourth Trumpet— CE 1160-1378

“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.” Revelation 8:12

Peter Waldo was the fourth “trumpet” messenger. He recognized the follies and evils of the papal reign. He saw the wealth and power of the clergy in stark contrast to the poor oppressed people. He set an excellent example for the opulent clergy by giving away all his possessions. Waldo was followed by the poor men of Lyons who also gave away their wealth and entered the ministry.

Peter Waldo translated the four Gospels into French, and his disciples carried them throughout the region.

The ministry of the Waldenses caused the right-hearted Christians to realize that the Gospel sunlight had been darkened, as was the Mosaic Law obscured along with the apostolic lights.

To the right-hearted it became clear that light was being withheld from them.

Though bitterly persecuted by the papacy, the Waldenses faithfully endured the persecutions and they effectively were in the forefront of those pressuring for reform.



Peter Waldo

The fourth “plague” of Revelation 16:8, 9 only affects the sun and in quite a different fashion. Instead of being darkened or withholding light, here the “plague,” when poured “upon the sun” causes it to become extremely hot. Those ministers, who had been spreading **some** of the sweet Gospel teachings and passing themselves off as ministers of God, now find the sun burning furiously down upon them and their followers, causing them to defame God who is bringing this scorching heat upon them.

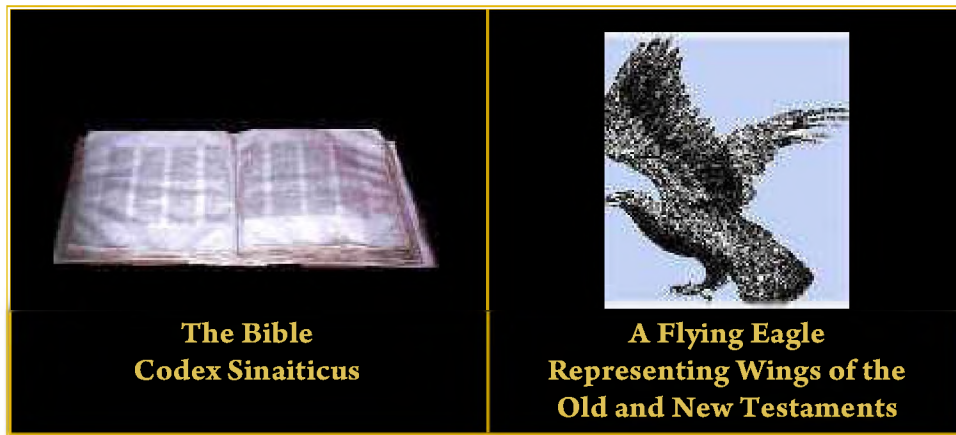
We notice there is no repentance and no willingness to respond by giving glory to God. It was easy to give glory to God when basking in the Gospel promises. But when the burning sun bakes them crisply, how different it is! The fourth “plague” is poured “upon the sun.”

The Waldenses did not pose a serious threat to the papal reign. Hence we find a very short description limited to one verse. The fourth “trumpet” only made the right-hearted realize that the light of the “sun,” “moon” and “stars” were being withheld from them and were determined not to accept the darkness, striving instead toward the light.

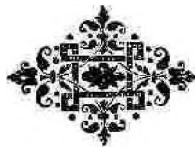
“And I beheld, and heard an angel [an eagle crying with a loud voice, according to ancient manuscripts] flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound.” Revelation 8:13

This verse declares that the next three “trumpet” voices would be attended with “woe” or trouble for society. The “trumpet” messages to follow would begin to adversely affect false religion, both Catholic and Protestant, causing grief as society realizes step by step the declining fortunes of their church-state religions.

It is those who have separated themselves from Babylon who are said to fly in the “midst of heaven.” Mid-heaven Christians are those not ruling in ecclesiasticism, but who are in touch with the Word of God. It is God’s Word, “an eagle crying with a loud voice,” or the Word on the wings of the Old and New Testaments as they began to be available and distributed, that portends the woes to Christian society.



Starting with Wycliff and onward, the Bible began to be available and to circulate. At first limited, the Word of God began to stand in stark contradiction to the papal teachings, and later, to the Protestant compromised teachings.



The Fifth Trumpet and First Woe— CE 1378-1528

“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.” Revelation 9:1

John Wycliff is the messenger that sounds forth here. Those who criticized the church were cast out or ostracized. Such was the experience of Wycliff. To his good fortune, in 1378 there was a Great Schism in the papal hierarchy with two popes each claiming to be the head of the church. Papacy had so much internal strife that Wycliff's dissent appeared as a small brush fire.



Wycliff's Trial before the Council

Three papal bulls were issued before the Great Schism to deal with Wycliff's alleged heresy.

At Wycliff's trial, two powerful princes accompanied him, preventing the execution of the judgments against Wycliff.

We see how God intervened to prevent papacy from destroying Wycliff before his work was accomplished.

The “key of the bottomless pit” represents the authority to unloose the truths being restrained by Satan.

It is interesting to note how the devil succeeded in locking the Divine truths in the “bottomless pit” for a season, yet in the appointed time Satan himself will be locked in the “bottomless pit” along with his lies and deceptions. This is poetic justice in its finest form.

We submit Revelation 9:2-11 as it is presented in the *“Interpreted Rendering of Revelation”* with some additions and variation. This will provide immediate explanations of the highly symbolic language.

“And he [Wycliff] opened the bottomless pit [released suppressed and dormant biblical truths]; and there arose a smoke out of the pit [evidences that truths had been suppressed], as the smoke of a great furnace [this evidence was very pronounced]; and the sun [the Gospel according to the creedal teachings] and the air [influence of the evil spirits] were darkened [diminished] by reason of the smoke of the pit [evidence that truths had been restrained and suppressed in this dormant condition].” Revelation 9:2

“And there came out of this smoke [evidence] locusts [truths which had been suppressed and restrained] upon the earth [stable society]; and unto them [the locusts or truths themselves which appeared unto society] was given power, as the scorpions [schools—the sting of a scorpion is very painful but generally not fatal] of the earth [society] have power [through teaching and education, bringing extreme discomfort and a desire for conversion which could not then be realized].” Revelation 9:3



LOCUSTS



SCORPION



Wycliff's followers were known as "Lollards," who were represented by locusts with stinging scorpion tails in Revelation 9:9, 10.

Wycliff engaged "poor" priests to teach his doctrines to the people. The ministry of Wycliff and his followers, along with the English New Testament, brought truths to light that were painful. This work was embraced by the Lollards who continued to speak the truths Wycliff had made known.

"And it was commanded them [these truths were directed] that they should not hurt [bring pain to] the grass [common people] of the earth [society]; neither any green thing [with spiritual vitality], neither any tree [prominent people]; but only those men [professed Christians] which have not the seal [enlightenment] of God [the holy Spirit of God] in their foreheads [intellects]." Revelation 9:4

"And to them [these locust truths] it was given that they should not kill them [or convert them], but that they should be tormented [troubled] five months [one hundred and fifty years from 1378 to 1528]; and their torment [trouble] was as the torment of a scorpion [teaching and education], when he striketh a man [causing pain because others saw through their errors and practices. A scorpion has two glands that supply his tail stinger. This could picture the teachings from the Old and New Testament]." Revelation 9:5



Page from Wycliff's Bible



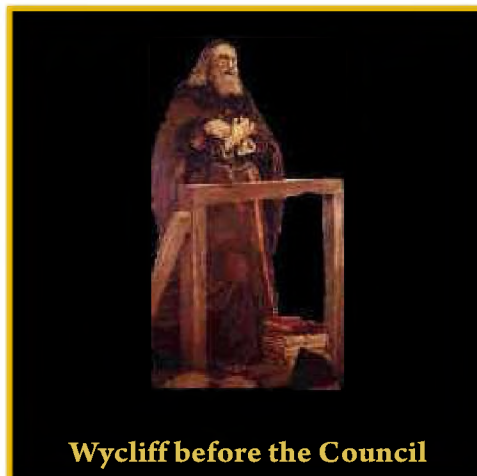
Wycliff's Bible

“And in those days shall men [those without the enlightenment of the holy spirit] seek death [a change or conversion from their position], and could not find it; and shall desire to die [be converted] and death [conversion] shall flee from them [the reforms were uncertain of being carried out for no one knew if reforms would be sustained or perish].” Revelation 9:6

“And the shapes of the locusts [truths] were like unto horses [doctrines] prepared unto battle [combat or debate with error]; and on their heads [the priests of these truths] were as it were crowns like gold [with divine authority], and their faces [appearance of these truth bearers] were as the faces of men [Christians].” Revelation 9:7

“And they [the locust truths] had hair [justification] as the hair of women [an ample covering], and their teeth were [rending criticisms] as the teeth of lions [of divine justice].” Revelation 9:8

“And they [the locust truths] had breastplates [righteousness], as it were breastplates [righteousness] of iron [which are impregnable]; and the sound of their wings [messages Scripturally supported by the wings of the Old and New Testaments, wings of an eagle] was as the sound of chariots [the message of organizations] of many horses [doctrines] running to battle [prepared for controversy].” Revelation 9:9

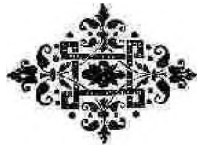


Wycliff before the Council

“And they [the locust truths] had tails [teachings] like unto scorpions [were sponsored by teachers who were like scorpions who inflict painful irritations], and there were stings [painful irritations] in their tails [caused by these teachers]: and their power [ministry] was to hurt [afflict those men in the church who had not the enlightenment of the holy Spirit] five months [one hundred and fifty years of a very shaky reform and uncertain survival].” Revelation 9:10

“And they had a king [these truths had a king, the Bible] over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit [the messenger of restraint and suppression to the unenlightened], whose name [king, Bible truths are destructive to entrenched errors] in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon [Destroyer], but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon [Destroyer].” Revelation 9:11

“One woe [the fifth trumpet] is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter [by reason of the two remaining trumpet messages].” Revelation 9:12



The Sixth Trumpet and Second Woe— CE 1517-18 to 1878

The sixth “trumpet” has more biblical verses to cover this period than any other “trumpet” message. From Revelation 9:13 to 11:14 we find material relating to the sixth “trumpet,” much of which extends beyond Luther’s ministry and may be attributed to the Lord’s personal intervention and unleashed power of the Scriptures.

Revelation 10 and parts of 11 are parenthetical chapters. We are lifted from the sixth messenger’s ministry into the larger scope of events rapidly shaping for the harvest work of the seventh trumpet.

The French Revolution of Revelation 11:13 and other related events in this chapter had little to do with Luther’s message. The dynamics of events were becoming very potent. Events such as the French Revolution were casting their shadow before the final fall of the Great City Babylon. Suddenly, we find the Bible ascending to the center stage after its seeming demise. “Truth crushed to earth, shall rise again, the eternal years of God are hers.”

“And the sixth angel [messenger, Luther] sounded, and I [the John Class] heard a voice [message] from the four horns of the golden altar [the power of the altar of the sacrificing Christ, the church with its divine Head] which is before God [the divine presence].” Revelation 9:13



Luther’s Ninety-Five Theses

“Saying to the sixth angel [messenger, Luther] which had the trumpet [Reformation message], Loose the four angels [basic divisions of Protestantism: Lutheran movement, Baptist movement, Congregationalist-Methodist movement, and the Presbyterian movement] which are bound in [above] the great river Euphrates [the peoples who support papacy]. Revelation 9:14

The river Euphrates is mentioned here as it is also mentioned in the sixth “plague” of Revelation 16:12. However, the difference is very great. **The sixth “trumpet” message releases the reform forces in the river Euphrates.** In stark contrast, **the sixth “plague” when poured on the river Euphrates dries the river,** or turns aside the people who support false religious institutions, additionally preparing the way for the “kings [the glorified Christ] from the east [sunrising].”

“And the four angels [basic divisions of Protestantism] were loosed, which were prepared for an hour [the harvest period], [and a day—not in *Sinaitic*], and a month, and a year [a month of 30 plus a year of 360 = 390 years], for to slay [by disassociating from] the third part [the right-hearted] of men [Christians—from anti-Christ followers].” Revelation 9:15 (See footnote in the “*Interpreted Rendering*” for Revelation 9:15).

“**And the number of the army of horsemen** [professed Christians who promoted Protestantism] **were two hundred thousand thousand** [or 200 million]: **and I** [the John Class] **heard** [was informed] **the number of them** [*THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES*, Page 16, where it is recorded that there were 116 million Protestants and 84 million Greek Catholics which totals 200 million who opposed the papacy].”
Revelation 9:16

“**And thus I** [the John Class] **saw the horses** [doctrines] **in the vision, and them that sat on them** [or used them], **having breastplates** [of righteousness or justification] **of fire** [to destroy as fire], **and of jacinth** [the reddish-yellow flame which comes from burning], **and brimstone** [sulfur, which would show its power to destroy opposition from the papacy]: **and the heads** [logic and reasonableness] **of the horses** [doctrines] **were as the heads of lions** [in harmony with the attribute of God’s lion of justice or justification by faith, which restored the truth of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ offered once for all instead of the Mass]; **and out of their mouths** [proclamations of these doctrines] **issued fire and smoke and brimstone** [destructively pointing out the sins of papacy, and destroying many as adherents of the false church while converting them to Protestantism].” **Revelation 9:17**



Tetzel Selling Indulgences

Martin Luther restored the doctrine of JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH, the “corner-stone” of the Reformation.



The doctrine of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, which had been offered once for all sins, was lost sight of by the Papal doctrines of the Mass, Purgatory, and Indulgences.

“**By these three** [fire, smoke and sulfur] **was the third part** [right-hearted] **of men** [Christians] **killed** [converted], **by the fire** [destructive influences of fire], **and by the smoke** [recollections of destruction] **and by the brimstone** [deadly fumes of sulfur], **which issued out of their mouths** [agencies of proclamations].” **Revelation 9:18**

“**For their power is in their mouth** [logic and teaching], **and in their tails** [tails can be those who teach lies or truth (Isaiah 9:14, 15)]: **for their tails** [those who teach] **were like unto serpents** [wise as serpents], **and had heads** [of logic and reasonableness], **and with them they do hurt** [afflict the false church].” **Revelation 9:19**



Martin Luther Branded a Heretic by Papacy

“And the rest of the men [nominal Christians] which were not killed [converted] by these plagues [notice that these doctrines and teachings of this second “woe” are called “plagues”] yet repented not of the works of their hands [man-made conceptions of religion], that they should not worship devils [devilish creeds], and idols of gold [man-made imitations of gold or divinity and Christianity], and silver [imitation truths], and brass [copper representing make-believe justification], and stone [not the true Rock which is Christ], and wood [soft wood not fit to build with]: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk [have no value or power].”
Revelation 9:20

“Neither repented they of their murders [converted from their ex-communicating practices], nor of their sorceries [superstitious practices], nor of their fornication [pollutions with the civil powers], nor of their thefts [misappropriations].”
Revelation 9:21

Revelation 9:13-21 gives the early effects of the sixth “trumpet” message delivered by Luther. However, other more important events were rising on the horizon to profoundly affect the Christian world. Our Lord was beginning an involvement by planting his feet upon the “sea” [the restless masses] and upon the “land” [stable society], awakening hopes in the hearts of these classes.

From 1829 the hope of our Lord’s return blossomed in the hearts of the Lord’s people. Although only dimly understood, yet it awakened a new dimension in this Reformation period. The burning issue was no longer to reform the church and state relationship, but now our Lord’s Second Advent took the center stage.



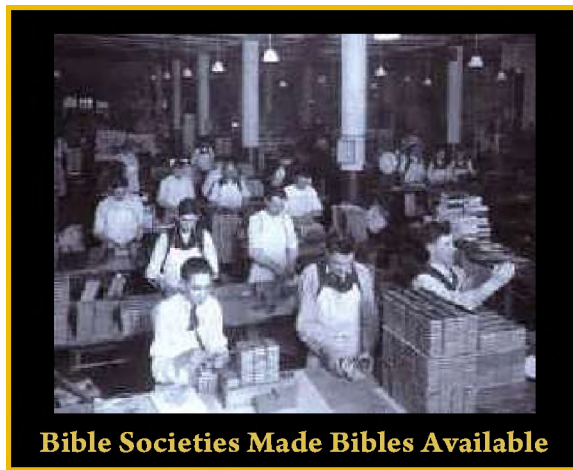
Chained Bible of the Middle Ages

Revelation 11:3-12 focuses upon the “two witnesses” of the Old and New Testaments. It reveals how the Bible was kept out of reach from most of the Christian world. The Scriptures were clothed in “sackcloth” for 1260 years from CE 539 to 1799. Not only was the Bible chained in secluded monasteries, but it was also written in dead languages rather than the vernacular of the people.

The year 1799 was supposed to end the sad condition of the Word of God, but the French Revolution had failed to end the power of the papacy. For three and one-half years after 1799 nothing seemed to change. It seemed the prophecies that brought us to 1799 were going to change nothing after all.

However, in May 1803, the Religious Tract Society passed a resolution for a Bible Society to make the Scriptures available to the world. This was exactly three and one-half days of years the two witnesses lay in the streets “Sodom” [Christendom] and “Egypt” [the world] until they received a “breath of life from God” (Revelation 11:4-12).

The following year, 1804, the first Bible Society was formed and the “earth” which had neither “dew nor rain” for 1260 years was soon to be flooded with the Holy Scriptures. Their first meeting in 1803 served as a “cloud the size of a man’s hand” which the Elijah class recognized as the promise of rain (1 Kings 18:44). Quickly these “two prophets” “stood up on their feet” (Revelation 11:10, 11).



Bible Societies Made Bibles Available

The Philadelphia period of the church had an “open door” before it (Revelation 3:8). The Reformation that Luther had started was accelerating. The full weight of the Scriptures could no longer be suppressed. As people studied their Bibles, it became clear that Jesus’ Second Advent was central to the Word.

The Miller movement made some serious mistakes, but one thing they knew for certain was the importance of Christ’s return. Though disappointed and humiliated before the world, a nucleus regrouped in deep study and prayer and became the “cleansed sanctuary” in 1846.



**Second Adventist
Prophecy Chart**

**William Miller
[Late 1840's]**

All these events were moving brilliantly toward the “harvest” with which the age would end. The “door” of the Reformation was kept wide open and no one was able to close it. Heaven knows they certainly tried.

The French Revolution

“And the same hour was there a great earthquake [revolution], and the tenth part of the city fell [the French part of the Roman Empire fell], and in the earthquake were slain [abolished] of men seven thousand [titles of men—the French Revolution destroyed the royal house with all its titled entourage. This amounted to some 7,000 titles in all]: and the remnant [of Christendom] were affrighted, and [thus the wrath of man] gave glory to the God of heaven.” Revelation 11:13

This verse focuses on the terrible French Revolution which unleashed the pent-up anger of the people against the dreadful excesses of the Royalty and the papal ruling authority. Royalty and priestcraft suffered at the hands of the enraged masses.

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Unlike the American Revolution that followed Christian values, godless leaders led the French in a bloody uprising not only against royalty and priestcraft, but against the Bible and everything associated with it.

One other factor entered the equation. France had never had a chance to change its oppressive form of government. Many other countries of Europe and the shining example of the United States were before the eyes of the people of France. They had waited too long.

When the people stormed the Bastille in 1789 and saw how evilly and brutally the hapless victims were treated there, their rage burst forth in full fury.

No one could fully comprehend the brutality of the Royalty and the Priests.



Heretics burned in Paris in the shadows of the Bastille dungeons.

The French Revolution was a just retribution for the evils perpetrated by Royalty and Priests.



**The French Revolution's
"Reign of Terror"
[Knitting Women Counted the
Guillotined Heads]**



**King Louis XVI declared,
"I die innocent," before 20,000
spectators at his execution.**

While the Revolutionary forces seemed at times excessive in the punishments meted out, yet when contrasted to the cruelty practiced in the Bastille, it seems a just recompense. They only saw one Bastille at the first, but later they found many like it. They also remembered the pride and vanity of both church and state.

The French Revolution became a wake-up call to all of Europe. The gains secured by the common people could not be taken away from them ever again. Royalty and priestcraft had to become very conscious of the people. The old "business-as-usual" ended. While kings and priests came to power again, the Lord was planting "his feet" on the "land" and "sea." Preparations were underway for the church-and-state way of doing things to come to an inglorious end starting in 1914.

"The second [trumpet] woe [plague] is past; and, behold, the third [trumpet] woe [plague] cometh quickly." Revelation 11:14

The seventh messenger, Russell, was about to sound. If we saw events **accelerate** through the Philadelphia period of the church under the sixth "trumpet," the tempo of change **exploded** in the world and in the nominal church because of the Lord's presence. It must be realized that the powers of darkness endeavored to thwart and hinder the Kingdom from coming to earth.

The counterfeit kingdom put every roadblock in the way—all to no avail. The King and his Kingdom at last arrived to vanquish his foes and set up his kingdom in power and great glory.

The Seventh Trumpet and Last Woe— CE 1878 to the End of the Harvest

“And the seventh angel [messenger, Bro. Russell] sounded; and there were great voices [proclamations] in heaven [the spiritual realm of earth], saying, The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord [Jehovah], and of his Christ; and he [Jehovah] shall reign for ever and ever [kingdom (both instances) should be singular according to *Sinaitic* and *Alexandrine*].” Revelation 11:15

The content of the message given by the seventh messenger was great indeed. We are privileged to know this last “trumpet message” in considerable detail because we have a complete written record of it. We are also privileged to continue preaching it.

The seventh “trumpet” announces in “heaven” [the spiritual realm] that “the kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and his Christ.” It does not mention the “air,” as does the seventh “plague.” There may be some similarity, but clearly **the seventh “trumpet” is an announcement that the “king” and his kingdom have arrived.**

This is good or bad news depending on the view one has of the “kingdom.” The seventh “plague” is poured on the “air” and is exposing the fact that Satan and the demons really control the nominal Christian churches, causing them to oppose the incoming kingdom of Christ (Revelation 16:17).

Waldo, Wycliff and Luther each brought some light in their time and place. Their biggest contributions were in beginning the process of making the Bible available to the people. Even when done on a small scale, the Word of God proved threatening to papal interests.



**Luther Translating the Bible
into German**



**Tyndale Translating the
New Testament into English**

The end of Luther’s period, concluding in the late nineteenth century brought a flood of Bibles, translations and concordances, etc. Bibles were everywhere, but one thing was lacking: the ability to tie the Bible’s testimony into one harmonious message which would reveal the Divine plan.

The distribution of Bibles that few could understand was disconcerting to the religious authorities. Having God’s plan revealed to the Christian world, left the religious authorities gnawing their tongues in pain. They could not successfully defend their misguided theology.

The truths of the seventh message proved a bitter pill and exposed them for running a counterfeit kingdom. The church leaders were angry and frustrated, but they had no ready answer to justify their heavy involvement in the kingdoms of this world. They succeeded only in being angry and guilty of profaning the guiltless.

Leaders heard the message that in 1914 the kingdoms of this world would crumble. When 1914 came and the great World War I broke out, they were half prepared to go down in defeat. While the Old World order and its ruling houses of church and state did collapse, to everyone’s surprise the church and state survived in a battered world and began to rebuild their fortunes.

However, as the years passed they found themselves beginning to prosper and their influence in the world increased. Yes, they thought, they could successfully prevent the kingdom of this world from becoming the kingdom of God. This they are hoping to do now as they marshal their forces.

The most significant feature of this seventh “trumpet” is the announcement that:

“The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ.”

The “kingdom of our Lord” overshadows the messenger.

The Lord’s Christ has returned with the “kingdom” and nothing that stands in the way of this “kingdom” can hope to succeed.

Once he understood the truth of Christ’s return to set up his kingdom, the seventh messenger made this a centerpiece of his ministry.



“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.”

Revelation 3:20

The Lord spoke to Jeremiah, saying:



“For thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

“Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.

“Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth.

“And the Lord said unto me, Behold I have put my words in thy mouth.

“See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.”

Jeremiah 1:7-10

Just as with Jeremiah, so with the seventh messenger. Yes, the seventh message would bring down the kingdoms of this world—not by any power of the messenger. The message was from God, whoever the mouthpiece. God’s purpose would stand. It is in this period of the church that we shall realize fully the collapse of the nominal systems that are united with the kingdoms of this world. It is in this period of the church that victory will crown the ascendancy of His kingdom and of God’s truth. Hallelujah!



***“And the Nations Were Angry,
and Thy Wrath Is Come”
Revelation 11:18***

How strange that this should be. For nearly two thousand years Christians have prayed “Thy kingdom come” only to be filled with anger and frustration when this prayer is finally realized. Nothing brings on anger more than to have one’s plans frustrated or defeated.

Just when the churches hoped to reel in the kingdom of this world into their control, Christ announces his kingdom as separate and distinct from Christendom. It was much the same at the first advent.

When the kingdom of God was among them in the person of Christ, they crucified him. At his Second Advent, however, the days of his humiliation are past. He comes in power and great glory to vanquish “the kingdom of this world,” which is a mix of church and state.

Theoretically, the churches should have been the first to welcome back the king. As Christ did not fit the mold of the religious world at his First Advent, they had to conspire to secure his death. The same condition applies at his Second Advent. However, this time it is they who shall finally collapse under the power of the “King of Kings and Lord of Lords.”

The Lord’s wrath was visited upon the Jewish nation for their rejection of His son. The nation paid a very high price for rejecting God’s prophets and especially for rejecting His son.



The destruction of Jerusalem witnessed God’s awesome judgment against that nation. The nation suffered from internal dissent and oppression of one another. Finally, the Romans conquered Jerusalem and terrible was the overthrow.

Starvation was rampant in the siege. Stories of cannibalism are told. Those who defected to the Romans were crucified outside the city. When the walls were finally breached, the temple was burned and the Jews suffered a terrible fate.

If only the leaders of Israel had known “the things that belong unto thy peace” in their day (Luke 19:42). If only Christendom would realize that as long as they seek to be joined to the “kingdom of this world” they are bringing upon themselves God’s judgment and the complete collapse of their structured religious empire.



***“And the Time of the Dead,
That They Should Be Judged”
Revelation 11:18***

The purpose of Christ’s kingdom is for judging the world in a trial and decision based on their works when the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth. The “dead” are all those in Adam, whether actually dead and sleeping until they are called from the “grave,” or whether they are alive with the sentence of death upon them. They are all dead in Adam. As Jesus said, “Let the dead bury their dead” (Matthew 8:22).



Paul spoke of this judgment day in Acts 17:31: “Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”



***That Thou Shouldest Give Reward
unto Thy Servants the Prophets”
Revelation 11:18***

The Lord cannot reward his servants the prophets while they are sleeping in the grave. They must rise from the dead to receive their reward. Their reward must await the glorification of the true church of God, for Paul says in Hebrews 11:40: “That they without us should not be made perfect.”

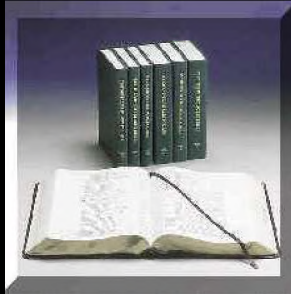
It is not until the saints of this Gospel age are glorified that the Ancient Worthies shall arise. Then Daniel who has been resting, shall stand in his “lot at the end of the days” (Daniel 12:13). The Ancient Worthies will be rewarded as they arise to a “better resurrection” as “princes in all the earth.” It will then be seen that those who served the Lord did not do so in vain.



***“And to the Saints”
Revelation 11:18***

With great anticipation the Heavenly Father will receive the saints into the joys of the Lord. The resurrection of the “sleeping saints” which began in 1878 will be consummated surely in the early part of the twenty-first century. Not until then will the “righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father” (Matthew 13:43).

The saints are standing on the threshold of victory. They must yet overcome the “beast” and “his image.” (Revelation 15:2) This victorious class will then be privileged to represent the entire Christ in executing the judgments written (Revelation 16).



**Studies in the Scriptures,
a Topical Bible Study**

It has been the privilege of the saints in this last period of the church’s experience to assist the seventh messenger in delivering his trumpet message.

While Bro. Russell finished his course in 1916, his writings and concepts are still being broadcast into the Christian world

The power of the written word is greater than the spoken word. Spoken words are soon forgotten and easily distorted and misunderstood. The written word is powerful enough to accomplish all that God intended in this time frame. Because the seventh message was a true reading of God’s Word, it cannot be defeated. The saints who appreciate the seventh message need to persevere with it until they share in the victory of the truth.



***“And Them That Fear Thy Name,
Small and Great”
Revelation 11:18***

The above-quoted reference pertains to the world of mankind. In the general restitution process, the world of mankind will come back from the dead. Because truth will then be so pervasive and every erroneous teaching will be silenced, people will come to “fear” or reverence the Lord.

The powers of darkness will not be permitted to sow “light for darkness” and “darkness for light.” Truth will be heard everywhere all the time. Nations will then “learn righteousness.” Deception will be a lost art until the end of the Millennium when Satan is “loosed” out of his prison and goes forth to deceive the nations.



***“And Shouldest Destroy Them
Which Destroy [Corrupt] the Earth”
Revelation 11:18***

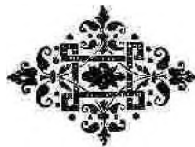
Our story ends with a complete victory for the forces of righteousness. Those who refuse to learn righteousness in the highest meaning of that word will find themselves very vulnerable to Satan’s deception when he is “loosed” out of his prison.

There is a big difference between what may sound right and what is actually right. Only those who love righteousness and hate iniquity will see through Satan’s deceptions. Eve was deceived once, but we doubt if she will hearken to the “serpent” the second time.

Experience with sin in this evil world will serve as a remarkable restraint. The second time around, the “forbidden” fruit will not be so tempting to those who learned well the “exceeding sinfulness of sin” (Romans 7:13). Yet, there will be some who will join Satan in endeavoring to “corrupt” the world the second time.

The word “destroy” also means to “corrupt”—the root word here means to “rot thoroughly”—Strong’s #1311. This is when Satan and his “seed” will have their “Waterloo.” Affliction will not arise the second time (Nahum 1:9). The triumph of righteousness over evil will be complete.

“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” Revelation 21:27





THE STORY OF THE “SEVEN LAST PLAGUES”

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Part I

Another Sign in Heaven

“And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.” Revelation 15:1

Revelation 15:1-4 sets the stage for our discussion. It starts with a sign or portent in heaven and mentions “seven plagues,” but nothing is said about pouring them out. The vision introduces the seven final “plagues” which will consummate or end God’s judgments.

This vision is only introductory. Nothing happens in it but the singing of the Song of Moses and the Lamb, a judgment song that Moses the servant of God sang just before he died. The Lamb takes up the Song and gives it to the saints to sing. We are not left to interpret which saints sing the song. It is interpreted for us.

“And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast [the leopard-like beast of Revelation 13], and over his image [the Protestant likeness of the papal beast], and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on [or over] the sea of glass, having the harps [Scriptures] of God.” Revelation 15:2



Sea of Glass

These saints are neither the saints of the Gospel age nor even of the general Harvest period. **The saints engaged to sing this Song are those that had gotten the “victory over the beast, and over his image.”**

While in token form the saints have indeed separated themselves from Babylon in this Harvest time, what is implied here is more than that. These saints have “gotten the victory over” or **conquered** the “beast” and “his image,” and his “number.”

There was no “beast” or “image” in the early church. While there was the making of a “beast” starting around Constantine’s time that began to emerge, this is not what Revelation 15 is focusing on. Indeed, the saints throughout the age did not worship this dreadful papal beast. However, the time sequence of our study is when a joint endeavor by both the “beast” and the “image of the beast” is orchestrated.

The “image of the beast” is represented in the Protestant Federation, which did not even begin until 1846 with the Evangelical Alliance. Nothing much came of this movement. When the Evangelical Alliance was dissolved, they gave all their papers and records to the World Council of Churches.

The World Council of Churches was born in 1948, the same year the nation of Israel was born. Since that time, liberal elements have aligned the World Council of Churches more with communism than with the Western world, and the organization began to lose its way.

Since the demise of Communism, the World Council has begun to reorient its focus. They will come to a posture similar to that of the Catholic Church today. What the two have in common is a desire to become a dominant religious and political force in the world. The Scriptures teach they will succeed in this. (See Revelation 13:15-18.)

The point of our lesson is that the “beast” and its “image” will not succeed in making the true saints receive their “mark,” either in their “forehead” or in their “hand,” or even to accept the number of the beast “666,” which translated means “Vicar of the Son of God.”

Our head is the Lord Jesus Christ. We recognize no “Vicar” of Christ, “for one is your Master, ... and all ye are brethren.” (Matthew 23:8)



Those Who Get the “Victory” Over the “Beast” and “His Image”

The “victory” is no small one on the part of the saints. They refuse to bow before the newly-found powers of the papal “beast” and the Protestant “image.” This confrontation is still before us. Those who refuse to bow before this unholy coalition of church and state, while they may be severely tried, shall emerge victorious. They will stand over the “sea of glass,” singing the “Song of Moses and the Lamb.”



Normally water is fluid. Here it is as glass. In Solomon’s temple a “molten sea” was contained in a huge laver, which was ten cubits from brim to brim and five cubits high, supported by 12 oxen. (2 Chronicles 4:2-5) The Revelation “sea of glass” is “mingled with fire.” The judgmental purging fire will satisfy God’s justice. A double cleansing of both water and fire is implied.

The critical point to remember is that the saints gain the victory over the “beast” and its “image.” Our Lord calls extravagant attention to these victors. These saints “had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands.” Revelation 20:4

The Lord is obviously very pleased with their performance. By implication, his displeasure is with those who identified with the “beast” and its “image.” None who worshipped the “beast” or its “image” may be the bride of Christ. However, the saints’ victory does not imply the destruction of the “beast” and its “image”—only refusal to bow their knee.

Bro. Russell muses as to whether the vivifying of the “image of the beast” may have had a certain fulfillment. We understand this was a part of his untiring effort to keep abreast of possibilities and fitting prophecy into a much tighter time frame than we now see was necessary or possible. In the preponderance of his articles and projections, Bro. Russell looked to this victory as a future event. (For more information, see *THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON*, Vol. 4, 1916 Foreword, p. 3, and 1912 Foreword, Roman Numeral p. vii-x.)





The Evangelical Alliance has been disbanded and its papers turned over to the World Council of Churches. Hence, in the coming federation the “Image of the Beast” comes to life.

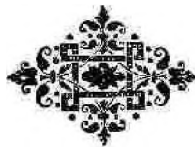
Vivifying the “image” is not the subject at hand. However, it is central to establishing the time when the saints get the victory over the “beast” and its “image.” That is where we take up our study. The saints have yet to take on the “beast and its image,” as referred to in Revelation 13:15-17. Refusing the demands of the Papacy and Protestants, they gain the “victory.”



After this “victory,” the saints stand over the “sea of glass mingled with fire,” having the “harps” of the Old and New Testaments. The “seven last plagues” have not yet been poured.

At this point those who refuse to bow the knee to the “beast and his image” are to sing the “Song of Moses and the Lamb.” We are not left to conjecture as to what that song might be. We are given the words of this song:

	<p>“Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!</p>	
	<p>Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou alone art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.”</p>	



Two Songs of Moses

There are two Songs of Moses.

(1) When Pharaoh and his minions were destroyed (picturing the second death of Satan after the Millennium), Moses and all the Israelites sang one song after the victorious crossing of the Red Sea.

This pictures when the whole people of God are delivered at the end of the Millennium (Psalms 136:15).

While there was a sea in that picture, it was not a sea of glass mingled with fire. Rather, it was a separated sea caused by a strong east wind, implying some turbulence. The “seven plagues” do not destroy Satan—they only defeat him in his warfare, resulting in his landing in the “bottomless pit.”

The Red Sea Song cannot be referred to in Revelation 15:2, because Satan and the “leopard beast” are still alive and active, certainly not in the pit yet.

When it says “the saints” get the victory over the “beast and his image” it means *they successfully refused to receive its “mark” or “number”—not that they destroyed them.* No, that destruction awaits the pouring out of the seventh and last “plague.” The victory of the saints is in refusing the “mark of the beast” and “his image”—that is all.

(2) The Song of Moses referred to in Revelation 15:2 is undoubtedly the song Moses sang before his death in Deuteronomy 32.

This Song has two parts to it. (See Deuteronomy 31:30 – 32:43.)

The first part deals with God’s treatment of his wayward people and their punishment.

The second part deals with God’s punishment of the enemies of his people.

“Rejoice, O you nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.” Deuteronomy 32:43

This Song of Moses is the precursor to the pouring out of the “vials.” It is God’s justification for using the “sea of fire” below the glass. **The “sea of glass” protects the saints standing over it. Those below the “glass” take the fire and heat —which would be those systems who oppose the Lord and his people.** (See *Reprint 3078.*)

This Song of Moses is preparatory to the pouring out of the “seven last plagues.” It gives meaning and reason for the ensuing “plagues.” We do not overlook the fact that the “seven angels” messages are identified with the Harvest message. The Harvest message contains the plague-producing ingredients.

In one sense these plague-producing elements were proclaimed throughout the Harvest, to cause Babylon some discomfort. But the plague-producing elements did not bring about the demise of Babylon’s systems.

Babylon seems to have weathered the assaults of truth in our time and remains powerful enough to cause the saints considerable grief. The “seven last plagues” will precipitate Babylon’s destruction.



The “Image of the Beast” Becomes History After Revelation 15:2

After the saints get the victory over the “beast” and “his image,” we no longer find the “image of the beast” around. Just like the woman of Revelation 12—we do not know what happens to her, we are not told what happens to this “image.” Nothing more is said about the “image” except as a historical reference.

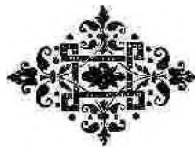
The papal “beast” is “cast alive into the lake of fire” in Revelation 19:20, but no mention is made of the “image” being “cast alive” into that lake. The “image” just fades off the screen after this point. **But this is no accident.**

Why should the “image” escape the same fate as the “beast”? We do not know, except to observe that something must have happened along the way to make the “image” less than a “beast”—a union of church and state. It could be that after the world experiences a financial collapse, our constitutional government may become a military state under martial law.

During such an interim the church and the state may have powers that they could not have under the constitution. After this power is exercised for a season, constitutional government may come back. This would declaw and defang the “image of the beast” somewhat—perhaps making it no more than an accomplice of the “false prophet,” as in Revelation 16:13.

We cannot be sure as to why the metaphor changes from the “image of the beast” to the “false prophet.” The “false prophet” is identified with the “two-horned beast” of Revelation 13:11, 12 with no stated connection to the “image of the beast” in Revelation 19:20.

The important point to observe is that the “plagues” are not poured out while the saints are getting the “victory” over the “beast” and “his image.” No! While the “seven angels” have “seven plagues” in this vision, nothing is said about their being “poured out.”



Part II

The Temple and the Tabernacle

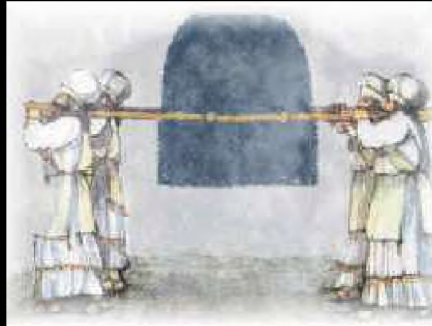
“After These Things I Saw and the Sanctuary of the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Witness Was Opened in Heaven.”

Revelation 15:5

(Livermore and Meggison Translation.)

We are taken back to 2 Chronicles 5:5. When Solomon’s Temple was almost finished, the exciting day finally came when the “Ark of the Covenant” was to be placed in the Temple, as well as all the “holy vessels that were in the tent.”

“And they brought up the ark, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle; these did the priests and the Levites bring up.”



The Levites brought up the Ark of the Covenant

The ark no longer contained the “golden pot of manna” [promise of immortality] or “Aaron’s rod that budded” [divine authority of priesthood]. They were unnecessary because at this point the church either has immortality or is certain of possessing it, and they are permanently identified with God’s Temple, no longer needing proof of their favor with God.

In Solomon’s Temple the only thing in the ark of the covenant was the “two tables of the law.” God’s law never changes. Its spiritual requirements will be in the new arrangement.

It is called the “Ark of the Covenant.” Ark of what Covenant?

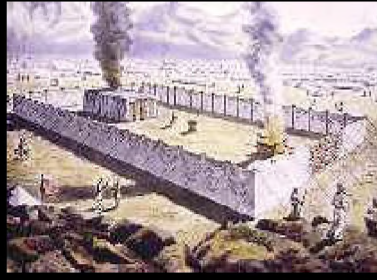
The sacred Ark represented **God’s oath-bound Abrahamic Covenant**. When the Ark of the Covenant is placed in its final resting-place in the Temple, the time will be near for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

While Revelation 15:5 does not mention the Ark of the Covenant, it mixes two metaphors:

(1) the “Temple” or the sanctuary, and

(2) “the Tabernacle of the testimony.”

The “Temple” was a permanent structure, while the “Tabernacle” was temporary. We think this shows what we have already described. The temporary Tabernacle furnishings, especially the Ark, were brought into the permanent Temple condition.

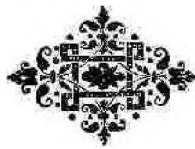


The Tabernacle in the Wilderness



Solomon's Temple

The “tabernacle of the testimony” is an interesting phrase. While in its temporary condition, the Tabernacle had a “pillar of fire by night” and a “pillar of cloud” by day as its witness. This witness will be enhanced when the temporary furnishings become permanently identified with the glorious “Temple” of Christ. We believe those saints remaining on this side of the veil will be sealed and identified with this “Temple.” Then will follow a very faithful declaration of God’s judgments.



Seven Angels

***“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.”
Revelation 15:6***

The “seven angels” [messengers] were sent forth from the sanctuary or the temple. The Temple represents the Christ of God. Here the full power and strength of God’s judgment is readied for delivery. Yet, it cannot be delivered. Why? Even though the seven angels have “golden girdles” [picturing divine servitude], one thing is lacking. What? They must have “golden bowls” before they can deliver their message.



***“And one of the four beasts
[living ones] gave unto the seven
angels [messengers] seven golden
vials [bowls] full of the wrath of
the God, who liveth for ever and
ever.”***

Revelation 15:7

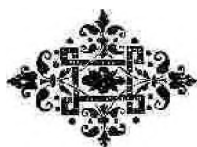
The seven angels are girded for service, but with no way to proceed until God provides the “golden bowls.” Then, and only then, are they empowered to deliver the awesome judgment messages.

This lesson seems to preclude the idea of the “seven plagues” being poured out throughout the Harvest period. The seven angels were not given one bowl at a time. Seven bowls were provided simultaneously to the seven messengers or messages.

When it is claimed that the plagues are being poured out throughout the Harvest time, we must ask what “golden bowl” was divinely provided for each? How could the Great Company and the Second Death class have had a part in delivering these messages?

If we explain this as merely being some ongoing witness by the Lord’s people throughout the Harvest, there would have been a great mixture of brethren who witnessed to the truth in this Harvest. Probably the majority of brethren later denied the truths of the Harvest. Others lost faith in it. Such classes could not, as it were, come from the Temple.

The seven angels are clothed in “white linen, having their breasts girded with golden girdles.” Revelation 15:6 Here again, is shown no ordinary standing. We know the “white linen” is the righteousness of the saints. In this case it is associated with the seven righteous messages. No ordinary servants these. The “golden girdles” indicate divine servitude.



Golden Bowls

***“Gave unto the Seven Angels
Seven Golden Vials [Bowls].”***

Revelation 15:7

If we have read the sequence correctly, the seven messengers [or literally messages] “come out from the Sanctuary or Temple.” Then, and only then, will “golden bowls” be provided.

They do not come from the “Temple” **after** it is filled with “smoke from the glory of God.” They come out of the “Temple” **before** it is filled with smoke. (Revelation 15:6) **We believe the “Living Creature” that provides the “golden bowls” is God’s lion-like justice.**

Still nothing can be poured out! Why?

Even though the seven messages contain the seven last “plagues,” and they are said to be in “white,” having “golden girdles” and given “golden vials [bowls]” — **two things remain before they may pour out the “plagues.”**

1. The Temple must be dedicated and “filled” with God’s glory.

Revelation 15:8

2. “And I heard a great voice out of the Temple [particularly our Lord] saying to the seven angels [messages], Go your ways, and pour out the vials [bowls] of the wrath of God upon the earth [stable society].”

Revelation 16:1

When the “great voice” commands, then these seven messages respond by silently going forth on their commanded mission. **However, they do not go forth until (1) the “Temple is filled with God’s glory” and not until (2) they are commanded to do so from the Temple head, our Lord Jesus.**

These two criteria must be met.

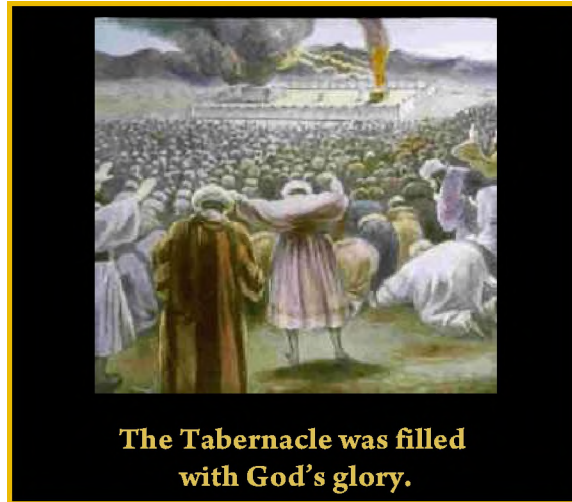


Filled with God's Glory

God's glory filling the Temple is a climaxing point. In every edifice that God used or designed, the crowning point was always when God's glory filled it.

The Tabernacle

“Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.” Exodus 40:34



No one could go in or come out. Only after being filled with God's glory could the Tabernacle be used as God's meeting place with Israel.

It took one day to assemble the Tabernacle, but putting it together was one thing. **God's glory filling it was another, far more important. Without God's glory it would be an edifice of wood, gold, copper, silver and cloth. Nothing has meaning without God and His glory.**

Solomon's Temple Filled with God's Glory

When did Solomon's temple become filled with God's glory? As you might suspect, it was not until the Ark of the Covenant was placed in the Most Holy and the priests came out. At this auspicious moment, the glory of the Lord filled the temple. We read:

“And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the Holy Place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord,

“So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.

“Then spake Solomon, ‘The Lord said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever’.”

1 Kings 8:10-13



We learn something additional here. The glory cloud was not light and airy like a summer day cloud. Rather, it was “thick darkness.” This indicated God would make his abode with his Temple class in a time of thick darkness.

No one could enter the Temple class anymore to run for the prize of the high calling, nor could any of the blessings of the Temple come to mankind yet. This will be a short period of time, probably covering the Armageddon crash.

Ezekiel's Temple Filled with God's Glory

1 Through the East Gate—Ezekiel 43:1-5

2 Through the North Gate—Ezekiel 44:4

Once the East Gate is shut, it will never open again. The East Gate is the gate to the High Calling.

“Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east:

“And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.

“And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city: and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face.

“And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east.

“So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house.” Ezekiel 43:1-5

This would indicate that the East Gate is closed forever when the Lord's glory fills the Temple. The door to the High Calling is closed at this juncture. This is why we cannot possibly admit to the plagues being poured out in the primary sense throughout the Harvest.

Interestingly, there is sound associated with this vision. Ezekiel says the sound of His coming was like the sound of “many waters; and the earth shone with his glory.”

We notice a striking parallel of this in Revelation 19:6:

“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.”

It seems the Great Company is suddenly aware that they are not part of the Little Flock or the Temple Class. The source of their comfort and joy is that they are invited to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

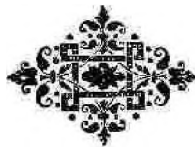
Following this, the Lord comes back through the East Gate and commands the Gate to be shut forever. The Lord then proceeds to enter through the North Gate. We read:

“Then he brought me the way of the north gate before the house: and I looked, and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord; and I fell upon my face.” Ezekiel 44:4

This last glory seems to be when the Lord enters through the North Gate. Then the marriage of the Bride and the Lamb takes place. In the last vision (Revelation 19:6, 7, 9) the Great Company was invited. In this vision we believe they shall witness the glory of God as He accepts The Christ as His dwelling place forever. It is amazing how many wonderful things are in God’s Word.

What else would we expect with God’s Living Temple when it is dedicated? Must it not also be filled with God’s glory?

This is exactly what we find. Not only is this Living Temple filled with smoke “from the glory of God,” but it also says “and from His power.” No longer will God hide his glory and power from men. Now they shall experience it first in God’s judgments. Later when the Temple is opened for blessing the world, they shall experience the power of God’s Kingdom blessings.



PART III

7 Last Plagues

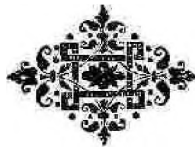
*The Stage Is Now Set
to Commission the “Seven Angels” [Messages]
to Pour Out Their Seven Bowls*

**“Great voice out of the Temple saying to the seven angels [or messages], Go your ways, and pour out the vials [bowls] of the wrath of God upon the earth.”
Revelation 16:1**

Notice, the “seven angels” did not leave the Temple here, for in Revelation 15:6 we are told, “And the seven angels came out of the Temple, having the seven plagues.”

Remember, these messages come out of the Temple before the Temple is filled with God’s glory. Afterward, the command is given for them to pour out their divinely provided bowls.

Don’t ask what the “bowls” are. How God will provide the means for pouring out the “plagues” is not stated. It is God’s problem to provide them. We know God doesn’t have any problems. Nothing is too hard for God!



The Seven Last “Plagues”

Who pours out the “plagues”?

We believe the sealed saints on this side of the veil are the active agents. These “plagues” come from the Temple. This would eliminate any other agencies or class of Christians, such as the Great Company.

Most important of all, they are the ones standing on the “sea of glass mingled with fire” who sing with biblical harps the “Song of Moses and the Lamb.” Who else would this be, but the sealed Saints, the John the Baptist Class, the Elijah Class in their concluding witness. The whole Temple Class is represented, because this “honor have all his saints” (Psalm 149:5-9).

7 Angels	Vials Poured upon	Symbol of	Effects	Upon	Pictures
First	Earth 	Stable society	Noisome & grievous sore = miserable & painful disintegration	Men with mark of beast who worshipped image	=Nominal Christians with characteristics of Papacy
Second	Sea 	Restless masses of mankind	Became as blood of dead man = separated into clot & serum, radical vs. liberal groups	Every living soul died in sea	=Right-hearted ones ceased restless attitude of masses by seeking meekness & righteousness
Third	Rivers & fountains of waters 	Sources of religious teaching— theological seminaries	Became blood = Abhorrent & deathly to any who drank from these religious channels		
Fourth	Sun 	Gospel of Scriptures	Scorched men with fire & heat = Teachers exposed & uncomfortable by Gospel Truths & threatened with destruction of their Christian professions	Men [professed Christians] blasphemed [defamed] name of God	
Fifth	Seat of Beast 	Papal Government	Beast's kingdom full of darkness = Full of gross error	Gnawed their tongues [in great agony] & blasphemed [defamed] God	
Sixth	River Euphrates 	People who support nominal church	Water dried up = People withhold their support	—Prepared way of kings of the east [Christ & true church] —3 unclean spirits like frogs [impure teachings that are boastful]	Gather kings of earth [rulers of present social order] to Armageddon [in position for their final destruction]
Seventh	Air 	Spiritual controlling forces of Christendom, exposing them to be the forces of demons & Satan	—Voices [proclamations], thunders [controversies], lightnings [releases of truths], great earthquake [social upheaval or revolution] —Great Hail the weight of a talent [scourge of hard truths]	—Babylon [Christendom] divided into 3 parts, receives cup of wine of fierceness of God's wrath [judgments of God's anger] —Men [nominal Christians] blasphemed [denounced] God	Every island [republic] & mountain [kingdom] fled [vanished]

1st Plague



And the first [message] went, and poured out his vial [bowl] upon the earth [stable society]; 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.” Revelation 16:2

This reading has a story to it. In Revelation 13 the “image of the beast” and “beast” developed an ugly attitude. They said: You cannot “buy or sell” in the spiritual market unless you have our mark. They claimed power to speak, slay, mark and prohibit unless you joined them.

In Revelation 14:9, 10 we read God’s mind on this matter. He says,

“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.”

As the story ends we find, sure enough, God is vindicated.

The first “bowl” of God’s wrath is reserved for those who “worshipped the beast and its image.” That’s how it should be. That’s how it is. Men who fell under the spell of the “beast” and its “image” now find foul and loathsome sores consuming them. They who would mark others, now are marked with opprobrium and stigmatized for their relationship with the “beast” and “its image.”

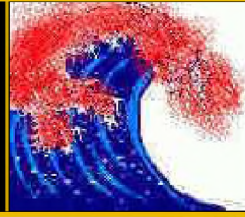
In Revelation 20:4 we learn that those who reign with Jesus never “worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands.”

Any Christian who does so will automatically be eliminated from being with Christ as his “bride.”

What message “plague” would have this effect when delivered? Not any mysterious message. No, it is a plain old truth that has been around and preached for some time. The essence of *THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES*, Chapter XIII, “The Kingdoms of this World,” p. 245.

The alliance of the religious Christian church with the kingdom of this world is a sad bit of history. The union of the church with the world should not have happened. When the truth is known, people will loathe those who betrayed the Kingdom of God to carry on a love affair with the world.

2nd Plague



“And the second angel [message] poured out his vial [bowl] upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man [clot and serum]: and every living soul died in the sea.” Revelation 16:3

THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON, Chapter VII, “The Preparation of the Elements,” p. 269, would serve as the essence for such a “plague”-producing message. This demonstrates the forces that precipitated the heaping of treasures by some and the exploitation of others.

“Blood,” dividing into clot and serum, shows the “sea” class dividing into the more radical and the liberal groups. The right-hearted cease their raging foam.

3rd Plague



“And the third angel [message] poured his vial [bowl] upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.” Revelation 16:4

The angel message is the essence of *THY KINGDOM COME*, Chap. VI, “The Work of Harvest,” p. 135. This shows the separation of the “Wheat and Tares,” the truth of the High Calling, and the casting off of Babylon.

The religious sources are here exposed. The “rivers and fountains of water” are those who used the International Sunday School Lessons, Sunday Schools, churches and sects to channel their teachings into the Christian world.

Religious leaders have not only missed the mark themselves, but they have taught men false concepts regarding the purpose of the church during this Gospel age. They are more responsible than others, because they are the source of these false teachings.

In this “plague” we hear a rather powerful justification for these judgments. This is the only “plague” wherein the saints pick up the cry raised in Revelation 6:10. This confirms that the cry from under the altar has been heard and is now being answered.

“And I heard the angel of the waters [the angel message who poured his bowl on the rivers and fountains of water] say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

“For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

“And I heard another out of the altar say [remember the souls under the altar in Revelation 6:10, who cried, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood”], Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.” Revelation 16:5-7

The tormented leaders and sources of teaching in Christendom are not shown any sympathy. Justice demands they be held accountable.

4th Plague



“And the fourth angel [message] poured out his vial [bowl] upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

“And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues, and they repented not to give him glory.” Revelation 16:8, 9

The angel message is the essence of *THE ATONEMENT BETWEEN GOD AND MAN*, Chaps. XII and XIII, “The Subject of the Atonement-Man” and “Hopes for Life Everlasting and Immortality Secured by the Atonement,” pp. 301 and 383.

This “plague” does not hurt the Gospel sun. But the plain truth bears with increased strength. The Gospel sunlight bears down with such intensity, it causes professed Christians much pain and discomfort, their hearts not being right.

Instead of accepting corrections and praising God, they do not repent. They only wish to make their false teachings to be seen as correct, as had been done in the past.

5th Plague



“The fifth angel [message] poured out his vial [bowl] upon the seat of the beast; and 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.” Revelation 16:10,11

The essence of this message is given in *THE TIME IS AT HAND*, Chap. IX, The Man of Sin-Antichrist, p. 267. The truths encapsulated here, when delivered, would cause professed Christians in these systems a great deal of pain and discomfort.

They professed to be God’s agents, and are here being exposed before the world as the antichrist, the mystery of iniquity. It is very humbling. These truths do not bring repentance. Rather, antichrist’s agents are prepared to curse God and vilify him for what befalls them.

We understand they will not directly vilify God, but by renouncing the fifth message “plague” they are renouncing God who sent it. Their kingdom becomes “full of darkness.” They have always been a dark kingdom, but apparently this means they are perceived to be “full of darkness” by many who once worshiped and obeyed them.

Please notice the “beast” is still here to receive this plague. As long as the “leopard-like” “beast” is around, Satan is still actively represented.

6th Plague



**“The sixth angel [message] poured out his vial [bowl] upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings [the glorified saints] of the east [from the sunrising] might be prepared.”
Revelation 16:12**

In another event in history, the river Euphrates was dried up when Darius had diverted the waters and entered under the gates of Babylon to take the city. Darius may have been under Cyrus. (See Daniel 5:30, 31.)

This pictures how our Lord dries up the waters (peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues) that heretofore supported antitypical Babylon.

We believe the plague producing ingredients can be found in *THE NEW CREATION* Chap. V, “The Organization of the New Creation,” p. 195. It shows there are only twelve Apostles and gives the true understanding of the keys of authority given to Peter, opening the High Calling at Pentecost to the Jews and later to the Gentiles, starting with Cornelius.

By understanding the organization of the true church, it reveals the counterfeit Mystery of Iniquity with its images and holy candles.

The “Kings from the east [sunrising]” are the Kings associated with our Lord in glory. (See *Reprint 2498*.) Cyrus means “the sun.” It was his army under Darius that took the city of Babylon. As the waters dried up, they made way for the “sun.”

Up to this point, the “plagues” have not produced organized resistance. The sixth plague, however, changes that. “Three musketeers” step forward to deceive the world into fatally flawed action.

“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon [the civil Roman power], and out of the mouth of the beast [leopard-like papal power], and out of the mouth of the false prophet [what is left of the Protestant World Council of Churches now represented in the Church of England which originally gave it life].

“For they are the spirits of devils, 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.” Revelation 16:13, 14



Notice there are two sets of kings. The “kings” from the “east [sunrising]” and the “kings of the earth and of the whole world” (Revelation 16:14). The battle lines are drawn.

Now it is clearly seen whose banner the “beast” and “false prophet” are under. They are solidly in league with the “dragon” of Roman power. They are against the “kings from the east [sunrising].” Their cover is blown. They can no longer pretend to represent Christ and his Kingdom.

Their new pitch is depicted as “croaking frogs” that are great and wise, proclaiming that if the world listens to them they will be saved from Armageddon. Do you believe that? Clearly, they are lying. But even as they lie, they gather the nations to Armageddon, the final crash and destruction of the present ruling powers.

It is wonderful to see how God uses their deceit to bring about their own demise. He uses their lies to praise him.

One thing stands out here. How can the Lord’s people associate with Babylon, seeing how clearly it is in league with the kingdom of this world and how opposed it is to the true Kingdom of God? Here it is shown in tight coalition with the “dragon” (the Devil, Satan, and civil Rome).

This is the worst possible place for a true Christian. Obviously, any Christian in Babylon will find himself in dire circumstances when this system is thrown down.

The Great Company

“Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” Revelation 16:15

This verse seems out of context. However, the Lord is entreating the Great Company not to forsake their robe of righteousness as Babylon comes falling down around them. He promises a blessing to them, even though it will be a most difficult time for them.

Remember that the temple is filled with “God’s glory.” No one may enter it. The door to the high calling is shut at this point. Therefore, this verse could not apply to the “Little Flock.” However, we see here a very warm and tender concern expressed for the Great Company as it belatedly takes its stand of allegiance with the Lord and his incoming Kingdom.

“And he [they according to most ancient texts] gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” Revelation 16:16

Armageddon is where the Lord wants them. Whether God does it, or he allows the three “unclean spirits” to accomplish his purpose, is of no great moment. It is here at “Armageddon” that the fatal blow is to be dealt.

7th Plague



“The seventh angel [message] poured his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple [the Christ] of heaven, from the throne [Christ’s throne who also shares Jehovah’s throne], saying, It is done.

“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 [papal “beast,” “false prophet” and the “dragon”] 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.”
Revelation 16:17-19**

What an inglorious end for this unfaithful city! She, who professed to represent the Lord Jesus Christ, is thrown down while she is in solid league against the one she professed to be her Lord and Master.

How deceived can one get? What is the papal “beast” doing allied with the “dragon”? What is the “false prophet” doing allied with the papal “beast” and the “dragon?”

This unholy alliance is exposed for what it is. The last “plague” is poured out on the air, exposing “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” Ephesians 2:2

The whole coalition of “beast,” “false prophet” and “dragon” is seen for what it is—a central part of Satan’s power and kingdom of darkness.

With this exposé, the coalition collapses. The city of Babylon is divided into three parts—the “beast,” the “false prophet” and the “dragon.” Each for himself. The charade is over. The truth is finally told and understood. The truth of Revelation on this subject is revealed and the consequences are awesome.

Then follows the great earthquake, so mighty and so great. Revelation 16 shows this “earthquake” from the standpoint of Babylon. Ezekiel 38 shows the same “earthquake” from the standpoint of Gog’s invasion of Israel.

We do not believe there are two great “earthquakes,” only one. In Revelation 16 we have one view of it, and in Ezekiel 38 we have another view of it. The only difference is the vantage point, whether one is looking at Babylon’s fall or whether one is looking at Gog’s defeat.

PART IV

Who Pours the Bowls?

Now the question—

Who pours out the “vials [bowls]” containing the “seven plagues” of Revelation?

Revelation says the “seven angels” pour out their “vials” or bowls. The “seven angels” are in all probability seven messages, which contain “plague” producing truths. A message cannot pour itself out. The language is veiled here for a good reason.

One thing is certain—it is not the Great Company who pours out the “plagues.” The “seven angels” come out of the “Temple.” The Great Company is not a part of the “Temple.” One reason some may feel it is the Great Company is because they feel that when the “Temple” is filled with God’s glory, then all the saints are on the other side of the veil.

In some places Bro. Russell expressed that view. However, on *Reprint 5714* he says regarding Solomon’s Temple which was dedicated while still incomplete: “The fact that the typical Temple was filled with the glory of the Lord before it was entirely completed seems to imply that at this present time there will be some manifestation of God’s favor toward His church in glorification while yet the work of construction is not quite finished.”

We understand this to allow for some saints to be on this side of the veil when God’s glory fills His “Temple.”

In Ezekiel’s “temple,” God’s glory fills the “Temple” when the Lord enters through the “East Gate” and then later, when the Lord enters through the “North Gate.” This seems to indicate two stages of glory.

- (1) With some sealed saints still on this side of the veil.
- (2) When all the saints are glorified.

Revelation 19 speaks of our Lord appearing on a “white horse” to judge and make war. He is said to have “armies” (plural) in heaven in “fine linen” who also follow him on “white horses.” Bro. Russell observed in order for there to be “armies” (plural), there would need to be at least two parts—one on this side of the veil and one on the other.

When the war does ensue, the papal “beast” and the “kings of the earth” make war against his “army” (singular). They apparently attack the weakest flank, the saints on this side of the veil. See Revelation 19:11-20; *Reprint 5451*.

Revelation 16 leaves the impression that the “seven angels” or seven messages go forth themselves with the bowls without any active agent. Why? There is good reason for this. In Revelation 15:6 we read again:

“And the seven angels [messages] came out of the Temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles [divine servitude].”

The whole “Temple” class takes responsibility for pouring out these judgmental “plagues.”

The Scriptures credit only the “Temple” and its Lord for delivering these awesome “plagues.” The messages come out of the “Temple.” The whole church or “Temple” class takes responsibility for this, as we read in Psalms 149:5-9:

“Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds [on their beds of faith].

“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand;

“To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;

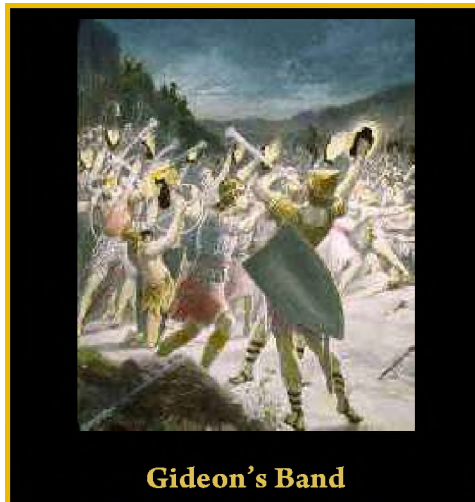
“To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

**“To execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all his saints.
Praise ye the Lord”**

Bro. Russell applies these verses to the saints on this side of the veil. (*Reprint 5631; 5451; Question Book, 387*).

The whole “Temple” class, under the supervision of our Lord and Head, directs these seven last messages which contain the seven last “plagues.” Only the Lord’s army on this side of the veil will act as mouthpieces. But solidly behind them is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and all the other “Temple” members in glory.

This will be the first time the whole “Temple” class will act as one body. So it is a great moment in God’s plan. Thereafter, the whole body will always act in unison.



The evidence seems to indicate that a small body of “sealed saints” will represent the whole “Temple” class in glory “pouring out the seven last “plagues” that “fill up the wrath of God.” Gideon’s band of 300 will be sufficient for the job on this side of the veil.



How Does the Fall of Jericho Fit into the Prophetic Picture?

The fall of Jericho is surely a type. How does it fit into the picture of the seven “last plagues”? For six days the priests and the mighty men of valor circled Jericho once each day while the priests blew “seven rams’ horns.” (Joshua 6:3-16)

On the seventh day the priests went around seven times blowing the “rams’ horns.” On the final lap, all shouted and the wall fell. Some have applied these “seven days” to the whole Gospel Age, trying to show how each of the priests [saints] circled Jericho, representing the six stages of the Gospel church. Then on the seventh Millennial Day Jericho was circled and fell, representing Babylon’s fall resulting from the “seven last plagues.”

This view has a major mathematical problem. It does not parallel the Revelation scenario. Jericho had $6 + 7 = 13$ circlings. This is an odd number and does not match Revelation with its “seven trumpets” blown during the seven stages of the Church with an additional “seven vials [bowls]” being poured out in the seventh period. Revelation has a perfect sequence of 7 “trumpets” + 7 “vials [bowls]” = 14 .



Fall of Jericho

Several other problems exist with applying the Jericho type throughout the age.

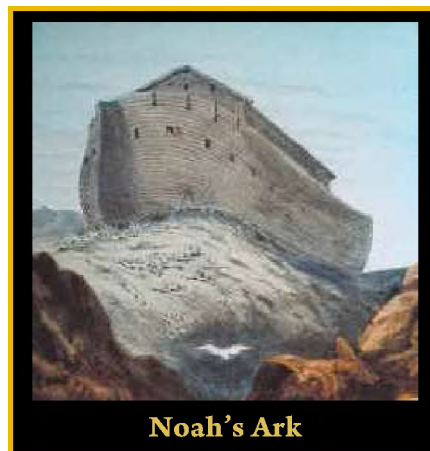
First, antitypical “Jericho” did not emerge until the time when the Roman Emperor Constantine made Christianity the religion of the state. The “mystery of iniquity” was at work in the Church but had not emerged as a power. You cannot “circle” something that is within. The antichrist element was still very much inside the Christian Church in the first two stages.

The second problem of applying the circling of “Jericho” during the six periods of the Church gives the impression that the Lord spent the whole Gospel Age trying to defeat this cursed city. The facts indicate that the antichrist system bloodied the true Church during a good part of this time. The Lord’s conquest would be much too long here.

The third problem is that the “seven trumpets” of Revelation are not identified with “days.” Only the “seventh trumpet” speaks of days, saying, “In the days [years] of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished.” Revelation 10:7 The “seven day” siege of Jericho, if we follow the Bible standard of a day for a year, would limit events to seven literal years. This is more likely the case. Let us consider another possible scenario which provides for $6 + 7 = 13$.

Is it possible that the siege of antitypical Jericho lasted 7 days [a day for a year would be seven years]? Were this the case, for six of those years the “sealed” saints would give forth a trumpet message of truth, perhaps akin to six of the last plagues. This would cause antitypical “Jericho” to be holding up in the city for fear. In the last year the saints would deliver all “seven vials [bowls]” which would include the “seventh vial [plague]” poured out on the “air.” This would fit a $6 + 7 = 13$ required here.

If this has any merit, the Jericho type would provide an additional insight concerning the saints at the very end. It would open a window of insight concerning six years of activity before the seventh year enables them to “pour out” the “seven vials [bowls].”



Noah’s Ark

Noah had “seven days” notice before the flood came (Genesis 7:4). Also it was the Lord that “shut him in” the ark, closing the door (Genesis 7:16). Could this indicate a seven-year period in which the saints on this side the veil are “sealed”? This type provides “seven years” in which the antitypical “ark” is entered and the “door closed” by the Lord (Genesis 7:16).

The Elijah Type

One last observation of the Elijah type may provide food for thought. Elijah's closing experiences seem to compliment that of the "seven last plagues" of Revelation. **Elijah in the last seven experiences that ended his career seems to typify the "seven last plagues."**

In 2 Kings 1:9-16, Elijah is shown in a very strong militant posture. King Ahaziah wished to apprehend Elijah. He sent a captain with fifty soldiers to bring him in. Elijah used the first two endeavors to take him, to prove he was a "man of God" by calling fire down from heaven, which consumed both captains with their soldiers. The third captain and his fifty came, pleading for Elijah to spare them and he did. His position as a "man of God" had been established. He went with them and pronounced the king would die.

Then Elisha accompanied Elijah to Gilgal. It was here that Elijah first suggested to Elisha, "Tarry here ... for the Lord hath sent me to Bethel." (2 Kings 2:1-11) At Gilgal came the first suggestion that they should separate. Elijah was first sent to Bethel. Of course, Elisha refused to leave Elijah. When they arrived at Bethel, the "sons of the prophets" met Elisha and asked if he knew that the Lord would "take away thy master from thy head today?" He answered, "Yea, I know it." The sons of the prophets and Elisha both knew of Elijah's imminent departure.

The Lord commanded Elijah to go to Jericho and Elijah again suggested that Elisha stay behind. He refused again. At Jericho, the sons of the prophets met Elisha again with the same question, and they got the same answer.

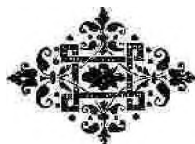
Next, Elijah was sent to Jordan and again suggested to Elisha "Tarry here." Three times Elisha was encouraged to stay behind. This occurred as Elijah is sent to three places—Bethel, Jericho and Jordan. This is not repeated at Jordan. They proceed together until a "chariot of fire" parts them. The fourth place was the point of Elijah's departure in the "whirlwind." 2 Kings. 2:11



From the foregoing it appears that in the first three judgments (2 Kings 1:9-16), Elijah was established as a "man of God." These compare favorably with the first three plagues of Revelation. The king knew of the "spirit and power of Elijah," as did his soldiers, as did Elisha and as did the sons of the prophets. A lot of people had this knowledge.

The next three judgments compare to "plagues" four to six. The terminal point of Elijah's journey was east of the Jordan where the Lord "would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind" (2 Kings. 2:1) That was what the journey was all about.

The first three "plagues" of Revelation would be to establish the saints as "men of God." The last four "plagues" would accomplish God's purpose to "take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind." 2 Kings 2:1





THE STORY OF THE LEOPARD-LIKE BEAST

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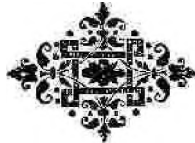
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Part I

The story of the leopard beast is the longest story in Revelation. It covers Revelation Chapters 13 to 19, where finally the leopard beast and the false prophet are “cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.” (Revelation 19:20)

All is well that ends well. A fitting end to this terrible and cruel beast. At the end of the reign of Christ the devil is also cast into this same “lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:10) So shall it be with all the enemies of righteousness when at last the triumph of Christ is complete. If there is a God in heaven, this must surely be the end of such evil institutions and beings that practice lies and deception to deceive the people of earth.



The Beginning that Led to Such an Ignominious End

Usually it is not good to tell of the end before the beginning, but the Lord’s people should know at the outset that this terrible leopard beast shall not triumph over the saints.

Treachery is greatest when something poses as a servant of truth and righteousness, while beguiling and misleading many good people away from the service of God and righteousness to institutionalized perversion. How many have started out to serve God and righteousness who were later subverted into the service of Satan!

The desire to serve, normally a good desire, is easily perverted into self-seeking, power lust, and self-aggrandizement. Hence, many who sought to serve God unwittingly lost their way. Perhaps few willed to do this, but the arts of the devil are beguiling. Once they succumbed to the influence of the leopard beast, they found themselves sliding down the slippery slope of sin and degradation under the guise of religion.

Satan and the fallen angels are masters at using religion to serve everything else but God and holiness. There is probably no evil that has not been done in the name of religion.

“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.” Revelation 13:1

Three beasts in Revelation have “seven heads” and “ten horns.”

Rev. 12	Red Dragon	7 Heads	10 Horns	Crowns on Heads
Rev. 13	Leopard-Like Beast	7 Heads	10 Horns	Crowns on Horns
Rev. 17	Scarlet Beast	7 Heads	10 Horns	No Crowns

These three beasts share a similar time span. All three are on the scene at Armageddon. The leopard beast is a composite creature, a mix of “leopard,” “bear” and the “mouth of a lion.” (Revelation 13:2)

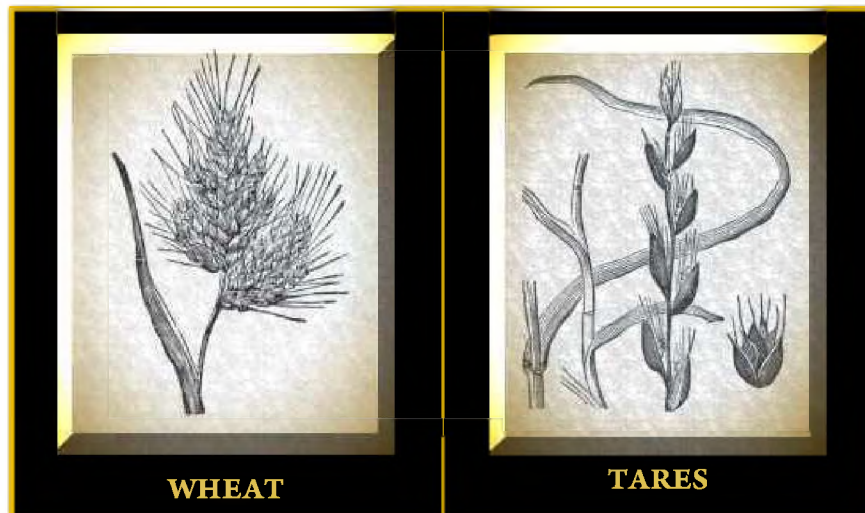
This immediately tells the reader that the leopard beast is not God’s creation. God created everything “after its kind.” There are no mixed creatures in God’s creation. Hence, immediately the student is made aware that this leopard beast is of Satan.

The rise of the leopard beast came from the “sea,” the restless masses. It was not the Roman aristocracy and the politically powerful that gave rise to this papal beast. Rome had many gods and goddesses—actually some three thousand. “As no man can serve two masters,” so it is impossible for anyone to follow three thousand gods.

The Christian religion taught singular devotion to one God, the only wise and true God. The Christian religion appealed to the measure of godlikeness left in the human heart. It was noble, it was pure, it was kind, and it spoke to the highest quality that man has—love. It appealed to the human heart seeking after God.

It was the “restless masses” who were ready to receive the elevating influence of Christianity. The poor masses suffered from the abuses of the rich, powerful and politically connected. They were not privileged to corrupt themselves.

Christianity preceded the rise of this papal beast. “The mystery of iniquity” began to work within the Christian community. Even as the apostles established ecclesias, the devil was at work causing “contentions.” (1 Corinthians 1:11-13) The Apostle Paul said, “the mystery of iniquity doth already work.” (2 Thessalonians 2:7)



Christianity, which appealed most to the restless masses of mankind, became a seedbed for Satan to “sow tares” among the “wheat.” Just as our first parents were supposed to populate the earth with perfect people but were soon beguiled into sin, filling the world with a progeny infected with sin, so Satan has not lost his cunning to repeat the same methods with the Christian Church. Only the power of God has kept the true saints from being corrupted by the adversary.



“Upon His Heads the Name of Blasphemy”

“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.” Revelations 13:1

No sooner is the leopard beast introduced, than it is labeled in a most derogatory way. The seven uncrowned “heads” are said to have “the name of blasphemy.”

When the bishops accepted Constantine as “Pontifex Maximus” [chief religious ruler], they renounced the headship of Christ. This was blasphemy.

Subsequently, “no less than sixty-two blasphemous titles” were applied to the pope (THE TIME IS AT HAND, p. 307).

Titles such as: “Most Divine of all Heads,” “Pontiff Supreme over all Prelates,” “Christ by Unction,” “Prince of Bishops,” “Infallible Pope,” etc.

The apostles were only known as Peter, James, John, etc.

The papal rulers adopted blasphemous titles, and with these also came privilege, wealth and power.



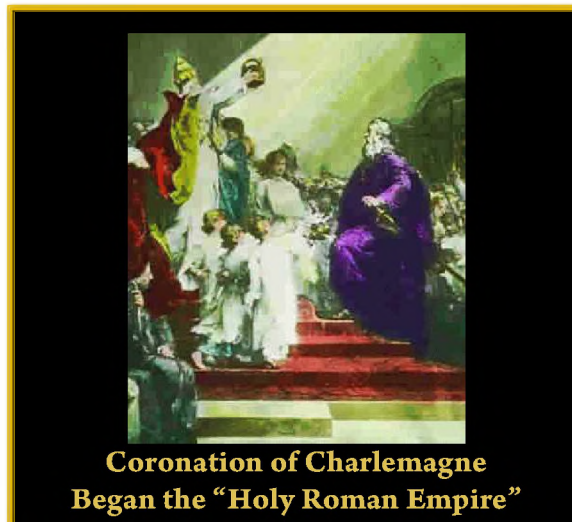
The papal beast was ruthless, mean, extremely proud and pretentious. It seemed remarkably fashioned after the three universal empires of Daniel (Daniel 7:4-7), having “the mouth of a lion,” “the feet of a bear” and “like unto a leopard.” (Revelation 13:2) The qualities of the roaring and intimidating lion, the grasping bear, and the stealthy leopard made this a dreadful beast. Its overall appearance made it exceedingly “dreadful and terrible” as the fourth beast in Daniel 7:7 was. This unholy mixture was the work of the devil.

It may be asked how the “name of blasphemy” became associated with the heads of this papal beast. Once Constantine, the first “head,” accepted the Christian religion as that of the state, the alleged Christian religion continued through successive governments of Rome. It ceased to be true Christianity, but became the religion of the state.

There were actually seven great emperors who molded the history of the Roman Empire. The church and state arrangement started with Constantine. Before that time Christianity was not accepted by the state. As a matter of fact, Christianity was competitive with the pagan gods of Rome.

1st Head	Constantine	Converted Roman Empire to Christianity
2nd Head	Valentinian	Emperor of the Divided Empire
3rd Head	Justinian	Declared Bishop of Rome head of all holy churches
4th Head	Charlemagne	Began 1,000 Year Reign of “Holy Roman Empire”
5th Head	Napoleon	Restored Catholic Church as religion of France
6th Head	Francis Joseph of Austria-Hungary	1848-1916
7th Head	Hitler	Nazi-Fascist Regime from 1929-1945

Valentinian, the second head, became the emperor of the divided empire. Then Justinian, the third head emperor, declared the bishop of Rome head of all the holy churches. The fourth head was Charlemagne, who set in motion the 1,000 year rule of the “Holy Roman Empire.”



The fifth head became the short-lived era of Napoleon, who restored the Catholic Church as the religion of France, albeit with a short lease. The sixth head Francis Joseph, of Austria-Hungary (1848-1916), followed this. The seventh head was Hitler, with his Nazi-Fascist regime that ruled between 1929-1945.

The allusion that the Roman Empire was Christian and a part of the Kingdom of God on earth deserved the name of “blasphemy.”

These emperors had empowered the church in various ways—some more, some less—but always enabling the papacy to exercise authority in government. Sometimes, with vast holdings of territories, the emperors ruled Papal States.

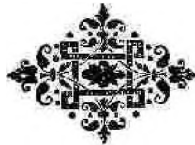
While the emperors and rulers of the Roman Empire did have a God-given right to rule during the Gentile Times, yet this rule was not to be considered a part of God’s Kingdom. The Gentile rule was to take place in the interregnum between the typical kingdom of God (that was taken away from Judah with Zedekiah’s fall) and the real Kingdom of God under Christ, which is set up at his return. **These emperor “heads” were neither Christian, nor the Kingdom of God—this was blasphemy.**

It should be noticed that “ten horns” of papacy were crowned. **Not only were the emperors or “heads” considered civil rulers in God’s Kingdom, but also the “ten horns” or territorial rulers in the Roman Empire were said to rule by “divine right.”** The papacy rose to sufficient power at times to be very powerful in “crowning” and “uncrowning” these ten territorial rulers.

There were four Gentile dominions, but only the last pretended to be the Kingdom of God, whose emperors and lesser territorial kings were claimed to rule by “the divine right of kings.” Hence, we see the church and state were locked in unholy union.

The Roman Church provided the religion of the empire, while popes ruled the Papal States as a part of the governments of this earth. While most of the Papal States have been taken away, still the vision of papacy is to claim back not only its former states, but to increase its domain to include the whole world.

By this method, Papacy would set up the Kingdom of God on earth without the return of Christ. The devil created a religious system that in turn reached out to become a government in the earth—we call it the papacy. When the devil threw his mantel over this whole arrangement and called it God’s Kingdom, this became blasphemy.



“The Dragon Gave Him His Power, and His Seat, and Great Authority”

“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.” Revelation 13:2

We notice the “dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.” In Revelation 12 we found the dragon going to war to hold its power in heaven. However, here we observe the dragon is quite a gentleman, giving the papal beast “his power, and his seat, and great authority” in the civil matters of earth.

Why this turnabout?

The dragon wished to control the nominal “heaven” just as he controlled civil Rome. It would be convenient to control “heaven” and “earth” from one throne. Finding his inability to sustain rule in “heaven,” the dragon changed tactics.

Within the early church was a “man-child” class. Soon it was “caught up unto God, and to his throne”—the counterfeit throne of the antichrist “who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, ... so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” (2 Thessalonians 2:4)

The “man child” of Revelation 12 is really nothing more than the incipient beginning of the papal beast. It started out simply as power-seeking bishops who were not recognized by Rome. Then this class of bishops accepted Constantine’s headship, creating the papal beast.

It was Constantine that first gave civil authority to the bishops. The need to do this occurred when Constantine moved his capital from Rome to Constantinople.



For the emperor to leave Rome was fraught with peril. His prime worry would be that some general or political aspirant would seize power and leave Constantine cut off from Rome. Hence, Constantine gladly bestowed favors on the bishops, granting them some political power in Rome, wishing to divide power so that no savvy aspirant would become too powerful.

Those in power always worry that someone may steal the base of their authority. Herod was not the first one to seek to destroy the competitive rising King of Israel. Insecurity caused many rulers to murder any possible aspirants. Hence, the dragon gave authority to many bishops.

This marks the time when the bishops were no longer persecuted, but gained status and authority in government. They changed from being bitterly persecuted under Diocletian to being empowered by Constantine. Now the Roman Empire became the base of the papal operation.

Part II

“One of His Heads as It Were Wounded to Death”

“And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.” Revelation 13:3

The first verses are spent in introducing the papal beast. Then Revelation 13:3 transports us through history to the Reformation period, when the leopard beast has one of its heads wounded. This began in the closing years of the fourth head of Charlemagne’s era, the time of the Reformation which severely wounded the papal power.

However, the Reformation did not kill the papal power. The closing hours of this era brought on the French Revolution which culminated when Berthier took the pope prisoner in 1798 and where he subsequently died. This was the *coup de grâce*, the final shot in the head commonly practiced by firing squads, which should have finished off the papacy.



The French ultimatum restricting Papal authority was presented to Pope Pius IV in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican.

Berthier took Pius IV prisoner from Rome to France on February 15, 1798, where Pope Pius IV subsequently died

“And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” Revelation 13:4

To everyone’s amazement, the deadly wound was healed. This did not make the papal powers humble, however, for they accepted the claims of the world who were saying, “Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” They learned nothing from their setback.

When it was said, “Who is able to make war with him?” the Lord heard this challenge and answered the question posed. In Revelation 19:16-20 the “King of Kings” reveals his power by easily casting the beast and the false prophet into the “lake of fire.”

The lesson to be learned here is that the Lord did not immediately destroy the pompous papal hierarchy. The Lord allowed it time to add to its sinful behavior.



“He Opened His Mouth in Blasphemy Against God”

“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

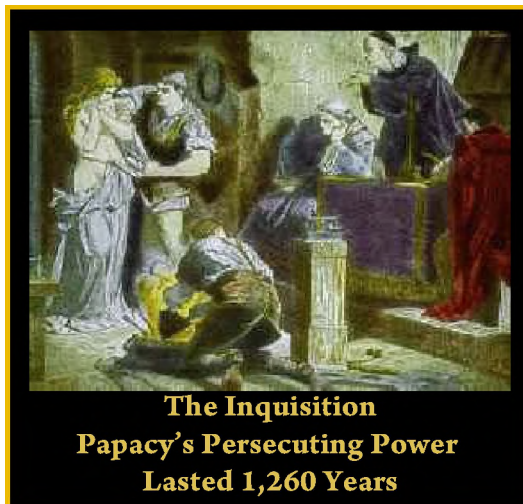
“And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

“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.

“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

Revelation 13:5-8

These verses cover the reign of the papacy, especially the symbolic forty-two months, or the literal twelve hundred and sixty years, of their unbridled power. They used God’s forbearance to persecute the saints, to blaspheme God’s name and His Tabernacle (His people that God dwells in), and them that dwell in the spiritual condition on earth, called “heaven.”



The power and majesty combined with the ruthless control the papacy exercised caused the people of earth to “worship him.” How can anything so powerful, so magnificent, and with such a massive following, not be ordained of God?

Yes, it was this that caused “all that dwell upon the earth” to bow down before it. Not quite, however, for those who had their names written in “the book of life of the Lamb” refused to worship this abominable system.

Make special note that none of the saints worship this beast, for we read in Revelation 20:4 concerning those who “had not worshipped the beast.” None who are said to reign with Jesus are guilty of this. Anyone who worships the beast or its image may not be among those who reign with Christ. Any follower of the Master who bows to this beast will lose his “crown.”

The Lord calls extravagant attention to the fact that those with him in glory did not worship the beast or its image. All the Lord’s people should take note of this. It is a deadly serious matter. If they hope to reign with Christ, they cannot yield to the beast or its image. There is no room for a mistake in this matter.

“If Any Man Have an Ear, Let Him Hear”

“If any man have an ear, let him hear.”

“He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.” Revelation 13:9, 10

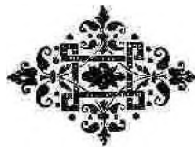
The writer now turns away from the beast and addresses the saints with a needful message. Yes, this papal beast shall have its season to persecute and try the saints, but with patience and faith they may not only endure, but also will surely overcome.

The Lord has set in motion a certain rule of law. Those who kill with the sword must also be killed in like manner, and those who take captives shall be made captive. This principle applied surely should give the saints confidence that the papal beast, who leads captives and kills at will, will suffer a similar fate.

“Strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.” (Revelation 18:8) The worst possible mistake any of the Lord’s people could make is to be on the wrong side in this battle. With patience and faith all the saints shall share in the coming victory.

Having exhorted the saints to steadfastness, the Lord closes this vision to introduce a “two-horned beast” and an “image to the beast.” This remains for a separate study. Hence, war against the saints will not be abated, but other forces emerge to test and challenge the Lord’s faithful.

The only point to remember here is that **the “image of the beast” is, in fact, a likeness of the “papal beast,” but without seven heads.** This reminds the saints that the forces pitted against them will come from the ranks of Protestants. As the enemies of the Lord’s people join forces against them, so the Lord himself will stand with the faithful saints. No need to fear then, is there?



Part III

“If Any Man Worship the Beast”

“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.” Revelation 14:9, 10

The story of the leopard “beast” is picked up briefly here, and God speaks His mind about any who may be willing to “worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand.”

The Lord makes it clear that such would share in the judgments and “plagues” coming upon Babylon. This message is not given at the moment the pressure is mounting for the Lord’s people to “worship the beast” or anything associated with it. Rather this message was given long before the Lord’s people were put upon to cooperate in any sense with papal or Protestant movements.

This message by our Lord was preached early in the Harvest and then clearly addressed in *THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON*. The author of this book not only addressed this matter in the book itself, but in both the **1912** and **1916** Forewords. It is very much a part of the Harvest message. The warnings were and are generously posted.

Some may conclude that because these things have not happened yet, the danger is past. Others may mistakenly believe and teach that all these things have vaguely happened already, and that, therefore, the danger is past. It is almost certain that neither of these viewpoints is correct.

Getting the victory over the leopard beast and its image is something very big, bigger than the victory of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Remember how they refused to bow before Nebuchadnezzar’s image?



Not only were these three heroes of faith delivered, but also the God whom they worshipped became exalted in the eyes of both Nebuchadnezzar and the people. It became clear to all the people that these three Hebrews were servants of the living God.

This is important to the story, because at some point those who are the servants of the living God will become known for this special relationship. This will not happen until the saints distinguish themselves for not worshipping the beast and its image.

Yes, the saints will get the “victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.” (Revelation 15:2) This is a very big and significant victory.

Not all who know the Divine Plan will be victorious over the beast and its image. Victory will belong only to the “overcomers” among the Lord’s people. The test will not only involve certain knowledge and understanding, but, more importantly, the courage and strength to stand for principle in the face of enormous pressure to compromise.

Only those who have lived daily and hourly near to the Lord may hope to be victorious. Our lives are built around the idea of yielding to others in many ways where no principle is involved. Suddenly, the Lord’s people will be entreated to yield to the beast and its image to show not an agreement in doctrine, but rather that we stand for law and order.

We certainly do not wish to be on the side of anarchists. But then, neither did Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego wish to anger the king. He had been good to them. He had given them many privileges and a good life. They did not wish to seem disloyal either.

However, they could not worship the image set up on the plains of Dura. (Daniel 3:1-30) They were in a “shotgun” arrangement. Either yield to the king’s will, or die. They were victorious. They did not bow, and they did not burn, and they were not demoted. They became known as servants of their own “God.”



The Fifth “Vial” Poured Out on the “Seat of the Beast”

“And the fifth angel poured out his vial [bowl] upon the seat of the beast; and 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.” Revelation 16:10, 11

This papal beast is still parading around as the vicegerent of Christ with the largest following of professed Christians. How could something so big, so influential, so prosperous, held in such high esteem by the great people of earth, suddenly have its lights go out? It does not seem possible, but the word of the Lord tells us its “kingdom was full of darkness.” The fifth plague accomplishes God’s purpose.



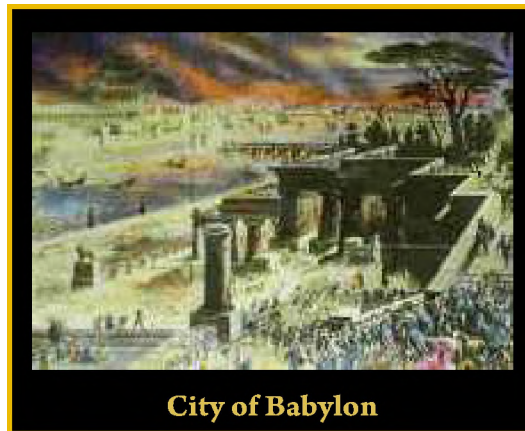
The Sixth “Vial” Poured Out upon the “Euphrates”

“And the sixth angel poured out his vial [bowl] upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east [kings from the sunrising] might be prepared.” Revelation 16:12

Not only is the papal kingdom filled with darkness, but the “river Euphrates” composed of “peoples, nations and tongues” is diverted from “Babylon.” The support of the people that gave her strength and wealth and prominence is suddenly dried up.

Literal Babylon did not fall over a long period of time. It fell in one night. While there has been a steady drain of Babylon’s credibility, at no point in the past has her support dried up. She presently claims a greater following than in any time of history. This does not secure it.

When it was asked “Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” they never thought that Christ would take up this challenge. (Revelation 13:4) Christ heard this boast in heaven, and when his appointed time comes he will make a short work of this beast.



City of Babylon

Babylon is symbolic of a city or a government. Likewise, the papal beast shows the influence of the Catholic Church as a government in the earth. It is necessary to view the Catholic Church from two standpoints.

It is first a body of professed followers of Christ with an earthly head. It has become the greatest world religion, probably because it provides religion as many like it. It must be viewed for its great political power and strength because of the massive following. No one with such a power block of people behind it can be ignored. It has used the governments of earth throughout its long reign.

At times kings trembled before the papal power. It could pit one government against another. It led crusades to take the Holy Land. Without a large army of its own, it exercised more power than many kings upon their thrones did. Its success as a government came about through the god of this world, the prince of darkness. Its demise will result because of the waning power of the devil to hold together his kingdom of darkness. The collapse of the papal powers will signal the complete binding of Satan.



Desperate Times Require Desperate Measures

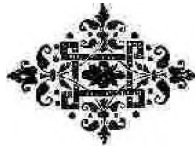
“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

“For they are the spirits of devils, 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. ...

“And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” Revelation 16:13-16

Suddenly the papal beast, along with the dragon [Rome under the devil] and the false prophet [the Church of England and Ireland and possibly what is left of the image of the beast], find themselves in desperate circumstances, which call for desperate measures. They decide to place their fortunes on a plan to settle the Middle-East situation which will have become a “trembling cup” to the nations.

When a gambler “bets the house,” it means that it is all or nothing. So these three desperate powers, the dragon, the beast and the false prophet, make their supreme bid to gain back their power and influence. Disaster awaits them. The Lord of glory is laughing in the “heavens” as they make their last stand as did “Custer.”



“Armageddon” from Israel’s Vantage Point

Great battles were fought on the plains of Megiddo in Israel. It is fitting that the final battle of the age should begin there. There the enemies of God and also of natural Israel will enter into a baited trap.



Two accounts of this final battle are given. The first account is given in Ezekiel 38, telling the story from the standpoint of natural Israel. We are told that “Gog” and “Magog” come against the land of Israel with a large and overwhelming force.

When the cause of Israel seems all but lost, God intervenes, mightily destroying this invading host. This will send shock waves back into the Christian world. When they suggested a solution for Israel’s problems, little did they realize their plans would utterly fail and cause the wrath of nations and people to be vented upon them—Christendom.

“Armageddon” from the Vantage Point of Christendom

**“And the seventh angel poured out his vial [bowl] into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.”
Revelation 16:17**

The timing of this verse is very important. Just as the forces of the world descend upon natural Israel to the “Armageddon” battle, the last “plague” is poured out on the “air.” This will expose the papal beast and the false prophet as tools of Satan.

Their claim to represent God will collapse when the forces they blessed fail in Israel. This last “plague” message leaves them without any cover or subterfuge under which to hide. This unholy coalition of beast—false prophet—dragon will collapse not only because of the defeat suffered in Israel, but also because they are seen to be in league with the devil and his angels.

The expression “It is done” is very similar to Jesus’ words on the cross, “It is finished.” It is the same “great voice out of the temple” that speaks in Revelation 16:1 that is engaged here. Yes, the same voice that directed the “seven last plagues” to go forth from the “temple” here proclaims, “It is done.”



**Elijah pictures
the “Little Flock.”**

**Elisha pictures
the “Great Company.”**

This will “finish” the “plagues.” It will also witness the remaining saints being taken as Elijah was by the “whirlwind.”

The “little flock” will be completed and taken to glory. The New Creation will be complete or “done.”

Only the Great Company will remain. Joseph’s “silver cup” will have been planted in their care.

This means they will understand the truth about natural Israel’s place in the Holy Land.

They will have spoken out against this doomed invasion to deaf ears.

As the world sees the churches to be in league with Satan, the Great Company will find themselves standing for Christ while the Christian community has fallen into disrepute. As howling masses turn upon Christendom, the Great Company will have to stand for Christ when everything is falling around them. It is here as a company that they shall wash their “robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Revelation 7:14)



“The Great City Was Divided into Three Parts”

“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.

“And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.” Revelation 16:18-20

The world will realize how it had been exploited by these false systems. There will be angry voices from many sources, and thunder and lightning, symbolic of the outrage and flashes of anger causing the masses to turn upon Babylon.

The “great earthquake” here is probably closely paralleled by the “great shaking in the land of Israel.” (Ezekiel 38:19) It is not likely that there are two such great earthquakes. Rather, Ezekiel presents this shaking with the invasion of “Gog and Magog,” whereas Revelation 16:18 refers to the same event from Christendom’s vantage point. This “earthquake” will involve the whole world. This will be the “Armageddon” crash that the Lord’s people have been looking for.

As the earth trembles from this massive quake, the great city is “divided into three parts.” The coalition of the beast—false prophet—dragon collapses. Their cover has been blown, and they stand no longer as God’s servants, but as objects of hatred and scorn.

We notice that all seven plagues are said to contain the “wrath of God upon the earth.” Yet it is not until this last plague is delivered and the great “earthquake” begins that we read: “Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.” It is Babylon that is singled out to receive the “fierceness of his wrath.”

We are not told here of what ultimately befalls the beast and the false prophet. That remains to be told in Revelation 19. However, it is quite evident that the collapse of these systems does occur here, and all that remains is to consume the substance of these systems of deception.

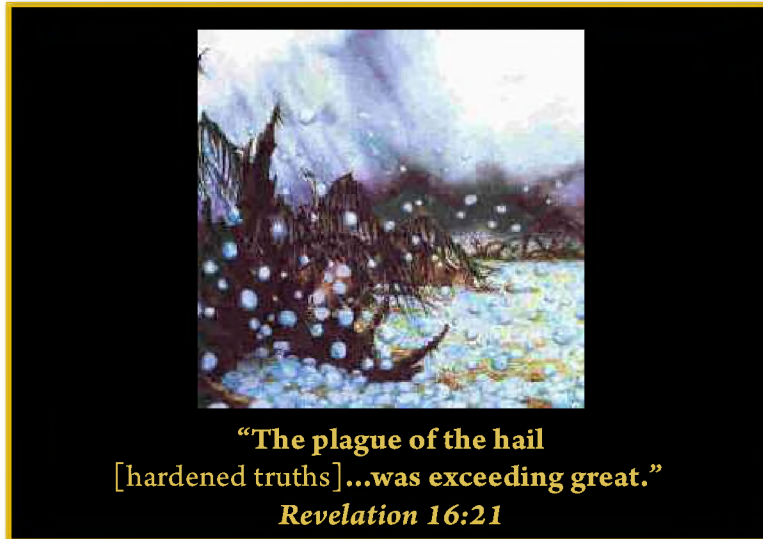
The reader must realize that God waited very long and very patiently before matters came to this terrible state described in Revelation 16. When “every island [republic] flees away and the “mountains” (kingdoms) collapse, that certainly brings us to the dreaded period of anarchy on a world scale.



The “Plague of Hail”

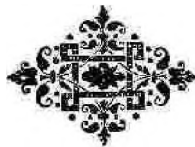
“And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.” Revelation 16:21

Those who basked in power and privilege as civil or religious leaders are finally called into account before a world which has lost all respect for these misguided leaders. The French Revolution was a miniature of this great and final “earthquake.” It is not during this falling of the large “hail” of hardened truths that the world is brought to repentance.



The loss of law and order, the loss of respect by mankind in general, will see men filled with anger while they blaspheme God because of the “hail.” There is a lot of sin and wickedness not limited to civil rulers and religious leaders.

All who have practiced iniquity will find themselves being exposed and scorned. The Lord intervenes to say, “Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psalms 46:10). Then the nations and peoples will come to their senses. At last the world will listen to the “still small voice” (1 Kings 19:12) of the Lord speaking.



Part IV

What Will Be the Fate of the “Beast” and the “False Prophet”?


While the demise of the papal beast and the false prophet is undoubtedly described in Revelation 16, yet we are not told specifically what becomes of them. That story is told in Revelation 19. The challenge was raised in Revelation 13:4:

“Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?”

This great Goliath roars its challenge before the world. There is no organization or groups of mankind or nations that can rise to this challenge. It is too powerful and too well connected to be subdued. This papal beast would probably be able to continue in power unabated, except that a greater power appears to destroy it.



The Final Conflict

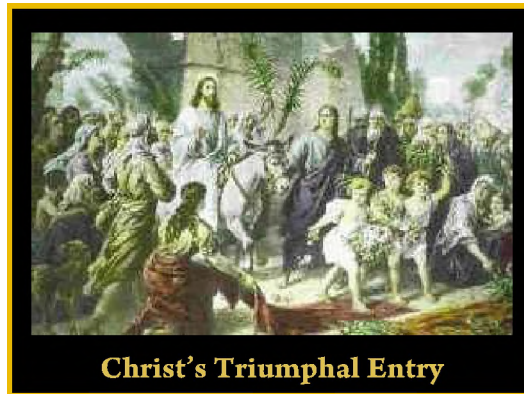
 <p>“The Word of God”</p>	<p>“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.</p> <p>“His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.</p> <p>“And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.</p>
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“And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

“And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

“And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” Revelation 19:11-16

Here our Lord comes on a white charger, an animal of war. At his first advent he presented himself as a King riding on a donkey. He was meek and lowly in presenting himself to the nation of Israel. He had no armies then.



Here the scene takes us into his Second Advent at a time when he has armies, plural, who are arising in spiritual control. This is not at his immediate return. Rather, it is later during his presence when his “armies” are clothed in “fine linen, white and clean.” This would be equivalent to having “his Father’s name written in their foreheads.” (Revelation 14:1)

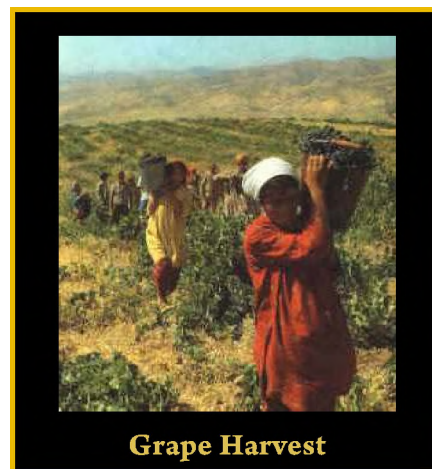
Another way of putting it, “And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.” (Revelation 14:5) This could only include “sealed” saints, counted as “overcomers,” the “called, chosen and faithful” “hundred and forty and four thousand.”

“He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” This identifies our Lord with the “treading of the winepress” picture given in Isaiah 63:1-6. It is based on the teaching that there is a “vine of the earth.” Jesus said, “I am the true vine.” (John 15:1)

There is also another “vine” that has angered our God. We read of this in Revelation 14:19:

“And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.”

The Lord’s method is to allow this “vine of the earth” to grow until its “grapes are fully ripe.” Grapes are harvested in late summer or early fall. This generally ends the harvest of crops in Israel.



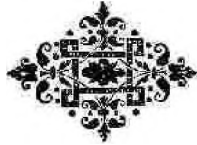
So the treading of the “great winepress” is the last feature of the Harvest time. The Lord has pent-up anger toward this abominable “vine.” The Lord will explode in judgment against this “vine of the earth.” This is called treading the “winepress of the wrath of God.”

The Word of the Lord figures heavily in this judgment scene. We are told that

“Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”

It is God's justice that has been violated, and, therefore, our Lord Jesus will execute the judgments written, using the "sword of his mouth," judgment truths. The banner over our Lord is "The Word of God." Satan has tried to break the Scriptures for six thousand years with not a single success.

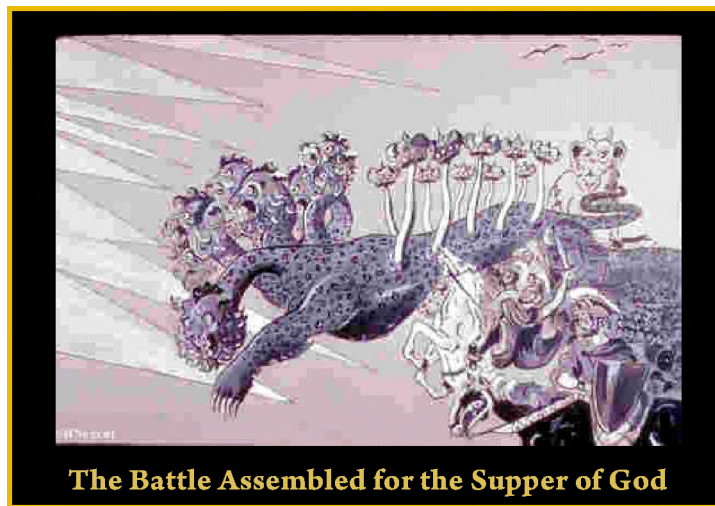
When Jesus comes with the "Word" title, it means Satan cannot prevail. "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). When Satan realizes he is confronting the "Word of God," he knows that the battle is lost before it is even begun. Who can prevail against God's Word? Heaven and earth could pass away, but God's Word cannot be broken. The Lord is about to put his foot on the serpent's head and secure him with "chains."



"The Supper of the Great God"

"And I saw an angel [of the "great voice out of the temple" in Revelation 16:1 that commanded the "seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials [bowls]"—this then embodies the plagues poured out by all "seven angels"] **standing in the sun** [the Gospel sunlight]; **and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;**

"That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great." Revelation 19:17, 18



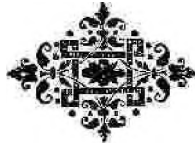
The outcome of this final battle is certain. An invitation is sent beforehand to the loathsome fowls to assemble for the "supper of the great God." The "flesh" or substance of these institutions is very large and will provide a lot of material wealth to feast on.

Just as the papal beast and false prophet confiscated properties of those they deemed heretics, so the Lord allows the vicious mobs to consume these institutions with their massive wealth and properties. In other words, selfishness will cause a feeding frenzy to accompany these loathsome fowls.



The “angel standing in the sun” reminds us of the “sealed” church arising as “kings of the east [sunrising]” (Revelation 16:12). This is a position of power and ascending glory. There is no uncertainty or weakness demonstrated here.

Victory and only victory is certain when coming from the east. The enemy is always at a disadvantage in facing the bright sunrising. We are only told what will happen to the “flesh” of all the forces confronting the “King of Kings.” Only after the battle is joined are we told what happens to the beast and the false prophet.



“The Beast Was Taken, and with Him the False Prophet”

“And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army [singular].

“And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

“And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.” Revelation 19:19-21

The papal beast is in the forefront of this battle. Hence, the beast will be taken first. The Lord has long held his patience with this monstrous beast, and (when the decisive moment arrives) neither its cunning nor its resources are able to sustain it. It falls easily before the “King of Kings.” Most importantly it is dealt with before the “kings of the earth, and their armies.” Revelation 18:9 reads:

“And the kings of the earth, ... lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning.”

Both accounts seem to indicate that the papal beast and Babylon fall before the “kings of the earth.” They survive only long enough to lament the fall of this seemingly invincible beast. It is important to notice that the beast and the “kings of the earth, and their armies” enter warfare against “him that sat on the horse, and against his army.”

While the Lord is said to have “armies” (Revelation 19:14), yet only the weakest flank is attacked, “his army.”

This seems to indicate that the “sealed saints” who remain in the flesh will be most easily targeted.

This could well be where the saints, represented in John the Baptist, may leave the battlefield, victorious in death.



Salome receives the head of John the Baptist on a charger.

If this is true, the papal beast, just like “Sodom,” puts in its worst performance just before it is destroyed. This may also fulfill Revelation 12:17 where we are told the

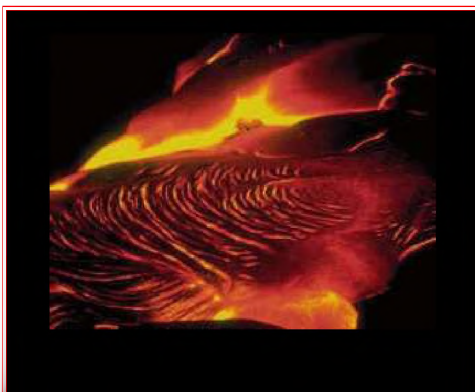
“Dragon was wroth ... and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

When the beast is taken, guess who is with him? No, it is not the image of the beast. We are told that “with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image.” This helps the reader contrast the image of the beast with the false prophet. Revelation 13:11-14 is being referred to.

The false prophet is clearly identified as a beast with “two horns” which speaks “as a dragon.” This is the Church of England and Ireland that broke away from the Catholic Church during the time of Henry VIII. It prospered greatly and was able to do what the Catholic Church was never able to accomplish. It became a world power and was able to lift its flag over many nations, even taking the Holy Land.

The Catholic Church tried to prevent the industrial revolution, while the British Empire, together with the Church of England, used it to create untold wealth. It also opened up education to the masses, whereas the Catholic Church sought to deny education to all but priests and aristocracy.

What happens to the papal beast and the false prophet? “These both were cast **alive** into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.” (Revelation 19:20) Notice that they do not die first and then get buried. They remain powerful functioning institutions up until the time the “King of Kings” casts them into the “lake of fire,” which is the second death. This seems to indicate they had sufficient resources to continue, but because of the overwhelming power of Christ, they are swallowed up while still vigorously functioning.



The “Lake of Fire” represents Second Death, not Eternal Torment.

Whatever Happened to the “Image of the Beast?”

The question may arise as to what happened to the image of the beast? Why isn't it dealt with as the others? The image of the beast is a short-lived creation. It will come and expire before the papal beast and the false prophet are dealt with. It serves as a Protestant Federation. Possibly it might eventuate as the “World Council of Churches.” It started out as the Protestant Evangelical Alliance, but nothing much ever came of this.

This Protestant Evangelical Alliance later turned over all its papers to the “World Council of Churches.” In recent times, the Evangelical Churches have made enormous strides in numbers and influence. All of this bears watching to see how the Protestant image of the beast will come into full development and power. Many have put this in the past, giving all the brethren an easy victory.

How easy it is to be able to claim victory over the beast and its image when the saints have not been confronted seriously in any way as were Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

The test will surely come to all the living saints, as it did to these three Hebrews. The saints are to have “gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image.”

Revelation 15:2



Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego

After the saints gain the victory here, the image of the beast fades out of the picture and only the papal beast remains. None of the seven plagues are said to fall on the image of the beast.

The first plague falls on those who had the “mark of the beast” and on those who “worshipped his image.” (Revelation 16:2) Notice that the scripture does not say a “plague” fell on the “image.” These distinctions are important and cannot be glossed over.

We are not told what happens to the image of the beast. Like the “woman” of Revelation 12, it just fades away. For some mysterious reason the metaphor changes in Revelation 16. No further active mention is made of the image, but we are suddenly presented with the false prophet without an introduction. Then in Revelation 19:20 the false prophet is identified with the Church of England and Ireland. Here the Bible defines who is referred to as the false prophet.

Why aren't the “kings of the earth, and their armies” cast alive into a “lake of fire”? A difference is shown here between institutions and people. The “kings of the earth, and their armies” are people, and they will be destroyed as enemies of the “King of Kings.” This can be done by ultimately making friends of them.

The beast and false prophet are institutions. While these institutions are run by people, still it is not people who are cast “alive into a lake of fire.” Only the institutions of falsehood are destroyed. Never again will the Lord allow an institution that is built on lies and misinformation to exist and perpetuate itself. False religion in government will never be permitted again.

While Satan will be “loosed out of his prison” (Revelation 20:7) when the thousand years are ended, still it is only Satan doing the deceiving. He does not have an institutional set-up to serve him. While “Gog and Magog” go forth to compass the “camp of the saints,” yet they are the deceived ones and not the source of the deception. Even here we notice a difference in language.

“Gog and Magog” are consumed by “fire” which “came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.” (Revelation 20:9) This will be the second death. However, Satan is “cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” (Revelation 20:10)

According to theology, Satan is in charge of “hell” and commands the torture of others.

This is bad theology. Only Satan, the papal beast and the false prophet are said to be “cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, ... and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

Here we have one spirit being and two institutions assigned to “the lake of fire and brimstone.”

While all three cease to exist, yet Satan and the two institutions he fathered, are said to be “tormented.”

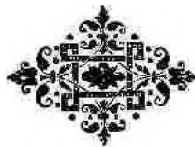


Hell Fire is “Bad Theology”

Obviously, this is not personal living torture, but an opprobrium that will last forever and ever at the recall and memory of these terrible sources of evil.

Those responsible for creating and teaching lies are more responsible than those deceived. “Death and hell,” upon delivering up the dead in them, are also “cast into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:14)

Happy is the ending to this story. Yes, only truth and righteousness will prevail. We have God’s assurance that deception and those responsible for it will be removed forever. Only righteousness and truth shall endure in God’s Kingdom.





THE STORY OF THE “IMAGE OF THE BEAST”

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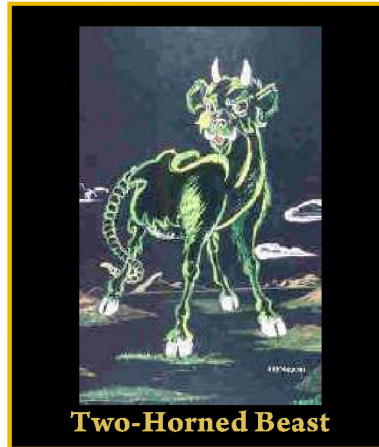
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Part I

“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.



“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.

“And he doeth great wonders so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

“And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

“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.

“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.”

Revelation 13:11-16

Adam was first formed, and subsequently God “breathed into his nostrils the breath life.” Man then became a sentient being. In like fashion, the Church of England and Ireland (the “beast” with “two horns” that spake as a “dragon”) first suggested to those that “dwell on the earth,” that they make an “image to the beast.”

Who would want an “image” to that ugly and mean “leopard-like” beast?

Certainly no one with an eye for beauty would. As though the four “beasts” of Revelation that already existed were not enough, this “beast” with “two horns” wants yet one more, and it is very specific in what it wants those who “dwell on the earth” to make.

It wants a powerful and mean “beast” that would perform in similar fashion to the “leopard-like” papal “beast.” Those who “dwell on the earth” succeed in making this “image.” They make an “image” to the papal “beast,” but there it lies comatose and inanimate. It needs to be given “life.” Only the “beast” with “two horns” has the power to do this. It has not done so yet, it seems.

The “beast” with “two horns” was formed during the reign of Henry VIII. He wished to have his marriage to Queen Catherine of Aragon annulled. He wanted an heir and she apparently could not provide one for him. He sent his request to Pope Clement VII (Giulio de’ Medici) in 1528.



King Henry VIII



**Ann Boleyn
Married King Henry VIII
After he divorced
Catherine of Aragon**



**Sebastiano del Piombo,
Pope Clement VII
c. 1526, Museo di Capodimonte,
Naples**

Two papal representatives, Cardinals Compeggio and Wolsey, decided against granting Henry VIII his divorce. Normally, if Catherine of Aragon had been some ordinary woman, the annulment would have been granted in a heartbeat. However, she was the aunt of Charles V, emperor of Germany, to whom the pope was closely allied.

Pope Clement VII's nephew, Alexander de Medici, married the daughter of Charles V. This brought tremendous new power to the pope on the one hand. However, in politics you win some and lose some.

The decision to refuse Henry VIII of England his request was a disaster for the pope. The king formed his own church and rid himself of Catherine of Aragon, killing two birds with one stone, as it were.

Thus, the new Church of England and Ireland came into being. Subsequently, under the reign of "Bloody" Queen Mary, the papal powers tried to retake England back to the mother church. However, despite the cruelty of Roman Catholic persecution, the Protestant movement in England could not be stamped out.



**"Bloody" Queen Mary I
Catholic Queen of England**

To this day, the English church and state are united under the banner of the crown of England and the Episcopal Church.

The Church of England and Ireland prospered greatly. Breaking away from the papal power may seem to have been a small event, because it started out as a king wanting to rid himself of his queen.

Little events such as this led to a tremendous change in history. The new freedoms of Protestants in England (first led by Wycliff, starting in 1378, and then enhanced by the birth of the English Church) now changed the course of British history.

Under papal rule, total subjugation of thought was required. As papacy lost its grip over England, the Protestants found an open door for reform. This enabled England enormous freedom of thought, business, trade, etc. The British were able to harness the industrial revolution while at the same time spreading their empire over the earth. England also embraced education and freedom of thought in science.

The British navy cast its shadow over the world. Britain would take the natural resources of its far-flung empire at dirt-cheap rates and return manufactured goods at high rates. It became rich as it became the banking center of the world. Banking was also to become an incredibly powerful tool in the emerging industrial world.

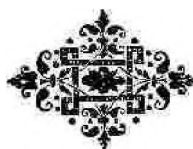
England's educational system became the inspiration of many nations. Little did Pope Clement VII realize how badly the papal fortunes would suffer from the loss of England.

	<p>The Church of England and Ireland went on to greatness while the papacy looked on green with envy as the British flag spread over the whole world.</p>
<p>British Ships Ruled the Seas as the Sun Never Set on the British Empire</p>	<p>With its gunboat diplomacy Britain ruled the waves and much of the world.</p>

Britain even took the Holy Land for a season, something the papacy wanted to do but could not do. Yes, the “beast” with “two horns” was able to do all of this “in the sight,” in full view of, the “leopard beast,” the papacy (Revelation 13:14).

At last papacy realized that the policy of keeping people ignorant and poor would not allow them to successfully function in an increasingly liberated and enlightened world. This forced papacy to reluctantly abandon the policy which for centuries had enabled the kings of earth to live “deliciously with her” (Revelation 18:9).

The papal powers have been a “Johnny come lately;” but in our time, by abandoning her old ways, the papal powers have regained stature and power in the modern world, while the Church of England languishes. The British Empire has experienced a setting sun, and the glories of her former days are gone. Its momentum has long since ended. Hence, with this brief overview of history, we see how the “beast” with “two horns” now might need a little help from an “image of the beast.” Nothing succeeds like success.



Defining the “Image of the Beast”

Our subject is not the “beast” with “two horns.” However, we cannot speak about the “image of the beast” without acknowledging that the “beast” with “two horns” suggests the creation of this “image” to those who “dwell on the earth.” The two-horned beast alone has the power to “give life unto the image of the beast” (Revelation 13:15).

The making of an “image of the beast” required a combination of church and state union. Papacy at one time had enormous land holdings. It virtually was a government in the earth, exercising religious and temporal power. The same was true of the “beast” with “two horns,” the Church of England and Ireland.



However, the United States of America, a predominantly Protestant nation, is a republic that forbids union of church and state. The exercise of religious influence without civil authority or power will not provide the conditions for a “beast” to exist in the United States if it is to be an “image” of the “leopard beast.” The Protestants have long desired an organization for greater power and influence in the world.

The Evangelical Alliance formed in 1846 was an endeavor by evangelical Protestants to organize for power. Protestants have not been good at organizing. Various denominations have special interests and are steeped in doctrines that find them at odds with each other.

The very year the Lord finally cleansed his sanctuary was the very year that the Evangelical Alliance of Protestants was formed. After all was said and done, nothing came of this alliance. It never got off the ground. Finally the leaders of that movement turned over all their papers to the World Council of Churches.

The World Council of Churches came into being in 1948 at Amsterdam. The world had just emerged from the most deadly war in history. Nations of Europe were trying to heal their wounds and rebuild from the ashes of that terrible war.

The papal powers that had tried to ride the axis powers as the queen of the third Reich had failed miserably. The bloody charger the papacy had hoped to ride to power was shot out from under her. Gone were their hopes of gaining control of the Roman Empire and a return to her former glory.

Neither the “leopard beast” nor the “beast” with “two horns” had returned from the war with laurels of victory. Hence the Church of England provided leadership at Amsterdam to create the World Council of Churches. Even the papal powers begin to rethink their “go-it-alone” endeavors.

Perhaps the time had come to make a common cause with Protestant powers, at least until Papacy could seize their worldly objectives. In other words, they would use allied forces to gain their objective and then shaft the allies after their victory. One must remember that these “beasts” of Revelation are all bent on power. There never was and never will be any love found among them.

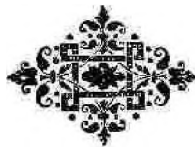
The evidence so far seems to point to the World Council of Churches as being the “image of the beast.” The fact that it was formed and then remained lifeless fits into the present situation.

The World Council of Churches seemed to start off at a critical time in world history. The world had just emerged from the bloodiest war of history. There was chaos in civil affairs, and religion shared the chaos of that time. Everyone was looking for answers and for hope as they climbed out of the war-ravaged bunkers.

At Evanston, Illinois, the World Council of Churches' theme was "Christ the Hope of the World." That seemed to be its high point. What happened to this movement is that it was infiltrated with communists from the Eastern Orthodox Church. This council soon went off to engage in the social ills of the world.

The resources of the World Council were squandered in Africa fighting for social justice—which was nothing more than communist propaganda. Africa had started to sink into anarchy. Joining any of the various factions of anarchy would not save Africa. The World Council of Churches emerged bloodied, but wiser from this foolish excursion.

The World Council of Churches is waiting for a cause again that might bring it some credibility in the world scheme of things. When that moment comes, the "beast" with the "two horns" will step forward to give "life" to the "image."

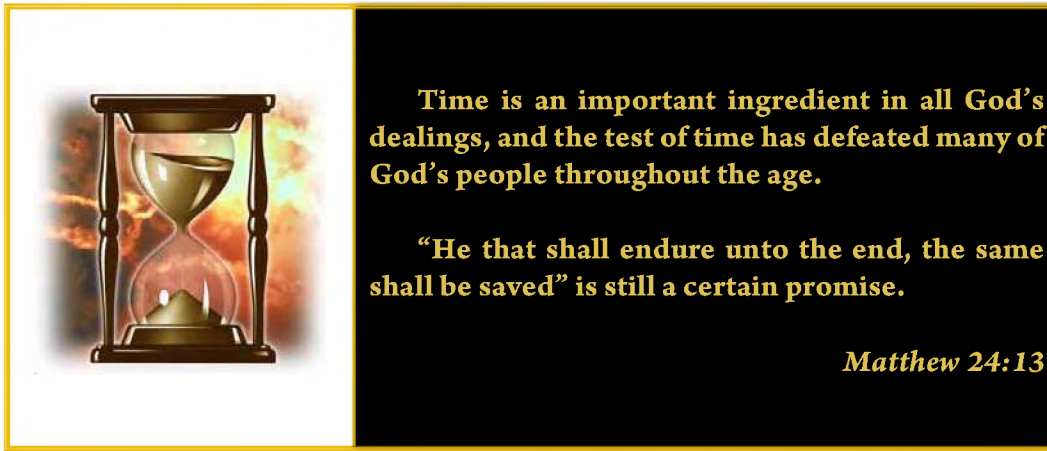


Part II

The Patience of the Saints

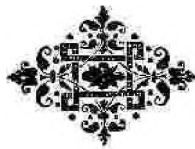
The Lord's people have understood what must yet come to pass, but have suffered uncertainty with regard to this vision. The saints watched the Evangelical Alliance rise and fall and also have witnessed the World Council of Churches emerge in 1948 and then flounder trying to bring social justice to third world nations.

It is easy to become confused and uncertain. The feeling may arise that we have followed our imaginations rather than the sure word of prophecy. The answer is no, we have not. This vision is true and certain and will surely come to pass. Have no doubt about it. The mills of God grind very slowly, but exceedingly fine.



Prophecy must always be considered with the realization that we may need to make adjustments as events develop and come to fulfillment. How all the particulars will play out, no one may know in detail beforehand. As Paul said, "We see through a glass, darkly" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Some have used this scripture to imply that we are looking through opaque glass and, therefore, we see nothing. That is not what it says. Looking through a dark glass provides an overview of events, but some of the finer features cannot be distinguished. Dark sunglasses are still very popular. They limit the light, but also reduce eyestrain. Let us keep looking "through a glass, darkly."



What Is God's Anticipated Response to the "Image" Worshipers?

Revelation 13:16, 17 left us facing a mean and threatening "image of the beast." The story does not end there. Revelation has many interrupted stories, so the reader has to read through several different visions before the story is rejoined. Such is the case with this "image" story. Revelation 14:9, 10 says,

"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."

The third angel is probably the message of warning that came early in the harvest in *THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON*, predicting the rise of this “image” and its activities.

God anticipated the creation of this “image” and its receiving “life.” He warned his saints beforehand to be prepared in mind and heart to resist unto death identifying with either the “beast” or its “image.” God will not have his people yield to this Protestant and Catholic conspiracy.

If any of his saints should be deceived into cooperation on any level with this religious conspiracy, they will suffer the consequences by sharing in the “plagues” coming upon Babylon. They will also have eternity to regret this deflection on their part.

It is certain that anyone who yields to the beast or its image will not be of the “bride of Christ.” The bride is clearly a class “which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image” (Revelation 20:4). We are not talking poetry here. This is a matter of paramount importance to the saints. No saints may yield here. The message is loud and clear and may not be misunderstood.



The Three Hebrews



**Nebuchadnezzar’s Image
on the Plains of Dura**

The story of the three Hebrews is given to encourage the saints in preparation for this anticipated rise of the “image of the beast.”

Nebuchadnezzar built a ninety-foot golden image on the plains of Dura, which was alleged to be on the left bank of the Tigris.

Daniel 3:1-30

What makes this event significant was that it required every one of all the provinces, especially people of importance, to worship at its dedication. It was not a general shrine which people worshiped at will. This was to be initially worshiped by command. **Worship was not optional.**

This golden image needed credibility, and the best way to get that was by command. The punishment for failure to do so was very clear (Daniel 3:6). Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had been newly promoted to positions of power at Daniel’s request. Their insubordination would reflect badly on Daniel.



**Shadrach, Meshach and
Abednego
in the Fiery Furnace**

We know the story of how these three Hebrews refused to bow or bend.

They could not and they would not bow down to this image. The furnace was heated to seven times its normal heat to accommodate the king’s anger.

They were thrown bound into the furnace and to everyone’s shock and amazement they did not burn. One like the Son of God appeared with them in the fire.

They came out unscathed without even the smell of fire. The only things the fire burned were their bonds.

The three Hebrews emerged victorious over the “image” experience. Not only so, they were promoted in the province of Babylon. Had the three Hebrews bowed to the image they would have saved their lives, but lost the honor of serving the living God.

Consider that thousands of people are sacrificing their lives daily on remote battlefields. Countless thousands die unwillingly, just being victims of circumstances. Death comes to all, sooner or later, so why should a consecrated Christian be unwilling to put his life on the line?

Of course, this is easy to say, and usually compromises come because there is an easy alternative to making the supreme sacrifice. Yes, and perhaps a noble rationalization is presented that obedience would interfere with the sacrifices we are making. However, obedience is “better than sacrifice.”

We see a common lesson emerging.

The three Hebrews came out of the furnace with full recognition that they served the living God.

Elijah, in his last three exchanges with King Ahaziah demonstrated three times to the king and his company of fifty soldiers that he was a “man of God” (2 Kings 1:9-16). A lot of people recognized Elijah’s relationship to God.

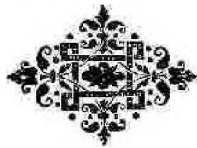
Herod also “feared the multitude, because they counted him [John the Baptist] a prophet” (Matthew 14:5).



We have three lessons here portraying an end time condition. All of them confirm the fact that the Lord’s faithful saints will be recognized as representing God.

Bro. Russell suggests that one of the ways that the tares would be burned is by the fact that they would recognize the “real church of Christ.” (Reprint 5951)

All this adds up to a condition where the saints by their refusal to compromise distinguish themselves before the world as servants of God. The Revelation story goes on to show that the saints not only distinguish themselves, but that the Lord will engage them to finish the last features of the harvest.



“Them That Had Gotten the Victory over the Beast and over His Image”

“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.”

Revelation 15:2

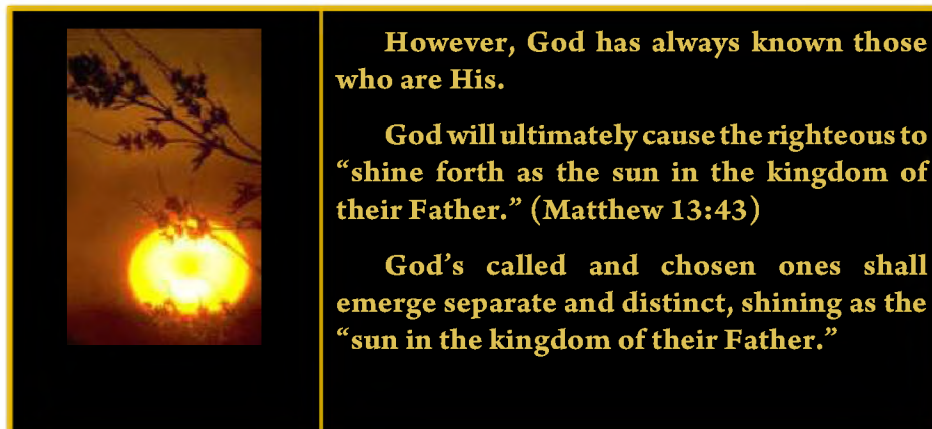
Earlier the saints had been warned not to yield to the “beast” or “its image.” The time then comes when the “image of the beast” is formed and vitalized. The story then goes beyond that time to when they threaten that all must bow down or face the consequences.

At last this verse takes us to the time when the saints emerge victorious, having refused to bow or bend or burn. They stand as known and recognized as servants of God. The “spirit and power” of the Elijah class will then be seen to be on them. A class here emerges victorious while still in the flesh, but recognized as a part of those who have the “Father’s name written in their foreheads” (Revelation 14:1).

At last a class that has distinguished itself by unswerving loyalty to God and His truth here emerges as separate and distinct from a host of professing Christians.

“Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.” Malachi 3:18

Pluralism will here have an end. Anybody today can still claim to serve the Lord. They can teach anything and do anything, and none dare say what is right and what is wrong. The servants of truth and the servants of error may not be distinguished. That would be politically incorrect.



If there is a God in heaven, this is surely how matters must eventuate. This will all come as a bitter surprise and disappointment to many in Christendom.

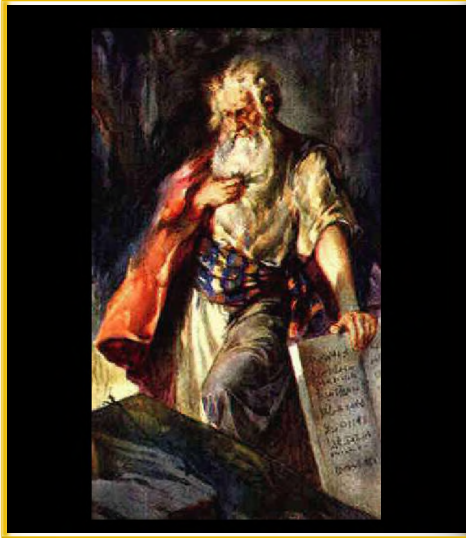


And They Sing the Song of “Moses” and the “Lamb”

“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.” Revelation 15:3, 4

Those who had gotten the “victory” over the “beast” and its “image” are said to stand on or over the “sea of glass,” while below they view the “fire” [fiery judgments of the Lord]. Like the Hebrews, these standing on the “sea of glass” know how to be tested in the fire and to come forth as gold. However, those beneath the “sea of glass” are ill prepared for what shall befall them.



The “Song of Moses” refers to the song Moses sang the day he died, recorded in Deuteronomy 32.

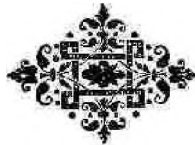
(See “The Song of Moses and the Lamb.”)

The Song of Moses tells how God judges his people and finally how he judges the enemies of his people.

The Lamb has been engaged in a similar work throughout the age. However, at the end of the age the Lamb will finalize judgment on the “beast” and its “image.” It is important that all understand the righteousness of God in these judgments. That is why those who have gotten the victory over the “beast” and its “image” sing:

“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.”

They know how to suffer injustice and can truly appreciate God’s true justice.



Part III

Why the “Image of the Beast” Remains Lifeless

The “image of the beast” seems to be an unfinished story. If it is indeed the World Council of Churches, and this is by far the biggest of all Protestant union efforts, it seems to have lost its way. It is only now trying to save face from being led into the debacle of social reform in nations that were hopelessly engaged in never ending conflict.

Furthermore, the laws of the great ruling nations in Europe and North America prevent anything close to the desired union of church and state. Only if a temporary collapse of democratic rule occurs can the moment arrive for the “beast” with “two horns” to vitalize this “image of the beast.” Only during emergency rule, could a union of church and state step forward, claiming that to regain law and order the nations must yield to an old form of government.

The gains of democracy would need to be laid aside if the nations are forced to military rule to prevent anarchy. The worst form of government is better than no government.

It is because so much time has elapsed already, that many have looked to other ways of patching together some explanations that might place the vitalizing of this “image” into the past. Bro. Russell mused as to whether the Evangelical Alliance might bring about a fulfillment of a vitalized “image.” He mused that the Church of England might “give it apostolic authority to preach” (*THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON*, p. ix-xv, the 1912 foreword). This never happened in Bro. Russell’s lifetime nor since.

The Evangelical Alliance ended in frustration and disunity. The time frame of world events has enlarged considerably since Bro. Russell finished his course. However, it is clear that these events somehow need to find fulfillment. On page xv of this same foreword, the Pastor speaks of Armageddon, “Not Yet, but Soon.” Two things were clear at that writing.

(1) **“The Image of the Beast must yet receive life-power.”**

(2) **“A larger number” of “Hebrews” needed to return before the Armageddon crisis.**

The vision was crystal clear in Bro. Russell’s mind. These events had to have a greater fulfillment. He could not squeeze this vision into the past. Nor can we.

However, **two things did begin in the fateful year of 1948.**

(1) **The World Council of Churches was formed.**

(2) **Israel gained statehood that same year.**

Is this some coincidence, some happenstance of history? No! It was God’s appointment with His prophetic word. Events in Israel have been slowly moving toward Gog’s invasion. The World Council of Churches’ movement toward being vitalized has been slowly moving.

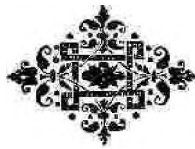
The student of prophecy must keep both events clearly in view. It is possible that some serious adjustments must be made before the end. Things can happen very quickly and set in motion what the Bible seems to clearly indicate must happen.

It is difficult to foresee the world events that will bring this “image of the beast” to life and to the forefront. It could come about by a financial collapse that would create unparalleled havoc in the financial world.

The whole world is running on a system of credit and promissory notes. In yesteryear, gold or silver backed money. Now, nothing backs it. As long as people have trust in its value, this system works. However, when the day comes that the man who has a loaf of bread will not exchange it for money, then money will become worthless.

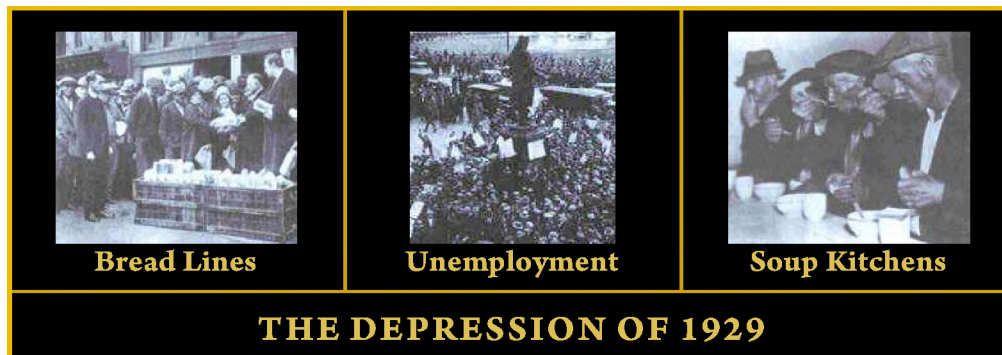
The ruble in Russia has lost much of its value, causing terrible loss and pain to the savings and security of countless millions. The former communist government spent every spare ruble building atomic bombs and weapons of destruction. Now they have a huge stockpile of atomic weapons that are expensive to maintain and keep from being stolen. They cannot eat these weapons and they can't maintain them forever. It is like having the tiger by the tail: you can't hold onto it but you dare not let go.

Much of the five trillion-dollar debt of the United States is due to the arms race. The United States government overestimated the Russian arms capabilities and spent huge amounts of money determined to have superiority. So the world has enough explosive capability to kill everyone in the world six times or more. Who really needs this? They call this MAD—mutual assured destruction.



A Financial Collapse May Occur

Should a financial collapse occur, the effects would be worldwide. All the securities and pensions and insurance monies would be affected. In 1929 when the banks failed, it wiped out the savings and assets of countless millions. People suffered silently then.



Today, we doubt that people would be that placid. There would probably be rioting in the streets. Imagine the rage in the hearts of those who were well situated financially, to wake up one day and find much of the wealth they had squirreled away gone.


A military government would need to step forward to quell the rioting and restore law and order. At such a time the churches might serve a useful role in helping the state gain credibility and start rebuilding from the ashes. A church and state arrangement might bring the “image of the beast” the right environment to receive a vitalization from the “beast” with “two horns.” We can only guess at the possible turn of events that will set the stage for this long waited moment to come. We deal here with possibilities and not probabilities.

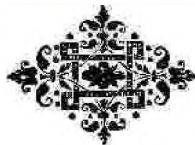
The real wealth of the world is its land, its resources, and most importantly its working people who produce food, housing, and the things that society needs. A financial collapse does not change the resources that a nation or people possess. It merely reshuffles the deck with winners and losers, as the holders of paper wealth must turn to the real source of wealth—natural and industrial resources, and sweat and labor.

Nations have recovered from monetary collapse many times in history. They will do so again. However, for a time this will provide an atmosphere bordering on anarchy. If the state and the churches step forward in this most auspicious moment and succeed in quelling the forces that threaten society, they will appear as saviors. This would bring them credibility and restore law and order with the hope that the world might begin to return to some degree of normalcy.

Why should the true Christian be concerned with a church and state union that promises law, order and hope?

In 1999 it was reported that there were 40 wars going on. Of those 40 wars, 30 were caused by religion. That may sound strange, but the most awful things have been done in the name of religion. People with religious power can be ruthless with anyone or anything that threatens that power. See what the religious leaders did to Jesus.

	<p>The history of religion is cruel and terrible.</p> <p>Before the reader are the open pages of history to confirm this.</p> <p>The true Christian will surely be tested, should the “image of the beast” come alive, and come alive it will.</p>
<p>The “Christian” Crusades</p>	



What Will the Vitalized “Image of the Beast” Do?

“And he [the “beast” with “two horns”] 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.

“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.” Revelation 13:15-17

This affirms that the “image of the beast” will be vitalized and that it will exercise the powers described. The word of God “cannot be broken.” (John 10:35) However, we need not conclude that everything stated is literal.

**The “mark” in the “right hand” or the “forehead”
is not a literal stamp.**



The “right hand” suggests that cooperation demanded would not require people agree with their religious viewpoints. Only outward cooperation is implied.



Being marked in the “forehead” would indicate that those individuals share a similar belief.

This appears liberal enough to leave an option as to what level of cooperation anyone may choose. However, there is no tolerance for those who do not wish to comply with the “right hand” or “forehead” mark.

Christians will be required to “receive a mark.” When you make a law, you have to add some punishment for noncompliance. The punishment is clearly stated. “No man might buy or sell [in the spiritual marketplace].”

This does not relate to buying or selling groceries. Rather, freedom to preach and teach, and/or freedom to use the media or mail service might be denied. The Lord’s faithful might be sorely tried.

One thing is certain, if they wish to “reign” with Christ, they cannot “worship the beast” or its “image” or receive his “mark” (Revelation 20:4). To do so would immediately remove all possibility of “reigning” with Christ.

The “image of the beast” will have considerable authority for a season. We are told that it would “speak.” This means its voice will be heard. A church authority without the support of the civil government could not speak with such authority. It mandates that as

“many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed [ostracized, not recognized as Christians and, therefore, be denied Christian liberty].”

This, of course, does not mean that the faithful who refuse to yield to this tyranny may not suffer physical violence or incarceration. **Religious persecution tends to be ruthless because it imagines some higher good must be served.**



**The “Holy Office”
of the Inquisition**

The “image” “causeth all, ... to receive a mark.” Yes, the “image” will be in the “marking” business. If one is not with them, he will be considered against them. They will designate or “mark” those yielding to their demands.

Any refusing will be prohibited from “buying” or “selling” in the spiritual market place.

We count its powers in four categories:

- (1) “speaking” power**
- (2) “killing” [ostracizing] power**
- (3) “marking” power**
- (4) “prohibiting” power**

That is a lot of power for an “image” that has come alive overnight, as it were.

The Protestant movement has watched in envy as the pope and the Papacy he represents have become the most powerful religious organization in the world today. The pope is lining up the European nations and South America into an economic block of power. The present pope was instrumental in the overthrow of the communist block in Russia and Eastern Europe.

The papal beast is no longer watching the beast with two horns ascend to power. The beast with two horns is now saddling up to the papal powers, its glory days now gone. It needs to ally itself to preserve its waning influence in the world. The Protestants, who have longed for power and prominence in the world, are not blind to the present-day successes of the papal power.



The Rider Without a Horse

The United States is emerging not only as a superpower, but also as the great industrial giant and a world leader in technology. Because economics and technology are the new engines of the world, the United States is the envy of all nations.

The Church of England and Ireland rode the horse of the British Empire to glory. Now it seems evident that the right set of circumstances could enable the Protestants to ride the horse of the United States to power, as did the Church of England and Ireland. Only one thing hinders this possibility.

The United States has a constitution that prohibits a union of church and state. That means that as long as this constitutional guarantee is in place, no Protestant federation can ride it to power. That is why the World Council of Churches, though large in numbers, has little influence or power. It needs to mount the greatest steed in history—the United States.

The British fortunes are now tied heavily to the United States. Should the window of opportunity open for church state union in the United States, the Church of England and Ireland would grant it vitality in a heartbeat. The sun has been slowly setting on the British Empire, so it must tie its fortunes to the new economic star shining in the world.

The early church had little political influence until the fourth century when Constantine took over the church. Almost overnight the persecuted Christians found influence and power when they became the religion of the state.



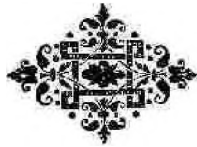
**Persecution
of John Huss**

The power and honor and riches that came to the church made the bishops believe that God was smiling upon them.

The very bishops that had suffered under the abuses of pagan Rome’s power soon became the persecutors of Christians who refused to be wedded to the Roman State.

It takes great character to handle absolute power. With Jesus, who has “all power ... in heaven and in earth” (Matthew 28:18), there is no danger that he can be corrupted. He is governed by perfect power, wisdom, justice and love.

When people with small character and great ambitions come to power it is quite different. **Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.** Just as “yon Cassius has a lean and hungry look,” so the Protestants are “lean and hungry” waiting as a rider for a horse. Which events must transpire before they have a horse to saddle-up remains to be seen.



Part IV

What Happens to the “Image of the Beast”?

We are told of a class who get the “victory over the beast, and over his image.” They have endured through the abuses heaped upon them. The “image of the beast” seems to fall apart and disintegrate. Those who succumbed to demands of the “beast” and its “image” are sadly in line to receive the first “plague.” Revelation 16:2 says,

“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.”



This pain falls upon those who yielded to the demands of the “beast” and its “image.” If God had not become involved, the results might be different. However, it was God who said,

“If any man worship the beast and his image, ... the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation.”

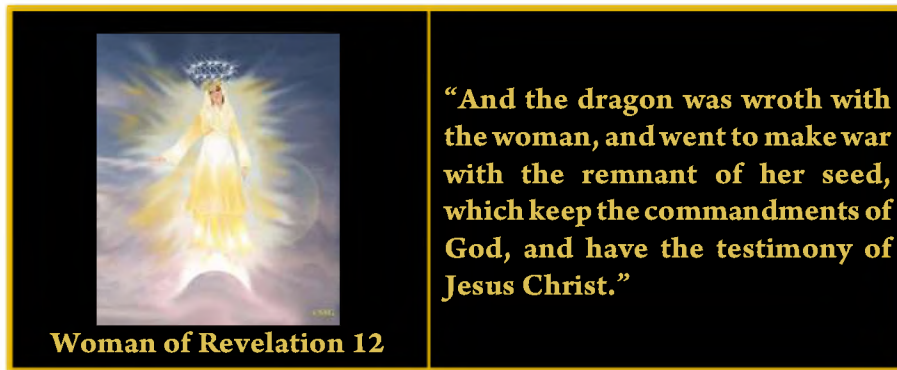
None may escape the consequences that God has promised those who yield to the “beast” and its “image.”

We are not told what actually happens to the “image of the beast.” We are told specifically that the “beast” and the “false prophet” (identified in Revelation 19:20 as the Church of England and Ireland) are “cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.”


Make no mistake, these false religious systems will be destroyed and never again will a false religion be allowed to become a government in the earth. This is not said of the “image,” and so we are left to ponder its fate. Just as we are not told what happened to the “woman” of Revelation 12, so we are not told what becomes of the “image.”

If one is prepared for a guess, ours would be that the Protestant Federation, possibly represented in the World Council of Churches, ceases to exist as a “beast” or as a governing body in the earth because the military or emergency government returns to constitutional rule. If that happens, a church and state union would be ended. So the “image” really has a short life once it receives “life.” It is short and mean and will not be missed.

We are not told what happens to the “woman” of Revelation 12. We know she left behind a “seed.” Revelation 12:17 says,



What a blessed heritage she leaves behind. Apparently, in the harvest of the Gospel age the faithful saints were called out of Babylon into a condition of separation. Hence the woman who lived through most of the Gospel age, passes off the scene yielding her torch of virtue to the “remnant of her seed.”

<p>It is this “remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” that seems to trouble the “dragon” — that old serpent the devil (Revelation 12:17).</p> <p>The dragon is determined to “make war” with this “remnant of her seed.”</p> <p>This is a statement of fact, not conjecture.</p>	 <p>The Dragon will make war with the remnant of the woman’s seed.</p>
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Satan will consummate his commitment to destroy this faithful “seed.” The conflict between Satan and the “seed of the woman” started in Genesis. It will culminate with the serpent bruising the heel of the “seed of the woman” and the woman’s seed bruising the serpent’s “head” (Genesis 3:15). That is bad news for the “serpent.”

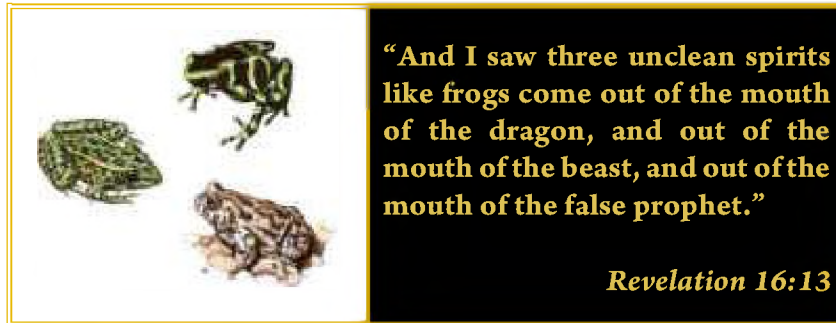
There is little doubt that the agencies the “serpent” designs to use in his war against the “remnant of her seed” are the “beast” and its “image” and the “false prophet.”

You fight true religion and faith with counterfeit religion and those who merely profess faith. That is how the devil secured the death of our Lord. He used the Jewish church leaders to champion his cause against Christ, the true heir of the woman. Oddly, these Jewish leaders were alleged to be holy men who fasted weekly and made long prayers to be heard by men.

It should not come as a great surprise that Satan would again rally the Protestant and Catholic power structure to consummate his “war” against those “which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”



The “False Prophet”



Suddenly, and without any explanation, the language changes here. Up until this point the “image of the beast” shared the stage with the “beast” and the “dragon.” No reason is given, but suddenly the metaphor changes and we have an unknown symbol thrust upon us.

Were it not for Revelation 19:20, we might be hard pressed to define the “false prophet.” However, the Lord provides the information we need to figure out who this “false prophet” is. The Revelator identifies the “false prophet” as the “beast” with “two horns” that performed “miracles” in the “sight of the [papal] beast” (Revelation 13:11, 14).

This will be all that is left of the “image of the beast.” Something happens along the way to declaw and defang this “image” so it really ceases to be a “beast.” The church state status it enjoyed for a brief season is suddenly ended.

Its religious position will be the same, however. Without the state to enforce its edicts, it ceases to exercise power. Its sympathies are still allied with the “beast” with “two horns” as it fades into insignificance and ultimately into oblivion. Hence it is not destroyed with the papal “beast” and the “false prophet.”



What Happens to the “Scarlet Colored Beast”?

We know that the “dragon” is thrown into the “bottomless pit.” The papal “beast” and the “false prophet” [Church of England and Ireland] are cast “alive into a lake of fire.” The “image of the beast” becomes extinct before it can be officially destroyed. That is a total of four “beasts” accounted for.

The “scarlet beast” is the only one not accounted for. The “ten horns” of the “scarlet beast” “make war with the Lamb” (Revelation 17:3, 12, 14). However, the “Lamb” does not destroy them, but simply defeats their warfare against him and his saints.

Next we find that it is the “ten horns” and the “[scarlet] beast” that are engaged to “hate the whore,” and “make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire” (Revelation 17:16). This shows the complete destruction of the apostate “woman” [the Catholic Church].

We are not specifically told what happens to the “scarlet beast” except that in Revelation 20 the Lord and his saints are established in power. In that the “scarlet beast” was a “peoples’ form” of government, really a republic of sorts, logically the people will not be destroyed.

As all peoples and nations yield to the sovereignty of Christ, they will cease to be enemies of the King. So the people who constituted the “scarlet beast” will fall under the headship of Christ and his kingdom.

Our story ends with all the enemies of the Lord vanquished and destroyed. Only two enemies will remain.

Satan is retained as an enemy and is loosed out of “his prison” whenever the thousand years are ended. He will be allowed to appeal to any on earth that have sympathy with sin so that they may follow their father the devil. He and his kind will be “cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are” (Revelation 20:7, 10).

The other enemy is “death.” Actually, it will be the “Adamic death.”

“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. ...

“The last enemy that shall be destroyed is [Adamic] death.” 1 Corinthians 15:24-26

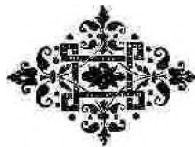


The saints shall share in the victory of Christ and his kingdom.

“Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end” (Isaiah 9:7).

The ending of the Revelation story is glorious.

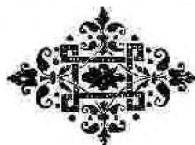
Hallelujah!





THE STORY OF THE SCARLET COLORED BEAST

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Part I

Revelation 17

Revelation seventeen has a total of seventeen kings divided into seven and ten respectively. **Seven kings** are the great emperors who set in motion governments that became the “**seven heads**” of this “scarlet colored beast.” This rule of emperors extended from Constantine to the Third Reich under Hitler. The “beast” has “ten horns” that are contemporaneous with it—they existed and were subservient to the seven successive “kings” (emperors).

However, there are also “**ten kings**” who postdate that historic past and are said to receive “no kingdom” (as yet, is supplied) (vs. 12). These “ten kings” fit into the same **geographical Europe**, but in an **updated time frame when Europe is without a “head” (emperor)**. This carries us beyond 1945 when the Third Reich collapsed. Eventually these “ten kings” do receive kingdoms, for we are told they “receive power as kings one hour with the [scarlet] beast” (vs. 12).

All seventeen kings were prophetic in John’s time when he wrote Revelation, about CE 96. **However, the “seven kings” have passed into history along with the historical “ten horns.” Now only the “ten kings” who have received “no kingdom” pertain to our time.**



Verse 1-2

“And there came one of the seven angels [messengers] which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:

“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.”

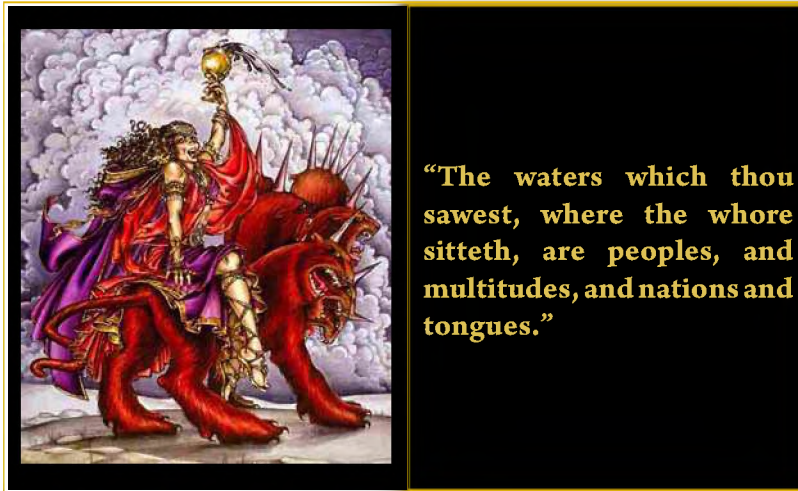
A better translation is provided by Westcott and Hort:

“And came one out of the seven angels the [ones] having the seven bowls, and spoke with me saying hither, I shall show to you the judgment of the harlot the great, the [one] sitting upon waters many.”

The purpose of this chapter is to show the saints the judgment of the great “whore.” This translation makes clear that all seven angels have one each of the seven vials, and not that one of the seven has them all. However, one from among the “seven” explains the vision.

Chapter seventeen is complete in itself. It shows how, when and who will destroy the “woman.” When the chapter is done, she is destroyed. This “woman” is said to sit on “waters,” the “beast that carrieth her,” and “seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.”

The waters are defined in Revelation 17:15 as: “The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” This is helpful information.



The “angel” who shows John (the “John class”) this vision was “one of the seven angels [of the ones] which had the seven vials [bowls].” This “one of the seven angels” is most likely the essence of *THE TIME IS AT HAND*, Chapter IX, pp. 267-361, **“The Man of Sin-Antichrist.”**

The John class is called to “Come hither,” or into the “wilderness” of separation from the world, to be shown the judgment of this wicked “woman” or apostate false church.

This woman is said to sit on “many waters,” or upon many “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” (vs. 15). The peoples and nations of earth on a massive scale support this “woman.” She also is said to sit on “seven heads” which “are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth” (vs. 9). The number of “heads” indicates a succession of governments, and so this woman has longevity, ensconced upon seven successions of government from Constantine unto Hitler.

Those looking for a literal “man of sin” who will appear in Jerusalem and deceive the world for seven years are looking for a “flash in the pan” fulfillment of Scripture. This “woman” is long-lived and very powerful. She “reigns over the kings of the earth” and also commits “fornication” with them (vs. 2), that is, over the “seven” emperor “kings.”

The historical “ten horns” upon this “beast” in this chapter, for some reason, are not called “kings.” Neither the “ten horns” on the “dragon” nor the “ten horns” on the “leopard beast” are defined as “kings.”

The only “ten kings” defined, as such, are in chapter seventeen who are said to have “received no kingdom” as yet. This indicates that this “woman” has and will provide religion as a covering for the nations in all their evil. She is a “woman” without virtue. Scripture designates her as “Jezebel” that “cursed woman.” (2 Kings 9:34)



Verses 1 and 2 are introductory to the whole chapter. John is “carried” away “in the spirit into the wilderness” of separation from the world and then sees what the “angel” has been talking about.

The “kings of the earth” are said to have “committed fornication” with her, and the people of the earth “have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” It seems this “woman” has corrupted both “kings” and “people” and both are consumed with either passion or in a drunken stupor.

The true saints of God are pure and chaste from the world. They are the “light of the world” and speak to those drawn to the true Light.



Verse 3

“So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.”

There are three “beasts” in Revelation that have “seven heads” and “ten horns.”

First is the “red dragon” (Revelation 12), which is similar in color to the “scarlet” “beast.” The notable difference is that the “dragon” has “seven crowns” on its “heads” while the “scarlet” “beast” has no crowns either on its “heads” or “horns.”

Second is the “leopard” “beast” of Revelation thirteen, which has “ten crowns” on its “ten horns,” implying kingship.

Third is the “scarlet” “beast” who has no crowns at all and is a rather poor “beast.” John says of this “beast” that it is “full of names of blasphemy.”

		
Red Dragon	Leopard-Like Beast	Scarlet Beast
Revelation 12	Revelation 13	Revelation 17
7 Heads	7 Heads	7 Heads
10 Horns	10 Horns	10 Horns
Crowns on Heads	Crowns on Horns	No Crowns

Rome was once a republic. It had a senate composed of patricians (nobility) and the plebeians (common people). Early on, as a pagan republic it had some 3,000 gods or names of gods, all blasphemous.

When Constantine accepted Christianity, he exchanged the pagan religion for the then budding false Christianity, which developed a pope who also assumed all kinds of “blasphemous” titles which would adhere to this defunct “scarlet beast” (*THE TIME IS AT HAND*, p. 307 “Blasphemous Titles”).

Actually this “scarlet” “beast” was defunct and in a dormant condition, but the “woman” still was ensconced upon the “waters” or the hapless peoples who had no voice in government.

In our time the pagan influences have made a comeback, especially on the “ten kings” who have adopted the neo-pagan religion of evolution (which the pope now endorses) and humanism, a pagan influence in modern society controlling our schools, our governments, our media and the like.

Humanist concepts controlled the former Soviet Union and now they control the European Common Market nations. The humanists pretend not to be a religion, but in fact they are, and so they function in the Christian world unhindered. Humanism does not necessarily attack Christianity, but it does dilute people’s loyalty to their Christian profession.

Verse 4

“And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.”



This verse describes her clothing and adornments.

She is arrayed with “purple and scarlet” and decked with “gold and precious stones and pearls,” all very majestic in displaying her opulence.

However, two colors are lacking: blue as a symbol of faithfulness, and white as a symbol of purity. She professes neither.

The “golden cup,” which represents the Bible, in her hand was defiled with her abominations caused by impure relationship with the “kings” of the earth.



Verse 5

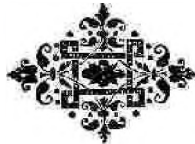
“And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”

**Mystery, Babylon the Great,
The Mother of Harlots
and Abominations of the Earth**



This descriptive label should warn every saint. No matter how graciously she may adorn herself, let every saint know the true character of this “woman.” She will not change and neither should our opinion of her change. We must heed what God says of her and not what others may say or what she might say of herself.

Beware of pluralism. This “woman” has begotten Protestant daughters who walk in her ways. The Protestants have continued the same habits as their mother.



Verse 6

“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 [aghast in amazement].”

This “woman” is a cold-blooded murderess with the “blood of saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus” on her hands. Whenever the devil or this “cursed woman” comes knocking on your door, know for certain that you are prey and nothing more.



**St. Bartholomew's
Massacre**

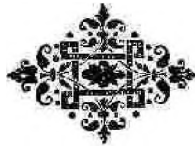


The Day After

The Lord holds her responsible for the “blood of saints” and the “martyrs of Jesus.” That is the very word of the Lord.

Recently the pope has tried to change his image to a benign and caring protector of even criminals and murderers. This “woman,” who invented the inquisition, now pretends to be so compassionate that she deplors the death penalty as cruel and unacceptable punishment.

Try as she may, God holds her responsible for spilling righteous blood. God himself will require her punishment. Such conduct will not go unrequited, because there is a God in heaven.



Part II

Verse 7

**“And the angel said unto me,
Wherefore didst thou marvel? 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 messenger (*THE TIME IS AT HAND*, Chapter IX, “The Man of Sin—Antichrist”) undertakes to explain this mysterious “woman” to the John class, and also of the “beast” that carries her, which has “seven heads” and “ten horns.” That is a big undertaking.

In *THE TIME IS AT HAND*, page 272, we are given this explanation: “We purpose to show that this **Man of Sin is a system**, and not a single individual, as many seem to infer; that as the Christ consists of the true Lord and the true Church, so Antichrist is a counterfeit system consisting of a false lord and an apostate church.” The apostate church is the “woman” of Revelation seventeen.



**The Man of Sin is a System,
Not a Single Individual.**

Again on page 354, we are given the explanation of the “scarlet beast:” “Papacy was rising, supported by the Roman ‘beast’ (people) and by its ‘horns’ (powers).”

The “Roman ‘beast’ (people)” depicts a people’s form of government, which was in the “bottomless pit” or dormant condition from Constantine to Hitler. This “beast” had no governmental authority and was defunct, but its power remained in the “people and nations and tongues.”

The “woman” rode on the “waters” which are identified as “people.” The real authority was in the “dragon” “heads” and the papal “heads” and the “ten horns” that controlled the earth. The only government the “people” had (with the exception of the papal state) was in the hands of civil or papal authority.

The “seven heads” of the “scarlet beast” were only figure “heads” dominated and subordinated into helpless acquiescence to civil and papal power. The “people” were not represented in civil or religious matters. The “scarlet beast” was muted and powerless in the “pit.”

Notice, however, that it is not dead, only dormant, even as Satan will be dormant in the true Kingdom. The desire and will to be represented in government always existed in the hearts of the people, even as it does today. Nobody wants to be governed by dictators.

Verse 8

“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.

An explanation of the “beast that thou sawest” is necessary. There was a time when this people’s form of government “was”—or a time in which the people were truly represented in government. When was that?

When Rome was a republic, it had a senate composed of the aristocracy called “patricians” and common people called “plebeians.” Gradually, prominent statesmen became popular enough to threaten the republic and its senate.

Julius Caesar was killed because Brutus and his co-conspirators thought that he was popular enough to become emperor and abolish the senate. The fear was real.

Finally, it did happen. Soon emperors or dictators replaced the senate. That is when the “scarlet beast” went into the “bottomless pit” where it languished.

It “was,” or existed, when Rome was a republic before the seven emperors or “kings” arose in Constantine’s time.

It “is not,” or ceased functioning, when Constantine was emperor and until the last dictator Hitler is gone.

This may need one qualification:



The French Revolution

During the French Revolution, from CE 1789 until 1799, one tenth of Europe (the French nation “tenth”), the “wild beast” of Revelation 11:13, arose from the “bottomless pit” condition and created great havoc.

This “wild beast” we believe was identifiable as belonging to the “scarlet beast” of Revelation seventeen. It was pagan in nature and very angry at the powers that suppressed it. However, the time for their full release must wait until all “seven kings” or emperors have fallen. That brings us to our time.

While this “scarlet beast” was in the bottomless pit, it “was not” in the sense that it was dormant and powerless. The Word of God makes plain that it “shall ascend out of the bottomless pit” for a short while to fulfill God’s purpose. Then it shall go into “perdition” (destruction).

The time when this “scarlet beast” arises from the “bottomless pit” is the Christian’s time clock. We will know exactly the time of day it is when we see the “beast” return from its dormant position to live again in its fury.

“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.”

This verse may seem to imply personal foreordination, but the seven promises of Revelation are given to “overcomers,” and none are given to the elect. However, God did foresee a class from the foundation of the world who would be his elect and precious followers.

Those who make their “calling and election” sure will fill God’s foreordained purpose. Those in this class will not be at a loss to fathom the “scarlet beast’s” returning to power. No, they will be awaiting its return. All others will be amazed at this wild “beast” suddenly rising from the “pit.”



Verse 9

“And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.”

Here the angel draws near to God’s people and tries to impart information very clearly so that we may be wise. You know what Daniel said: “The wise shall understand.” This verse tells us: “The seven heads are seven mountains [governments], on which the woman sitteth.”

Which head or government first gave a place for the “woman” to “sit”? Would you concur that it was Constantine and the empire under him? Obviously, the answer is, yes.

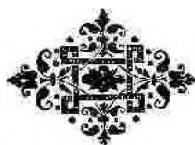
Who was the last dictatorship that the “woman” rode upon? The Nazi-Fascist regime was in a concordat with the pope (1929 and 1933), and at no time renounced it. The Catholic Church justified her alliance with the axis powers because she claimed they were a hedge against communism.



Constantine
—The First King



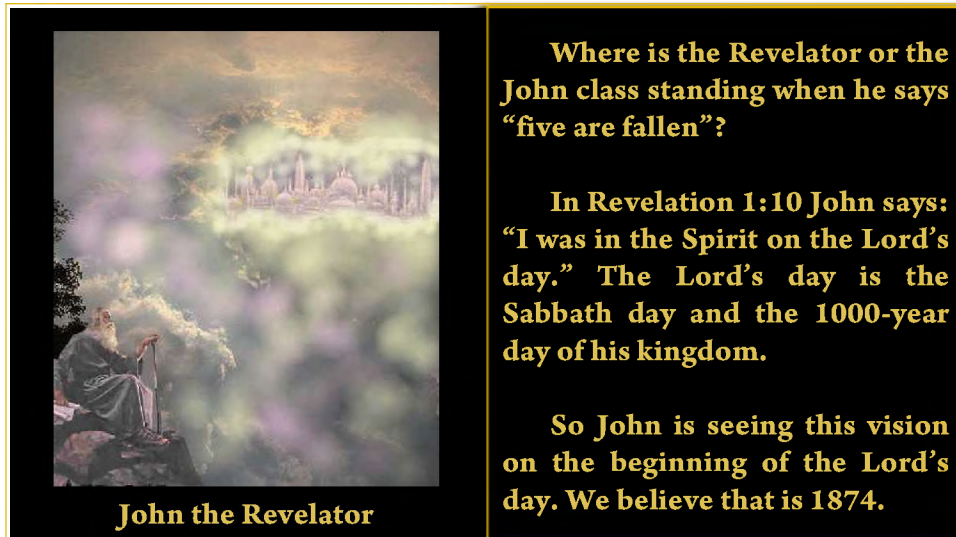
Hitler
—The Seventh King



Verse 10

“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.”

Now get your wristwatches out and let the Lord set your prophetic time clock.



What five kings had already fallen at that point of time?

(1) Constantine, (2) Valentinian, (3) Justinian, (4) Charlemagne and (5) Napoleon.

“And one is:” The Victor Immanuel II government was in power and his line continued in Immanuel III.

However, Bro. Loomis later felt that Austria-Hungary better filled that role because it was more influential (*Reprint* 3984, col. 1, par. 3 and 5829, col. 1, next to last par.) and it, together with France, Italy, Spain and Portugal, was willing to accept the Catholic Church as a partner with the state. Assuming the latter is true, the sixth head would be Francis Joseph who dated from 1848-1916. At any rate, the prevailing power in 1874 would have to be the sixth “head” in power.

Then we are told about the last head: “The other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.”

The Nazi regime had its shadowing beginning in 1920. In 1921 Hitler was named Leader of the Nazi party. Hitler ran for President in 1932, the year the Weimar Republic collapsed. On March 23, 1933 Hitler was named Chancellor of Germany and became dictator of Germany and lasted until 1945, a very short space in relation to the length of other “heads” with their “kings.” Fascist Italy also joined this unholy alliance in solid union with the “woman.”

We notice something else. For the first time in this chapter “seven kings” are mentioned. As there are only seven “heads,” so there are only seven “kings”—an emperor or king for each government or “head.”

In that there are only seven “heads,” “mountains,” and “kings,” their eighth condition will be as Bro. Russell says: the “beast without a head—either a republic or anarchy. If a republic, we shall shortly expect anarchy.” (*Reprint* 2062:6 or *HARVEST GLEANINGS* 20:5)

When the last “head” and “king” shall have come and gone, then we must wait until the “scarlet beast” without a head emerges in Europe as a socialist republic. When this happens we may set our clocks when these “ten kings” emerge and give their “power and strength unto the beast,” for then they will “make war with the Lamb.”

The moment of action and conflict will come when these “ten kings” or temporal rulers of Europe agree to political unity. They are already agreed on a common currency, which is working surprisingly well. This is called the Economic Monetary Union (EMU). It has coined a currency called the Euro.

German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder revealed what his design was when he said: “*The Euro can be a success only with greater political union.* It is not enough to simply coordinate monetary policy.” (Reuters, Dec. 29, 1998. *The Philadelphia Trumpet*, Feb. 1999, p.14) His is not just a lone voice crying in the wilderness.

German Foreign Minister Gunther Verheugen echoed the same sentiments saying: “Normally, a single currency is the final step in a process of political integration. This time, the single currency isn’t the final step, but the beginning. Inevitably it will happen.” (*PA News*, Jan. 1, 1999. *The Philadelphia Trumpet*, Feb. 1999, p. 14)

Also Johannes Rau, a leading member of Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder’s Social Democratic Party, was elected Germany’s eighth post-war president May 23, 1999. Everything is shaping up for a power grab.

Some thought perhaps that France’s Mitterrand (now deceased) would begin this movement. He was more of a philosopher than a man of dynamic action, and little happened under his leadership. However, Germany’s Schroeder is a man of untiring ambition and design. There can be no doubt that he is lining up the nations of Europe to create a political union of nations, or a republic with socialism as a common ideology.

Needless to say, this is with the pope’s blessing. If and when this republic emerges with a united people’s government, we can set our clocks for action. Whether it will be Schroeder or someone else yet to come to power, clearly the present momentum will continue until “ten kings” give their power and strength to the “beast.”

The original people’s government of Rome was pagan. We believe that humanism is a modern paganism that has extended influence on the nations. As with the Roman Empire, for a time paganism and Christianity co-existed with a certain amount of enmity. Christianity suffered, but also gathered strength and numbers.

As we shall see, these “ten kings” will not immediately turn against the “woman.” No, their first concern will be to placate the “woman” while they strengthen themselves as a world power.

The “woman” will remain aloft this “scarlet beast” until she seduces these “ten kings” to make war on the “Lamb.” That will be the “woman’s” fatal mistake. The “ten kings” will lose that war, as you obviously might guess.

Then the “ten kings” and “the scarlet beast” in unison will vent their rage on this “woman.” Now let us go to Revelation 17:11.

Verse 11

“And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.”

That is short for telling us that while the “seven heads,” “seven mountains” and “seven kings” are in power, the “scarlet beast” will remain in the “bottomless pit.” Know, therefore, that after the last of the “seven” emperors are expired, the “scarlet beast” will start to emerge.

Let us note this verse very carefully. It says: “The beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.” When the “scarlet beast” is delivered from the “bottomless pit,” he will become the “eighth” succession of government over the Roman Empire.

Notice, it does not call it a “head” but only “eighth” (ruling power)—obviously without a “head” or emperor “king” ruling the “beast.” Remember that this “beast” was a republic originally, and it shall be a republic once again.

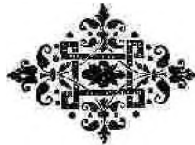
Consequently “ten kings” shall arise to govern. We are approaching the time when “ten kings” will agree to give their power and kingdom unto a people’s republic.

“And is of the seven”—what does this mean? It is not a head and is nowhere called a “head.” Remember, John carefully tells us there are only “seven heads” and “seven kings” and “seven mountains.” There are no more than this.

It is of “seven” in the sense that during the closing days of the fourth “head” (the Charlemagne Holy Roman Empire), “the wild beast” rose up during the French Revolution (1789-1799) in a “tenth” part of the Roman empire. Royalty and priestcraft were savagely attacked.

This was a miniature of what it would be like when the “scarlet beast” and the “ten kings” turn on the “woman.” History cast its shadow before it. What happened back there was a shadow of things to come.

During that uprising, the people were organized by brilliant pagan leaders, men of letters, who stirred the passions of the people to throw off the bonds of priestcraft and royalty. The savagery of that time was casting its shadow before it.



Part III

Verse 12

“And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom [as yet]; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.”

Since World War II ended we saw republican governments emerging, but not until now do we see the “ten kings” who have “no kingdom” organizing to form a republic of nations by subscribing to political unity.

When the “scarlet beast” finally emerges from the “bottomless pit” in strength, the lesson of verse 11 is that there will be no “head” over it, that is, no emperor to order its affairs. It will be a headless “beast.” Instead of one governing head, it will have “ten kings” who at last attain a kingdom.

The reason the “King of kings” does not destroy this “beast” when it makes war with him is because the real reason this pagan “beast” is allowed to appear again is to destroy the “woman.”

The “King of kings” overcomes this “scarlet beast” and only after this does this “beast” and the “ten kings” turn on the “woman” to destroy her. Then the “scarlet beast” goes into perdition.

“One hour with the beast” has been and is a challenging time period to figure out. Bro. Loomis tried to make all the “hour” periods mentioned in Revelation equal in length.

The “hour of temptation” covered the whole harvest period and is a long period of time. If this explanation be true, it would mean that everything happens during the harvest “hour.” That is still a viable explanation. If this be true then the “ten kings” would receive “power” **during** this “hour” and not necessarily for the **duration** of the “hour.”



Jezebel thrown out of the window by her eunuchs.

There is the possibility that this “hour” of verse twelve may in fact be a shorter period of time. It could be one-twelfth of one year or one month. It didn’t take long to throw Jezebel out the window. The point needs to be studied further.



Verse 13

“These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.”

Here a united Europe is forecast. When the political union of European nations occurs, it will not be half-hearted. All “ten kings” shall agree. Now it is hard to get people to agree to anything, even Bible Students. But here the unity is clearly defined without qualification. They do “have one mind.”

When a group is of one mind, it makes it easy for them to give “their power and strength unto the beast,” to this common form of government. When nations are willing to pool their “power and strength,” that makes them a formidable foe indeed. They are united for the purpose of making war.

However, in this case they are ill advised in their union and purpose. They haven’t the foggiest idea of the power of the one they are planning to attack.

Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo, even though he had superior numbers. His demise was not predictable. However, the battle these “ten kings” are committed to is very predictable. The “ten kings” don’t have a prayer. They are doomed to be defeated. It is not a good idea to make “war with the Lamb.”

Verse 14

“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and Kings of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen and faithful.”



Obviously, these “ten kings” are not apprized of the formidable opponent they have chosen to attack. They are badly informed and their intelligence is in short supply. They would not knowingly blunder this badly.

They are led to believe the enemy is only a few weak saints that they can crush easily under foot. They fail to see the “Lord of lords and King of kings” standing behind this handful of saints.

However, the Lord easily “overcomes” them. He thwarts their purpose without destroying them. As a matter of fact, the Lord then engages these “ten kings” and the “scarlet beast” to serve his purpose.

In verse 14 we are given a very significant piece of information. When “the Lord of lords” is besieged by these “ten kings,” we are told that “they that are with him are called, chosen and faithful.” In times past this was not true.

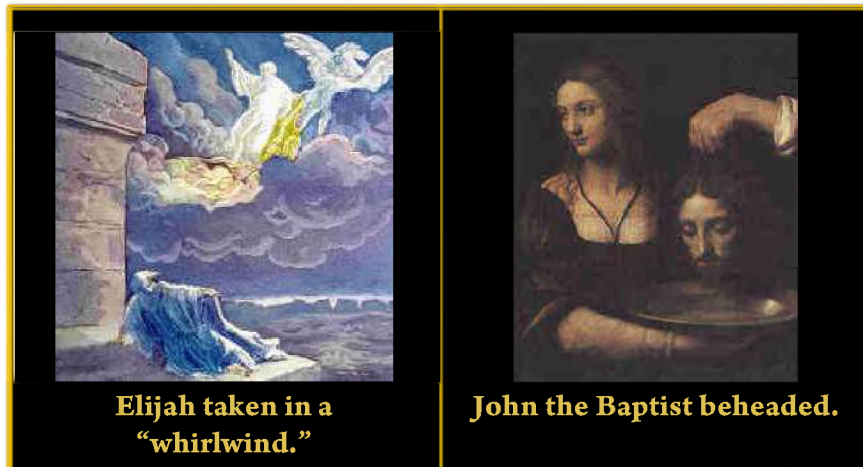
This war does not take place until the “sealing” of the 144,000 is actually accomplished. There are only 144,000 sealed—no less and no more. This is not talking about those with some knowledge of the truth. Many more than 144,000 have had knowledge of the truth throughout the age.

Only 144,000 thousand are finally “sealed.” That will be when the door to the high calling is closed, while some saints still remain in the flesh.

We know the “ten kings” are overcome or defeated, but not destroyed in their conquest against Christ. We are not sure if any of his saints will remain in the flesh after the attack is made against the King of kings.

The next sequence of this story shows the “ten kings” and the “beast” attacking the “woman.” This may mean that the saints in the flesh will have passed beyond the veil, while the “Lord” enlists the “ten kings” and the “beast” to savagely turn on the “woman” and destroy her.

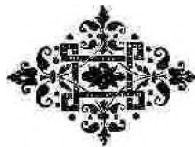
In two types we find this “woman” outlives both Elijah and John the Baptist. The Elijah type shows the saints being taken by God to heaven in a “whirlwind”—a rather triumphant exit. The John the Baptist type shows the saints falling in death by the wiles of Herodias.



The two types show two views of the saints passing from the world.

From God’s standpoint they are taken victoriously to heaven.

From the world’s viewpoint the saints fall in defeat before this “cursed woman” who plots to have the civil authorities “behead” the saints.



Part IV

Verse 15

“And he [the angel explaining the judgment of this woman, *THE TIME IS AT HAND*, Chapter IX, p. 267-362] saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations and tongues.”

It is important that we learn the source of this “woman’s” power and influence. The main reason the “seven kings” [emperors] found themselves enamored with this woman was because of the tremendous influence she had on the people.

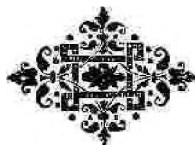
This apostate “woman” would bless the armies of the “kings,” so they gladly supported the endless carnage of war. The nations were made drunk with the “wine of her fornication.” The people believed they were serving God when they went to war, while the priests blessed them marching off to battle. The worldly rulers knew it always helped when the church put a religious edge on swords being wielded in battle. Holy(?) wars have been the stock and trade of all religious fanaticism.



None were more talented in intoxicating the peoples and nations than this “woman.” Soldiers were made to believe the gates of heaven would be open to all who died in holy (?) war.

Christianity’s sole purpose is to serve in the call, selection and development of God’s New Creation. It was the ultimate desecration for the church to prostitute Christianity to serve earthly ambition.

Both Catholics and Protestants profess to serve both God and country. That is like trying to serve God and Mammon.



Verse 16

“And the ten horns which thou sawest upon [and] the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.”

What a savage end for this splendidly adorned “woman.” This whole chapter has been given to us so we may know the precise time and the foreordained way this evil religious system comes to its end. Nothing can save it. It will be destroyed suddenly and effectively. “Strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.” (Revelation 18:8)

We notice something of importance here. This “woman” is killed and consumed. She is not thrown into the “lake of fire” or the second death. When she is consumed and “burned with fire,” it indicates the end of this church system. This does not mean the end of all church authority in the earth. Only the unfaithful church will be destroyed with “fire” and cease to exist.

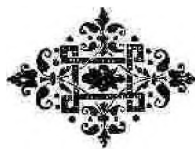
The Christ of God, the true Church of God, will then ascend to power in the earth. However, when describing the “leopard-like beast,” we are told:

“The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet.... These both were cast alive into a lake of fire.”

Never again will there be a false religious government in the earth. The “lake of fire” will consume the papal government forever. Satan will also be consumed in the same “lake of fire.”

However, there will always be a Church of God or a true religious institution to represent Him. Only the false church will be terminated.

It is interesting to notice that the “woman” is destroyed with “fire” whereas the papal “leopard beast” will be cast “alive into a lake of fire” (Revelation 19:20), the second death.



“Ten Horns and the Beast”

We now address whether it is the “ten horns **upon** the beast” or the “ten horns **and** the beast.” This is critical to our discussion.

There is a certain logic to the “ten horns” being upon the beast. Where else would they be? We cannot deny this logic—the “horns” are upon the “beast.”

Those believing this “scarlet beast” is in some way identified with the Papacy need the first reading: “And the ten horns which thou sawest **upon** the beast.” Obviously, if the Papacy were identified as being the “scarlet beast” it would be unthinkable for it to rend and destroy the “woman,” for the Catholic Church is a part of the Papacy.

If, however, the “scarlet beast” in its final appearance is the “Roman peoples” form of republican government it should read: “And the ten horns which thou sawest **and** the beast.” Let us check for the correct reading.

Most authorities read: “And the ten horns which thou sawest **and** the beast.”

THE NEW TESTAMENT, Von Tischendorf—English by Samuel Davidson on Revelation 17:16 (printed in 1872, the eleventh and last text of Tischendorf): “And the ten horns which thou sawest **and** the beast, these will hate the whore, and will eat her flesh, and will burn her with fire.”

MURDOCK’S TRANSLATION OF THE SYRIAC TESTAMENT, Bethune—Revelation 17:16: “And the ten horns which thou sawest, **and** the beast of prey, will hate the harlot; and they will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.”

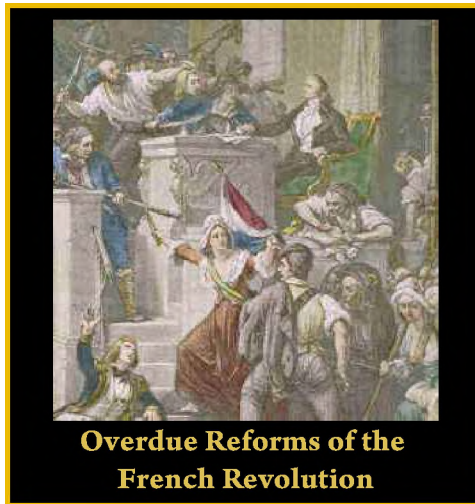
TREGELLES ON REVELATION, by Samuel Tregelles on Revelation 17:16: “And the ten horns which thou sawest **and** the beast, these shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire [bold supplied by us].”

GREEK TESTAMENT WITH NOTES BY WORDSWORTH, in his comment on Revelation 17:16 says: Some Cursive MSS., and some early MSS. of the Vulgate have (upon the beast). “But, **and**, is found in the A, B and in twelve Cursive MSS. Cited by Scrivener, p. 533; and the best MSS. of the Vulgate, and in the Syria Version, and the Arabic and Aethiopic and in Hippolytus, p. 18, ed. Lagarde; and Ireneus seems to have so read the passage (v. 26). This reading is received by Griesback, Scholz, Bengel, and Winer, p. 128, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles. There seems little doubt that this is the true reading.”

If the “scarlet beast” **and** the “ten horns” rend this woman, the “beast” is obviously not the Papacy, but rather a “beast” similar to the one that rose from the “bottomless pit” in the French Revolution and created such havoc for kings and priests in France.

Up until Constantine’s time this pagan “beast” persecuted the Christian Churches even though they lived and prospered in the pagan kingdom of Rome. Therefore, we need not think that this “scarlet beast” will immediately turn on the “woman” when it comes to power.

Satan made that mistake in the French Revolution. He incited the revolutionists against the Catholic Church of France. Satan hoped the extreme bloodiness of that revolution would frighten people back into a church and state bond.



However, reform was so overdue and the people so distressed and angry that they rather enjoyed their new freedoms and were in no hurry to welcome back the Catholic Church.

This time around, Satan modifies his strategy. He wishes to engage the “ten kings” to attack the “King of kings.” In Revelation 12:17 we see what Satan tries to accomplish in employing the “ten kings” to make war on the “Lord of lords.” We read:

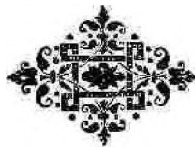
“And the dragon [Satan] was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Here is a clear declaration of Satan’s ultimate purpose toward those who “have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” That is his clear and stated purpose. Make no mistake about it. We believe Revelation 17:14 is the fulfillment of Satan’s last and final attempt to consummate his “war” against the “seed” of the “woman” (the faithful Gospel Church).

Satan made a disastrous mistake when he cast out a “flood of water” after the “woman” in the French Revolution. He “shot himself in the foot,” as the expression goes. He will shoot himself in the other foot when he engages the “ten kings” to make war against the “Lord of lords.”

When Satan attacks the “called, chosen and faithful” saints, his last game plan is over, for standing behind them is the “King of kings.” He may indeed succeed in putting some “saints” to death, but his cause will go down in certain defeat.

Forthwith, Satan will find the “woman” that he made to be the mistress of the nations, become scorned and hated.



Verse 17

“For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.”

Here Satan and his queen, this dreadful “woman” of our story, find their “Waterloo.” The “ten kings” who for a time were without a “kingdom,” never really had any affection for this “woman.” As long as they prospered, they let the “woman” have a place with them to secure their “kingdom.”



**John the Baptist
Beheaded**

Just as “Herodias” succeeded in getting Herod to behead John the Baptist, he nevertheless was angry with “Herodias” for how she manipulated him into killing one of God’s prophets.

Herod knew that it was a grave mistake to kill a “holy” man of God.

We are not told how God will “put in their hearts to fulfill his will” in turning on this “woman” and burning her with “fire” and eating “her flesh.” It will not take a whole lot on God’s part to get people to “hate the whore.” She has been very wicked.

You can only fool the people so long. As the truth becomes known, and when the people begin to suspect who the true people of God really are, it will automatically cause them to despise the “whore.”

Jezebel’s end was a type of how this “woman” of Revelation seventeen comes to her end. Jezebel was betrayed by her servants. The “eunuchs” gladly threw this “cursed woman” from her lofty chamber into the street below. The “dogs,” the Gentiles or heathens, consumed her flesh.



**Jezebel’s eunuchs threw her
out of the window.**



**Dogs ate Jezebel, leaving only
her hands and feet.**

So it will be with this Revelation “woman.” The godless pagan forces will consume the resources of the false church.



Part V

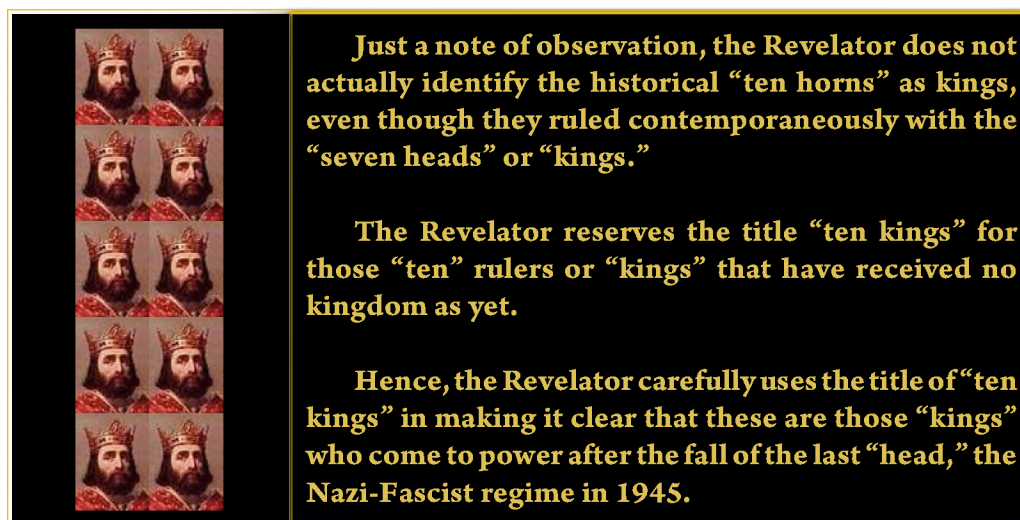
Verse 18

“And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”

Here we are given a clear definition of this “woman.” What other “woman” or church reigned over the “kings” of the so-called “Christian world”?

The Roman Catholic Church was first seated in the Roman government in CE 325 and remained trafficking in world affairs until this present time.

This “woman” has ruled over the seven emperor “kings” or “heads” throughout the history of the Roman Empire until the present time. She ruled over the “ten horns,” or the territorial rulers of the Roman Empire, as well.



Oddly enough, these “ten kings” exist before they receive power as “kings one hour with the beast.” After the fall of the Nazi-Fascist governments of Europe, we found Europe a loose mixture of nations under no “head” or “king.”

Most of the nations of Europe became independent republics. The only organization they belonged to was the NATO military alliance for mutual defense against the communist block of nations. The idea of a United States of Europe had been entertained from time to time.

In recent years, the European block of 11 nations moved to create a common currency called the Euro. This has successfully been accomplished. Suddenly these nations are finding it economically feasible to move toward a common government, a republic of Europe.

When this happens we will know the end is near. It will be when these “ten kings” who have received no kingdoms decide to subscribe to a common government and give their independent nations to this “scarlet beast” republic.

This union will not occur because the nations are religiously inclined. They are not. These European nations are largely neo-pagan with only a form of Christian religion. This union is driven by economic necessity.

The United States has become the leading economic powerhouse of the world. We see that nations like Russia, who tried to live by communist ideologies, collapsed because they were not economically viable. They virtually went bankrupt.

Economics rule the world.

Ideologies, religion and nationalism are no longer the engines that move the world.

The good life depends on robust economics.

The powerbrokers of the world need finances to fuel world economies. That is where the bankers and money comes in.



WOATS	SP 100	SP 500	S&P 500	DOW JONES	EURODOLL	
MAY	INDEX	INDEX	JUN		MAR JUN	
8685	8765	9250	40217	9372	9345	
8227	8316	8650	39830	9365	9330	
1100	5652	8738	9180	40190	9369	9341
1100	4214	4224	4554	3574	2-	3

Economic forces move the world, and bankers and finance move the economic forces. It is a marriage of money and industry. Industry makes money, and the bankers keep industry generously supplied with the finances needed to keep the wheels of industry turning.

This marriage has not produced happiness, but has given people more possessions than they have ever had in history. The neo-pagan theory is that he who dies with the most things wins.

In conclusion we have in this chapter the complete story of this “woman” from her first seat in the Roman Empire under Constantine until at last, under the “ten kings,” she is pillaged and destroyed.

In this chapter the Revelator tells us how, when and by whom this “woman” meets her bitter end. We get the whole story of both the “**woman**,” the **Catholic Church**, and then the “**Man of Sin**,” the **Papacy** under the headship of the pope.

Revelation seventeen tells us how the “woman” is destroyed and Revelation nineteen tells us how the “Man of Sin” is destroyed.

We rejoice to have the absolute knowledge that following the destruction of both the “woman” and the “leopard beast,” the kingdom will unfurl its flag of triumph over the world. Then surely will come the answer to that prayer, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.”

“The woman” is that “great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” A city is a government. This “woman” controlled governments and people’s lives on a worldwide basis in Christendom. She has been involved in endless wars and never ending persecution of those unwilling to bow to her excessive demands. She posed as a “dove,” but in reality was deadly as a poisonous serpent.

The kingdom of God cannot come to its own until this “woman” is destroyed. The kingdom of God cannot come to its own until the papal “Man of Sin” is destroyed.

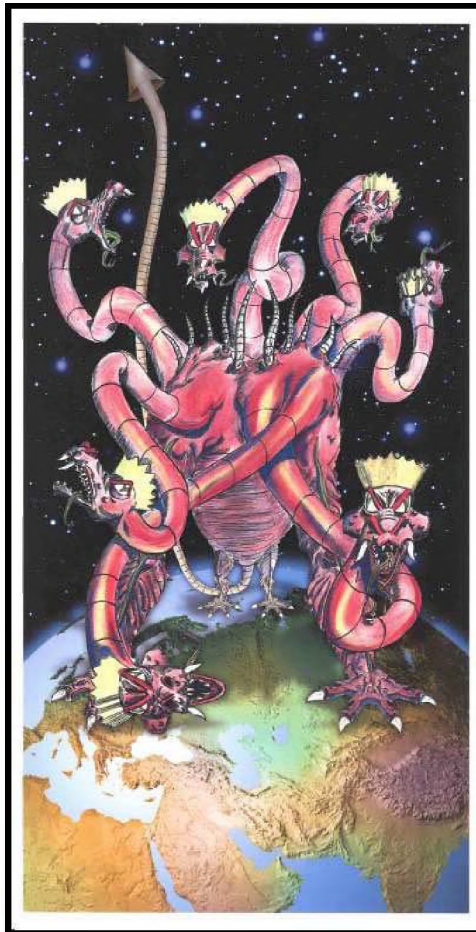
Let us rejoice, for we are standing at the moment when the tide of battle turns to vindicate our King and Kingdom. It has been a long and seemingly never-ending reign of these evil forces controlled by the devil. We stand on the threshold of victory. Let us stand up and be counted as those enlisted under our King.

This poem illustrates Revelation 17.

*“There was a young lady from Niger
Who smiled as she rode on a tiger,
They returned from the ride with the lady
inside,
And the smile was on the face of the tiger.”*



A good ending!



THE “DRAGON”

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Part I

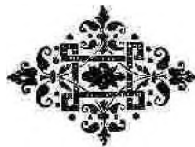
THE “DRAGON”

Chapter 12

The “dragon” of Revelation is a long-lived creature. The story begins with the Roman Empire at a time when the early Church, pictured in the “woman,” had become a vital force. Satan had successfully killed the Founder of the Church and then was confronted with the reality of a living and vibrant body of believers.

At times Satan tried to ignore the early Christians, hoping they would go away. Then he tried to persecute and destroy them by vicious attacks. At last he tried to join them and corrupt them. The latter method seemed to work best.

	<p>This “dragon” story covers the whole period of the Christian Church.</p> <p>The “dragon” is on the scene from the earliest Roman Empire until it is destroyed in “Armageddon.” (Revelation 16:13, 19)</p> <p>Hence, the “dragon” is here until the bitter end.</p> <p>Its fall will precede the full establishment of Christ’s Kingdom, the fifth universal empire.</p>
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Verse 1

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.”



The story of this chapter actually centers around the “woman.” She is given a splendid introduction. Then there follows a great struggle.

We do not know what happens to the “woman” of this chapter. She fades away leaving a “remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” (Revelation 12:17)

The “dragon’s” distress is exacerbated by the fact that the “woman” leaves such a marvelous legacy. I hope we each are a part of it. She also gives birth to a “man child,” whom the “dragon” is extravagantly interested in as his kind of child.

This phenomenon is seen in the spiritual realm, which is actually the “heavens of earth,” or a part of the religious ruling power. The “woman” is described as “clothed with the sun” or the Gospel light.

Symbol	Picture Of
Wonder in Heaven	In Religious Realm
Clothed with the Sun	The Gospel Light
Moon under her Feet	Jewish Law
Twelve Stars	Twelve Apostles

She is not related to the “whore” of Revelation in the seventeenth chapter. She is not dressed with the regal clothing bestowed by paramours, but with the purity of the Gospel sunlight provided by Christ.

The “moon” typifies the Jewish Law that the early Church had under “her feet.” The righteousness of that law is “fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.” (Romans 8:4)

To compliment her beautiful attire, she is said to wear a “crown of twelve stars.” (Revelation 12:1) Just as the “seven stars” of Revelation typify the “angels [messengers] of the seven churches,” so the “twelve stars” represent the “twelve apostles of the Lamb.” (Revelation 21:14)

This language describes very accurately the early Christian church. It has been difficult in any period of Church history to find an absolutely pure Church. “Wheat” and “Tares” would be together until the “Harvest.” We must not think of this “woman” as being composed of all saints. If any body of Christians were ever all saints, it would be rare indeed.

How could such a nice “woman” be with “child”?

The “woman” of our lesson has the misfortune of giving birth to Satan’s “man of sin” child. Was she unfaithful because she was found with this man-child?

We believe not. Just as the “devil” sowed “tare” seed in the Lord’s field, so the devil succeeded in planting his “seed” in the early Church. Paul said, “The mystery of iniquity doth already work.” (2 Thessalonians 2:7)

It was easy to plant ambition, the desire for lofty positions, greed and the desire for power and riches. Who planted sin in Satan? It arose from his lust and desire.

The only difference between the devil and this child, the “man-child” of sin, is that the devil had fostered this evil spirit within the early Church, whereas sin originated within the devil’s heart. The devil has always had a “seed” ever since the Garden of Eden.

**In Genesis 3:15 God told the serpent:
“I will put enmity between thee and the
woman, and between thy seed and her
seed.”**

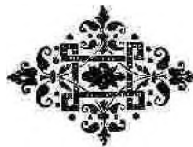
**This enmity has continued throughout
history.**

**The “devil’s seed” will be on the scene
until the devil is loosed out of his prison
and goes forth to “deceive the nations.”**

(Revelation 20:7-10)




Jesus said of Satan’s seed in his time: “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do” (John 8:44). Satan will have his deceived children to represent him until they are all destroyed at the end of the Millennium. (Revelation 20:9)



Is This Woman Representative of the Sarah Covenant?

Some have felt that the Sarah Covenant pictures this “woman.” This view would have merit only if the “man child” represented Christ. Such does not seem to be the case.

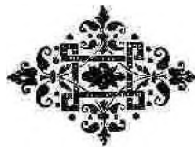
 <p>The “Manchild” represents the Apostate element in the Early Church —Not Jesus.</p>	<p>While the “dragon,” represented in Herod, did try to kill the “child” Jesus, he did not succeed. Jesus fled into “Egypt,” not to heaven. There was no throne for Jesus while he dwelt on earth.</p> <p>While Jesus finally is raised to heavenly glory, it was not as a “man child.” He was raised a “life-giving spirit.” (1 Peter 3:18) Jesus did not gain heavenly glory by beating the devil in combat.</p>
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He said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” (Matthew 28:18) God the Father gave it to Jesus. There was no way that the devil and Jesus were locked in conflict for heavenly glory.

Why would the “crown of twelve stars” be featured on this woman before the “man child” is born?

Jesus selected the twelve apostles when he was a grown man and not a “child.” To teach that the “twelve apostles” crowned the woman who gave birth to Jesus seems almost irreverent.

While Jesus was put to death on the cross, it was not as a “child.” The devil was successful in securing Jesus’ death. He remained in the grave for parts of three days and was not snatched up to heaven. He stayed on earth for forty more days before he ascended to heaven. None of this fits the scenario given in Revelation 12.



Verse 2

“And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.”

While the “Wheat” and “Tares” are allowed to grow together until the Harvest, such was not the case with this “man child.” It was to have an early separation or birth.

You cannot have faithful and unfaithful leadership together for too long. Divisions have to come when righteousness and truth will not permit the faithful any other recourse.

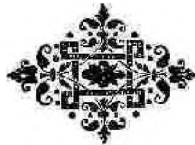
We notice that this “woman” does not nurse or care for this child. There is no affinity here. Normally, a woman would have a caring and loving disposition toward her child. There is none shown here. Here we see the “man child” is provided for lavishly without its mother. There is no love between this “woman” and her “child.”



Emperor Constantine became Pontifex Maximus the Chief Religious Ruler of the Church of Rome

This “woman” is “pained to be delivered.” She obviously had this element within the confines of the Church that pained and troubled her.

The catalyst for giving “birth” came in Constantine’s time, when he entered the Church as Pontifex Maximus or Chief Religious Ruler.



Part II

Verse 3

“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.”

The “heaven” referred to cannot be God’s true heaven. Jesus in his pre-human existence said, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.” (Luke 10:18)

Satan has not been in God’s heaven since, nor will he ever be there again. In Job 1:7 we read of his confinement: “Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth. ...”

Normally, we would expect the “dragon” to operate on the earth as civil authority is supposed to. However, in this vision the “dragon” appears in “heaven” or in the powers of spiritual control.

Notice it does not have wings, but is endowed with “seven heads” and “ten horns.” We understand the “seven heads” to be successive, that is, one “head” would control the “dragon” and then another and so on.

These “seven heads” each wear a “crown,” a “crown” for each “head.” The “crown” would indicate authority to rule, or kingly authority. The “ten horns” or territorial divisions of the Roman Empire are not crowned. They are under the headship of each emperor or “head.”

SYMBOL	REPRESENTS
7 Heads	7 Successive Rulers
10 Horns	10 Territorial Divisions of Roman Empire
Crown on Each Head	Authority of King or Emperor to Rule over the 10 Territorial Divisions of Empire

The “dragon” is shown with centralized authority throughout the successive reign of the “seven heads.” We know who the power behind the successive thrones really was. We are not even left to guess. We are told it was “that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan.” (Revelation 12:9)

We normally would expect the “dragon” to rule the earth in civil matters. The Roman Empire was to be the last dominion before God’s kingdom. This “dragon” is not satisfied to just rule the earth, but wished to rule both the “heavens” (spiritual ruling authority) and the “earth” (civil ruling authority). If the “dragon” could rule both “heaven” and “earth” from one seat, it would please him well.

However, as our story unfolds, the “dragon” loses this convenient control from one central authority, and must shuttle back and forth from civil rulership to religious rulership. This was not convenient for the “dragon” and certainly not his first choice.



Verse 4

“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.”

In Isaiah 9:15 we are told: “The prophet that teacheth lies is the tail.”

The “dragon” was already in “heaven,” or the spiritual realm, when its “tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven” to cast them “to the earth.”

The lying “tail” needed to rid itself of the faithful to retain an appearance of unity.



Revelation 12:4

When Constantine entered the church it was not as a penitent seeking God’s grace. He entered as the “Pontifex Maximus,” Chief Religious Ruler. The faithful bishops were divested of authority when they did not consent to what Constantine ultimately decided was correct or usable for the empire. Truth was not the criteria.

What Constantine wanted was a united front for his new found state religion. He had plenty of division and divisiveness under the pagan rule with three thousand gods.

He wanted a united front to parade before the nation and was ready to cast out from religious authority all that would not bow the knee to his decisions. Hence bishops such as Arius and his associates were put down and lost voice in the spiritual heavens as they were “cast” to “the earth.”

Who is the “third part”? We are schooled in fractions and in our schooling one-third denotes a proportional part of a whole. Scripture does not fit into that mold. In Zechariah 13:8, 9 we read:

“And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.

“And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people.”

We may gather from this that the “third part” is the faithful part, the right-hearted, of whom God may say, “It is my people.” It has no meaning of proportion or mathematical value. The part that God is pleased with is the “third part.”



The Council of Nicea in 325 A.D.

The “dragon,” the civil authority of Rome, embodied in Constantine in that time, “stood before the woman.”

Constantine invited all the “bishops” of the various Christian Churches to Nice.

He wished to enlist or appropriate under his leadership all those leaders who would be subordinate to his authority.

The “dragon” planned to control both the religious and civil authority from one imperial seat. That was his first choice. When someone is looking to control, they seek subordination in those under them.

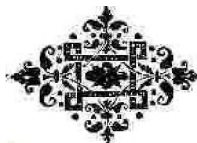
Constantine “cast out” from the spiritual ruling “heavens” those who would not **compromise biblical truth for political favor**. It is not that Constantine did not highly regard some of those he ostracized. However, he needed consensus, unity and subordination of all those under his spiritual control. He often went out of his way to bring stubborn adherents to truth under his banner.

Failing in this, they were inevitably “cast to the earth.” Truth defenders may have lost their standing in the powers of spiritual control, but we know you can do nothing against the truth. It is of God and, therefore, “the eternal ages are its years.” It will prevail, because God’s Word cannot be broken.

Why did the “dragon” stand “before the woman?”

Constantine wanted to subordinate the leaders of the church at the time the bishops emerged as a ruling class. He could thereby rule both the “heaven” (spiritual ruling power) and the “earth” (the civil ruling power) under one scepter.

If he could succeed in this he would have maximum efficiency. Failing in this, the devil would have to revert to a second choice of wearing two hats to cover two thrones, which, in fact, he finally did. In Revelation 2:13 it is said of Christians: “Thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is.”



Verse 5

“And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.”

This is not a literal “man-child” just as this is not a literal “woman” or a literal “dragon.”

This “man-child” could not be Jesus, as he was the forerunner of the church and not its child.

If the “woman” is alleged to be the “Sarah Covenant” that brought forth Jesus, the “man-child,” we are faced with another problem. Jesus was not caught up to heaven as a child. The child Jesus with his parents had to flee to Egypt. There was no throne for Jesus here on earth.

The “dragon,” represented in Pilate, succeeded in putting Jesus to death when he was thirty-three years old. Jesus never referred to himself as a “man-child.” He often referred to himself as the “Son of man.” Additionally, Sarah had only one child, Isaac.

When Pharaoh and Abimelech wanted to take Sarah to wife, God moved mightily and with dispatch, plaguing “Pharaoh” and threatening Abimelech with death. (Genesis 12:17; 20:3) Sarah was the mother of only one child, Isaac. This “woman” also has a remnant of “seed” subsequently. (Revelation 12:17)

The “man-child” was not Jesus, but it was the “man of sin” child that emerged from within the early church. Those looking for a “man of sin” at the end of the age, are overlooking the real “man of sin” born early on.

The “dragon” stood before the “woman” (the Christian Church) to appropriate her child. Constantine invited the powerful bishops to Nice to bring the bishops under his sovereign control. He gave them generous gifts and had a banquet for them at the end of their sessions. He wanted to walk away with this “man-child” in his pocket. Momentarily, this was so.

However, at Constantine’s death his son Constantius succeeded him for a short time and died. Julian, a very noble pagan, then took the throne and intensely disliked the bishops. Julian did not wish to work with them.

Here the “dragon” momentarily lost interest in this perverse “man-child.” This pause by the Emperor Julian enabled the man-child to be “caught up unto God, and to his throne.”

With the death of Constantine and his son Constantius, the man-child lost its chief religious ruler—the Pontifex Maximus. This was Papacy’s moment of fortune. They appointed their own Pontifex Maximus, first as the fancied bishop of bishops and finally as the pope. The “man-child” is described in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 in these words:

“Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”

The man-child was “caught up unto God and to his throne” in apostasy as the “man of sin” or the “son of perdition,” having its own earthly head. The headship of Christ was rejected and also the headship of the Roman emperor. It would have its own religious Pontifex Maximus, the bishop of bishops or the pope.



Verse 6

“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 days.”

We leave the story of the “man child” momentarily to focus on the poor “woman’s” plight after being delivered of this unwanted and unloved “child.” She “fled into the wilderness” (of separation) where God would provide for her.

Oddly enough, this parallels Elijah’s three and one-half years (1260 days) in the wilderness during the great draught.

This “woman” was fed similarly “for a thousand two hundred and threescore days” (1260 days — each day representing a year).



Elijah at Brook Cherith

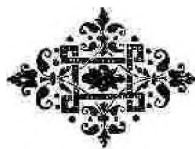
Please notice the time setting here. While the “man child” is caught up to glory in this time frame, the “woman” languishes through the famine and survives only by the grace and power of God to sustain her. Clearly, the papal exaltation and glory from CE 539 to 1799 is in stark contrast to the “faithful Church’s” wilderness experience in harsh and difficult conditions, kept by the power of God.

The time given us in this verse is easily identified and becomes critical to understanding this verse.

Why the difference in gender between “Elijah” and the “woman?” This difference is easy to explain.

“**Elijah**” is God’s mouthpiece before nominal spiritual Israel. Hence the masculine gender is appropriate. The “**woman**” pictures the faithful “church” as persecuted and marked for destruction.

True to Bible symbolism, a “woman” represents a “Church.” She survives only by the grace of God. If this “man child” were the true Christ, why would the “Church” be in such dire straits? When Christ’s true mediatorial reign on earth takes place his true followers will be with him in glory, certainly not in the wilderness condition.



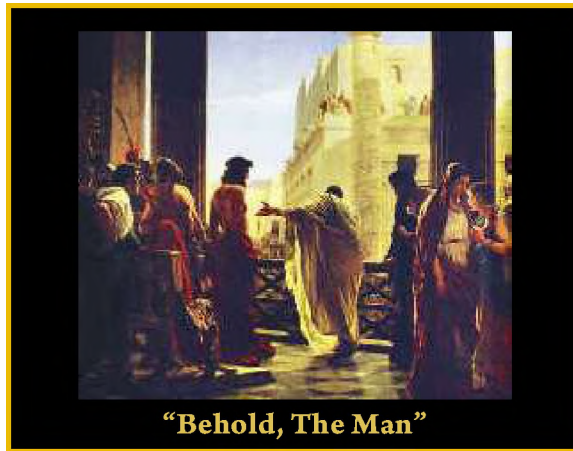
Part III

Verse 7

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.”

One thing is instantly observable here. If Jesus is “Michael” of this verse, where could we find justification in Scripture to indicate that he fought for a place of authority in the ruling heaven? **Never did Jesus fight for any position in heaven or on earth.**

He submitted to crucifixion and death so easily that even his enemies were surprised at how easily he fell before them. He refused to defend himself before Herod or Pilate, but as a sheep, he silently gave himself up to the slaughter. Where was the warfare? It never happened!



The “dragon” (Satan) easily secured Jesus’ death when the appointed time came. Did not Jesus say in John 10:18: “No man taketh it [my life] from me, but I lay it down of myself.”

Again we ask, Where was the warfare? Jesus was never accepted in the Jewish spiritual ruling arrangement.

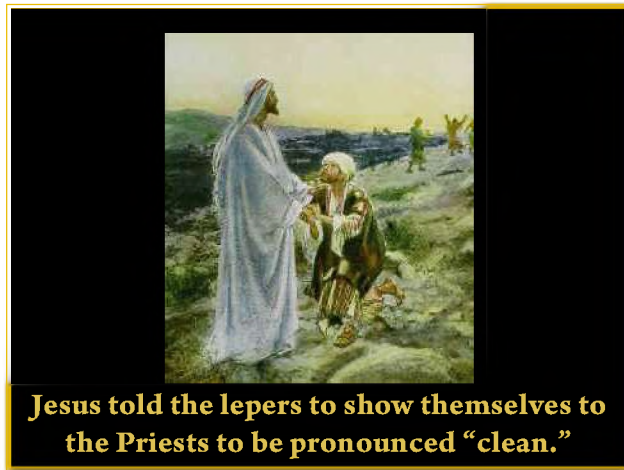
However, there was warfare, and “Michael and his angels” fought against the “dragon and his angels” and vice versa. The “dragon” and this “Michael” were going at it, vying for position. That hardly pictures our Lord and the “dragon” locked in combat.

Everything our Lord received came from the Father with love. Never did he want anything except what God would give him. He wrested nothing from the “dragon.” This whole scenario is unthinkable to apply to our Lord Jesus at any stage of his life here on earth.

We note that both “Michael” and the “dragon” had “angels” on their side, also being pictured as locked in this grab for control of “heaven,” the spiritual realm. It is important to understand that our Lord never fought for control of the “Jewish heavens.” He told the people that the scribes and Pharisees “sit in Moses’ seat.” He said in Matthew 23:2, 3:

“The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat:

“All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.”



Where is this war in heaven touching our Lord? He encouraged the people to observe what their religious leaders enjoined upon them.

However, when we apply this text properly to the man of sin “Michael,” this text fits like a glove. The bishops were clawing and struggling among themselves to gain ascendancy within their ranks to gain the papal seat controlling “heaven.” As they contended for preeminence among themselves they also battled with vigor against the “dragon” (civil power) controlling their inner circle of “heaven.”

Clearly, they did not want the “dragon” emperor to be their Pontifex Maximus. They wanted at last to crown the winner within their ranks as the “bishop of bishops,” the pope. They succeeded in ousting the “dragon” from control of the religious realm by a fortuitous circumstance.

When Julian, a noble pagan, abandoned leadership in the Christian heavens, wanting rather to maul it than to join it, it enabled them to lock out the emperor from being Pontifex Maximus. That is basically where the “dragon” prevailed not. Julian died after only a short reign, but that brief interlude in which they were not persecuted by the emperor to control them, gave the “Michael and his angels” the momentum for victory.



Verse 8

“And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.”

Alas for the “dragon,” his Pontifex Maximus reign in the Christian spiritual realm was very short. The “dragon” would still control the emperors of the “earth” as well as the “popes” of the spiritual Christian realm. The same ambitions, cruelty, pride and vanity gave Satan controlling leverage over both emperors and popes.



**Pope crowning Charlemagne
Emperor**

If both emperors and popes were in the “dragon’s” power, why the struggle?

The answer is simple.

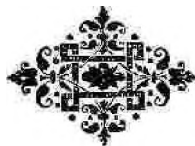
It is hard to synchronize the interests of emperors and popes conveniently.

Sometimes their interests conflict.

It made Satan’s control less efficient.

We read of the Church of Pergamos in Revelation 2:13: “I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is.” Satan still had and has enormous control over the spiritual “heaven” and civil “earth.” He just lost ease of operation and efficiency in this battle.

Democracies are even harder to control. The more people who are involved and the more interests that conflict, the harder it is for Satan to accomplish his purposes.



Verse 9

“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.”



**King Louis doing penance
before the Pope.**

**The “state” became
subservient to the Pope.**

The emperor and his retinue of civil officers lost their unique ruling status in the “heavens.”

They were cast to “earth” where they belonged in the first place.

Separation of church and state is excellent in an evil world.

However, in the Kingdom of Christ, his reign will be unchallenged.

Christ will have all “power in heaven and earth,” all from one throne. There will not be a competitive or divided ruling authority.

This is really what Satan wanted, but was denied.

Remember, however, Satan only lost efficiency of operation, he did not lose control. He thenceforth had his ducks lined up into two columns, and not the one column he desired.



Verse 10

“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.”

The victory of the papal forces in ridding themselves of meddling emperors in their internal affairs and also of their religious conquest for the world was attended with jubilation. The “heavens” were now under their control and they could direct their attention to getting a better hold on earthly matters.



Coronation Celebration of the Pope

We notice something strange about this jubilant declaration. There is no praise given to God or Christ. No, not one word of thanksgiving to God or any acknowledgment of gratitude was given. Nor should it be, for God and Christ had nothing whatever to do in this successful grab for power.

Jesus said, “The Son can do nothing of himself.” (John 5:19) But the claim is made that “salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ” has been attained by the fact that the “accuser of our brethren is cast down.”

Please notice this proclamation is made because the “dragon’s” control in the nominal spiritual heavens has been thwarted. The “dragon” is not in the abyss. He still rules the civil governments of earth. And without a doubt he still has the antichrist under his influence, albeit he needs two hats to run the split powers of “heaven” and “earth.”

Edward Gibbons, Esq., in *THE HISTORY OF THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE*, Vol. II, p. 41 (in the Chicago Bible Students’ disk on Gibbons, the footnotes are not provided, so the pages are 31, 32), in evaluating the tendency of Christians to seek martyrdom observes:

“The first Christians, who, according to the lively expressions of Sulpicius Severus, desired martyrdom with more eagerness than his own contemporaries solicited a bishopric. The epistles which Ignatius composed as he was carried in chains through the cities of Asia, breathe sentiments the most repugnant to the ordinary feelings of human nature.

“He earnestly beseeches the Romans, that when he should be exposed in the amphitheater, they would not, by their kind but unseasonable intercession, deprive him of the crown of glory; and he declares his resolution to provoke and irritate the wild beasts which might be employed as the instruments of his death.

“Some stories are related of the courage of martyrs, who actually performed what

Ignatius had intended; who exasperated the fury of the lions, pressed the executioner to hasten his office, cheerfully leaped into the fires which were kindled to consume them, and discovered a sensation of joy and pleasure in the midst of the most exquisite tortures.

“Several examples have been preserved of a zeal impatient of those restraints which the emperors had provided for the security of the church. The Christians sometimes supplied by their voluntary declaration the want of an accuser, rudely disturbed the public service of paganism, rushing in to pronounce and to inflict the sentence of the law.

“The behavior of the Christians was too remarkable to escape the notice of the ancient philosophers; but they seem to have considered it with much less admiration than astonishment. Incapable of conceiving the motives which sometimes transported the fortitude of believers beyond the bounds of prudence or reason, they treated such an eagerness to die as the strange result of obstinate despair, of stupid insensibility, or of superstitious frenzy.”

This illustrates that the antichrist had martyrs during the pagan persecutions which they could look back upon and choose whom they would as their “brethren” who were being accused and martyred. It must be acknowledged that while there were true Christians who were martyred, the antichrist had many people who gladly and fanatically sought martyrdom.

We are not to think of the man of sin element as limited in its roster of martyrs to fanatic examples. It claimed that all martyrs, starting with Christ and the apostles on down through the terrors of Diocletian’s reign of terror, were among its faithful who helped bring it victory. As Gibbon says in *THE TIME IS AT HAND*, p. 84:

“The Church of Rome defended by violence the empire which she had acquired by fraud; a system of peace and benevolence [practiced by early Christians] was soon disgraced by proscriptions, war, massacres, and the institution of the holy office [of torture].”



Constantine ended the relentless persecution of Christianity, allowing the man of sin forces to enrich and fortify their position and ultimately to secure victory over the whole spiritual realm. While the early Christians were non-violent martyrs, once the man of sin came to power it became more ruthless and cruel than the worst performances of Diocletian.

We notice the false declaration of victory says: “Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ.” We notice this shameless proclamation attributing to God and Christ what in fact had been the result of their own successful ascent to power in the control of the “spiritual heavens.”

Notice this man of sin class does not say we were “accused day and night.” No, these ruling princes were not the persecuted and martyred. They say, “the accuser of our [deceased] brethren is cast down.” They claim all the martyrs, which at their discretion they chose to call their “brethren.” How convenient it was!

Verse 11

“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.”

Please notice what this verse does not say—“we overcame him [the dragon] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of our testimony; and we loved not our lives unto the death.”

The man of sin could sit smugly ensconced in glory having secured “heaven” as its domain, and claim the faithfulness and martyrdom of others the basis for their ascendancy. Nothing more needs to be said. This is a total lie.

The man of sin got where it was by compromise, intrigue, deceit, duplicity and flagrant abuses of Christian values. The martyrs suffered. The man of sin element, more often than not, made others suffer.



Verse 12

“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.”

Something is very wrong about this declaration. It is transparently a pathetic lie. Where will the devil be when Christ takes control of the heavens? He will be in the “bottomless pit.” (Revelation 20:2, 3) The devil will not be around to trouble anyone, no matter how angry he might be, for he will be absolutely restrained in the “pit.”

This text sends up all kinds of signals of its deception. There is no proof that because the “devil is come down unto you” that the “inhabitants of the earth and of the sea” were any worse off. It was always difficult being under the rule of the “devil.” The only one seemingly singled out for persecution was the “woman.”



Part IV

Verse 13

“And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.”

The story of this chapter has movement and a build-up of conflict, first between the “dragon” and the “man child,” and then the “devil” in anger turns his persecuting power against the “woman.” It is ironic that the “dragon” does much of its persecuting work directed by the “man child.”



The Spanish Inquisition

The papal forces engaged the civil powers to carry out the most ruthless persecutions against the faithful Christians as represented in the “woman.”

It was at the behest of the papacy that the “Holy (?) Inquisition” arose.

Actually, the “dragon” never had any affection for this “woman.” The “dragon” had a history of animosity and persecution of the early Church. The persecution abated when the “dragon” wished to control the “man child.”

However, once the “dragon” was cast out of the ruling spiritual realm, the “woman” was no longer exempt from his hatred. Unless the Lord had intervened on her behalf, she would have perished.



Verse 14

“And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.”

“Two wings of a great eagle” are the “wings” of the Old and New Testaments. You never saw an eagle fly with one wing. Both are needed for flight.

From Peter Waldo on, the messengers to the Church engaged in bringing the Bible to light. Peter Waldo translated the four Gospels into French. Wycliff translated the Bible into English, as did Tyndale. Luther gave us the German Bible.



Woman in the Wilderness
Revelation 12:14

It was on the wings of a “great eagle” that the “woman” was transported into the “wilderness” of separation in spirit from the “face of the serpent.” This expression in itself is most interesting.

We are told the “times of refreshing shall come from the presence [out from the face] of the Lord [Jehovah].” (Acts 3:19)

This conveys the thought that God’s favor is turned toward man. When the “serpent” turns his “face” toward the “woman,” it indicates he has turned his full attention toward destroying this “woman” or toward her “seed.”

God has a “place” for the “woman,” underneath the “wings” of the Almighty. “She is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time from the face of the serpent.”

This is a specific time prophecy covering from CE 539 to 1799. It was because of God’s tender care and providence that the “woman” was sustained against the penetrating anger of the “serpent.”

As the twelve hundred and sixty-year time period neared its close, the “serpent” became exasperated and frantic. He must somehow overwhelm this “woman” whom he loathes. Desperate ones must take desperate measures.



Verse 15

“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.”

Normal serpents are not known to be able to cast out large amounts of water. This “serpent” is in fact that “old serpent,” the devil. Water is a symbol of truth of any kind—either spiritual, or human rights and dignity pertaining to mankind.



The French Revolution

The devil tried a bold move in France, a nation that never had a reformation and where the truth never penetrated as it did in England and Germany.

The “serpent” raised up gifted men of letters who awakened the sleeping nation of France to what America was all about.

These men such as Robespierre, Voltaire, Rousseau, Danton, Mirabeau, etc., were brilliant writers who with penetrating analysis exposed the evils of royalty and priestcraft. Also, there was no shortage of evil to expose.

However, most of these men renounced all Christian values and exalted the goddess of reason. The devil's first love of paganism was reinstated. Nonetheless, many truths of human dignity and human rights were proclaimed and were anxiously received by the masses.

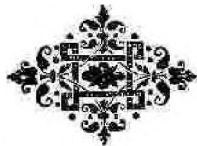
"Satan" was never good in handling truth, and in this instance he more or less shot himself in the foot. His design was to make the revolution in France so bloody and repulsive that all the nations of Europe would cringe at what happens when you give people that much freedom. He expected such revulsion on the part of the nations that they would clamor to go back to the old papal controls and authority.

Satan badly misjudged matters. These reforms were so overdue that the people and nations received them gladly. Once you spill water on dry ground it is hard to get it back again.

The world could look at two revolutions now, one in France and the other in the United States. The difference was that France took the pagan route and the United States took the Christian path of reform. It was easy to see which bore better fruitage.

The real purpose of the "serpent's" strategy was to have "true Christianity," represented in the "woman," "carried away of the flood." He misjudged how thirsty the earth was for this refreshing water. Consequently, the last state was worse than the first.

He succeeded in causing light and liberty to prosper to his own disadvantage. Satan performs better in darkness than in light.



Verse 16

"And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth."

Try as the "serpent" would, we see his utter frustration and the defeat in this most carefully thought-out plan to harm the "woman." The world was never going back to the old papal way of doing things. The cloak-and-dagger politics where popes and kings could closet themselves in dark design were ending. The people had been treated as serfs and peasants and were tired of the castles and churches on the hill while they dwelt in hovels in dark valleys.

For the common people the terrors of the revolution were not all that bad. They felt a sense of just retribution on the wickedness of the royalty and priests.



The Bastille Prison stormed in the French Revolution

When the people stormed the Bastille in 1789, they got a first hand look at what had happened to their friends and neighbors who had been carried hither.

The human mind cannot imagine how terrible were the instruments of torture, how creative the demonic skills of men, and how poor victims were tortured mercilessly.

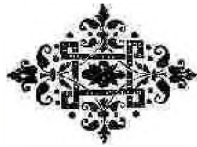
The papal powers would never be able to return to such depths of wickedness. The “serpent” could not recover a drop of water he cast out after the “woman.”

His boldest scheme had failed. He was not only frustrated now but angry. Things were not going better for him. From this point on, every move he made in his warfare against true Christianity found him losing more than he gained. His options were running out and he found himself being moved against his will toward the “bottomless pit.”

While the “serpent” may still score some points, yet each step he takes will require greater loss than his overall gain. In simple language, he is taking a beating. Notice that while the “dragon” is outraged with the “woman,” he no longer will be able to persecute her.

Whatever happens to this “woman”? We are not told. She just fades away and ceases to be involved in the struggle.

In the “time of harvest” the body of believers is separated—the “wheat from the tares.” The general body of believers is separated into those truly consecrated saints and those who are merely parading as Christians.



Verse 17

“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.”



**The Dragon
“Went to Make War
with the Remnant of Her Seed.”**

To the saints living in these last days of the Gospel period, this last verse is of paramount importance. Here we have absolute information of what lies before us.

Yes, there can be no doubt, the “dragon” “went to make war with the remnant of her [the woman’s] seed.”

Here God is telling us that those “which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” must at some point meet the “dragon” head on in battle. Is that battle over, or is it future? If it is past, it has been an easy victory for us.

Most of the Lord’s people believe this is future. They will be well-advised if they make every preparation for this confrontation. This time around, the devil is going to be better prepared than he was in the French Revolution, when he badly misjudged what the results would be. This will be his last chance at crushing the saints.

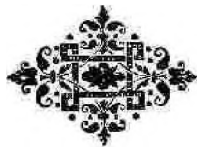
They have “smart bombs” now. Precision weapons are replacing wholesale blanket bombing. We would be well-advised to expect the “dragon” to join the battle with hi-tech focused weapons, with the name of every saint clearly marked on it before being sent forth.

Just because the “dragon” has been slow to make this last assault does not lessen the reality of what must yet take place. The very Word of the Lord makes it clear: the “dragon ... went to make war with the remnant of her seed.” It has not been consummated yet, but the Word of God cannot be broken. This will occur just as certainly as the sun will rise on the morrow. Dismiss this warning at your own peril.

Our story does not end in this chapter. The last verse prepares the reader for the battle that the “dragon” has been carefully plotting. In the old days when kings were uncertain that they could win, they sought allies in the battle. We notice the “dragon” does not rush into this conflict. As a matter of fact, he is forced into it.

In Revelation sixteen, we learn that “seven angels” are each sent forth from the “temple” with a “golden vial [bowl]” to be “poured out” just like “smart bombs.” Each has a designated destination—earth, sea, rivers and fountains of water, sun, seat of the beast, the great river Euphrates, and the air.

These messages will be directed by God to reach their target. The effect of these “plague” messages will be painful and will pull away the cloak that has hidden the operations of the rulers of “darkness.” The devil has really been slow about entering this final battle. Anyone would be slow to enter a battle you know you will lose.

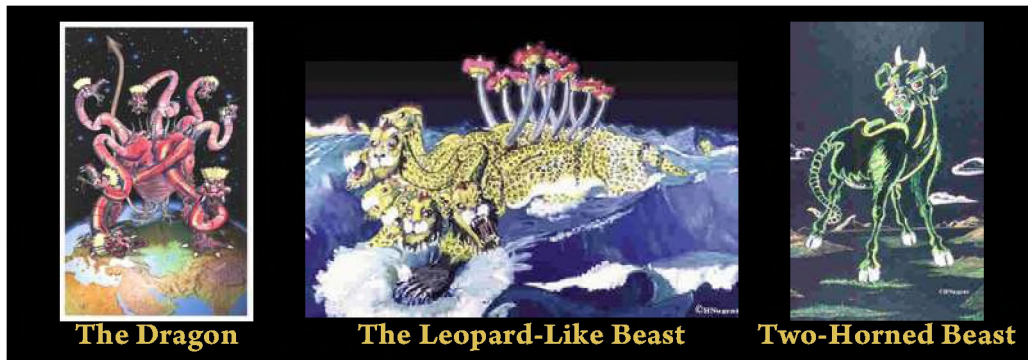


Part V

Revelation 16:12, 13

It is after the six of these very damaging judgment messages have been delivered, opening the way for the “kings of the east [from the sunrising],” that the “dragon” moves to consummate his war against the “seed of the woman.” (Revelation 16:12, 13)

We notice that the “dragon” is not very secure now. He seeks an alliance with the [leopard-like papal] “beast” and the “false prophet” [with “two horns of a lamb, and spake as a dragon”].



The Dragon

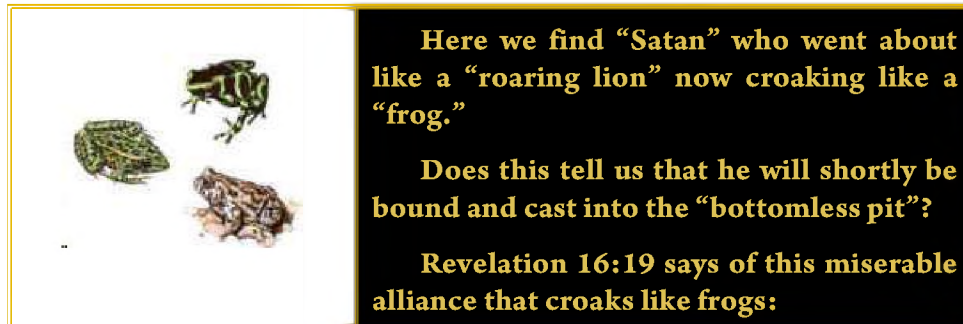
The Leopard-Like Beast

Two-Horned Beast

We read:

“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.”

These frog-like utterances are defined as “the spirits of devils.” This is interesting, because more than the “serpent” himself is involved here. It seems like the demon spirit world is all united with the papal power as well as the Church of England and the “dragon.”



Here we find “Satan” who went about like a “roaring lion” now croaking like a “frog.”

Does this tell us that he will shortly be bound and cast into the “bottomless pit”?

Revelation 16:19 says of this miserable alliance that croaks like frogs:

“And the great city was divided into three parts [“beast,” “false prophet” and “dragon”], 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.”

This marks the defeat of the coalition as they fall divided and helpless.



The Last Look at This Unholy Triumvirate

In Revelation 19:11-21 we have the final description of the battle between Christ with his “armies” in “heaven” and his steadfast opponents, the “beast,” “false prophet” and the “kings of the earth, and their armies.” This describes the last battle before the devil is defeated and placed in the “bottomless pit.”

The battle line is clearly drawn between the “King of Kings and Lord of Lords” together with his “armies in heaven” against the papal “beast,” the Church of England “false prophet” and the “kings of the earth, and their armies.”

We notice the title of “dragon” is dropped in this scenario. Why? Because the “dragon” is not “cast alive” into the “lake of fire” as are the “beast” and “false prophet.” The “dragon’s” forces are depicted separately from the devil himself.

“The kings of the earth, and their armies” are, in fact, representing the “dragon” but they will only be destroyed as opponents of the “King” and soon will become subordinate to our Lord. The Scriptures make this fine distinction here to show that two parts of the opposition are “cast alive” into the “lake of fire” [the second death], while the “kings of the earth, and their armies” are only dispatched as enemies.

The false religious systems will be destroyed forever and never will they be permitted to rise again. However, the devil will only be restrained in the “pit” until the time that God wishes to loose him.



**Adam and Eve
in the Garden of Eden**

Just as Adam and Eve were tested by the devil, so mankind, when the Mediatorial reign of Christ is complete, will stand before God, as did Adam.

Mankind will be able to attain human perfection while some may still harbor a latent sympathy for sin.

God will manifest the true heart condition of each person.

Those sympathizing with sin will be revealed and destroyed.

When the devil is loosed, he will go forth to call those identified as the seed of the serpent (Genesis 3:15). His children will hear his voice and be beguiled by his subtle deceptions. Just as Eve was deceived, so some of mankind will think they are justified in compassing the “camp of the saints about [ancient worthies in their temporary dwelling place].” (Revelation 20:9) These deceived ones, as well as the devil, will all meet the same end in the “lake of fire,” the second death.

The “dragon” is said to be “bound” and cast into the “bottomless pit.” (Revelation 20:2, 3) We cannot help but notice that the “dragon” is not released from the “pit.” Only “Satan” is said to be loosed. (Revelation 20:7) While it is true that there will be some form of government on earth when Christ ends his reign, it will not be under Satan’s control and hence the “dragon” description is not used.

Here we see Christ and his Church victorious. All the powers of sin and darkness will be finally dealt with. That will close forever the chapter of sin and evil in the world. It is said of Christ: “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end” (Isaiah 9:7).



THE ANOMALY OF THE LAMB

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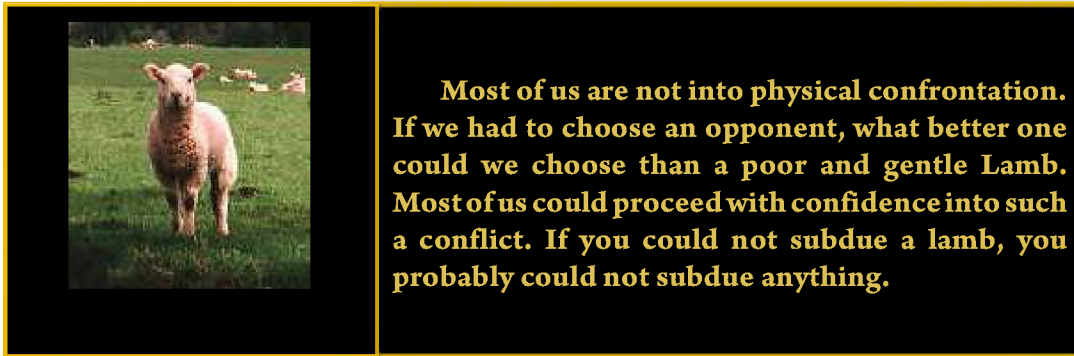


Part I

The Anomaly of the Lamb

“The Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful.” *Revelation 17:14*

An anomaly is something out of the ordinary, a departure from the usual or deviating from the general rule—you might say unexpected. In our text, we find what is not usually expected of a Lamb.



But the Lamb of Revelation 17:14 is an anomaly. This Lamb is King of kings and Lord of lords, invested with all power in heaven and earth—truly an invincible Lamb. If we are among those called, chosen and faithful, we shall share in that invincibility—even if it costs us our lives. That’s another anomaly.



The Lamb in Daniel

If the sheep family is used, why not better portray the victor as the Ram? In Daniel 8:3,4, we find a conquering ram.



Ram = Medo Persia

“I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, a ram standing on the bank of the canal [river]. It had two horns; and both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last.

“I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward. No beast could stand before him, and there was no one who could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great.” (ESV)

The mere fact that the ram “magnified himself” (RV) tells us this ram was a loser. And sure enough, as the story unfolds, Daniel introduces a mean he-goat, a billy-goat.



He-Goat = Grecia

“...A male goat [he-goat] came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground. And the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes.

“He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the canal [river], and he ran at him in his powerful wrath.

“I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns. And the ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled on him. And there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power.

“Then the goat [he-goat] became exceedingly great; but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.”

Daniel 8:5-8 (ESV)

As soon as we read that this he-goat “magnified himself” (RV) exceedingly, it indicates it will not last. Nothing that magnifies itself will last. Just as the ram representing Medo-Persia with its two horns fell before the he-goat of Greece under the one horn Alexander the Great, so the Grecian empire later became fused into the Roman empire. Consequently we read a little horn emerged and **“a king of fierce [“bold”—ESV] countenance”** whose power would be great and “by his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall magnify himself.” (Daniel 8:23-25)

This later **“a king of fierce [“bold”—ESV] countenance”** was tougher than all, but because he magnified himself he would be broken as well.

The fall of that false religious system was forecast in these words, **“...and he shall be broken—but by no human hand.”** (Daniel 8:25, ESV) All powers that magnify themselves shall all be broken. Yes, even if it requires a hand stronger than human, their pride guarantees their destruction. So, in this quick scenario we are shown the end of all those powerful beasts and kings who magnified themselves. Pride goes before destruction.

This “king of fierce [“bold”—ESV] countenance” represented the great line of religious princes who have reigned through the centuries, which cannot be broken by any power on earth. Satan supports it and will not allow this antichrist ruler to fall until the King of Kings arises to destroy it. But it will be destroyed.

Even the Devil in his appointed time will be destroyed. He, too, magnified himself saying, **“I will be like the Most High.”** Yet he will end up as ashes on the earth.



The Lion and the Lamb

Our brief review of Daniel's prophecy casts a shadow before the lamb. The lesson is enlarged in the Revelation of Jesus Christ. There we are introduced to the Lamb, "*Arnion*"—occurring 28 times, referring to Jesus. Only once is Jesus referred to as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah." (Revelation 5:5)

We are told that the Lion of the tribe of Judah prevailed to open the book sealed with seven seals. The reason the "lion" is mentioned here is to fulfill the Old Testament scriptures.



The "lion" confirms Genesis 49:9,10 which reads:

"Judah is a lion's cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down; he couched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him?"

"The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him [until he comes to whom it belongs]; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples." [ESV]

Genesis 49 was Jacob's prophecy.

But in Deuteronomy 33:20 and 22, Moses speaks of two other tribes as lions.



1. "Gad ... dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head."



2. "Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan."

But in Revelation we learn it is not Gad or Dan that is the **triumphant** lion. Clearly, the lion of the tribe of Judah prevails to open the scroll, sealed with seven seals.

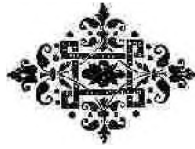


Jesus is only once referred to as a lion in the New Testament, whereas 28 times in Revelation Jesus is referred to as a lamb. Now that is a very interesting fact.

Why not a little more of the lion figure and less of the lamb? After all, one of the attributes of Jehovah is the face of a lion, which means it can be used to describe holy and good qualities. But, for whatever reason, it is not the way our Lord Jesus is most often described.

Why the lamb symbol? Lambs are not known to be smart, nor strong, nor wise, nor rich, nor glorious, nor powerful. But the Lamb of which we speak is an anomaly of a lamb. We read,

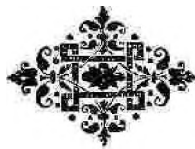
“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing.” (Revelation 5:12)



Qualities of the Lamb

We must not ever underestimate the qualities of this Lamb. This Lamb is endowed from the One who sits upon the throne with all the resources of God Almighty. This Lamb is worthy to receive such resources and glory. We must forget about all the images we may have had of a harmless and weak and adorable little creature. This Lamb whereof we speak is not to be petted and fed and coddled like an ordinary lamb.

This Lamb has one unique quality—the heart of a servant. In one sense, no one took Jesus’ life from him. He gave it—he sacrificed it freely for those he loved. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life as a ransom for all. He came not seeking anything for himself, to use men for his own purposes. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came not to glorify himself, but rather to glorify his Father in heaven. This is the heart of the Lamb.



The Lamb Is Rejected

The world is not prepared to receive the Lamb at his second advent any more than they were in the first advent.



When John the Baptist proclaimed before the nation of Israel, “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29), you would think that the people who had wearied themselves sacrificing lambs for centuries would be ready to hail a Lamb that only needed to be sacrificed once for all—a Lamb that could forever take away sin and end forever the tiresome repetition of sacrificial lambs that could never take away sin, that could never purge the believer.

Israelites at the first advent were not seriously interested in having one deal with their sin. More importantly, they wished for one to deal with Rome.

Oh, if Jesus had come on a white charger ready to take on Rome, how gladly Israel would have hailed him and rallied to his side, especially if he could use his miracle-working power to bloody Rome. Yes, they might have received the Lamb of glory, described as “King of Kings and Lord of Lords.”



Strangely, here was a nation specially trained for nearly 2,000 years in types and shadows and prophecy to receive a sacrificial Lamb as their Messiah.

When the moment arrived to receive their Lamb and King, they crucified him. John truly realized this, saying to Israel,

“There standeth one among you, whom ye know not.” How sad! (John 1:26)

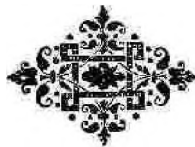
We are told that we have an education problem in this country. But here we see that God spent so many centuries to prepare a people to receive their Messiah, and when the appointed moment came, the examination time, the nation flunked the test. Only a few were prepared to receive Jesus as their Messiah. Why did they fail? How could a whole nation blank out on the test? How could they be so blind, so dull, as not to recognize this one sent of God?



If only Jesus had lived up to their expectations! In brief moments, perhaps he did. When he healed the sick, raised the dead, fed the multitudes—this was what they were looking for. Someone who could do something materially. If he had only improved this type of performance, they would not only proclaim him King, but they would have followed him. Supposing he organized them into an army to throw off the shackles of Rome. Imagine having a general who could say to his soldiers, “Don’t worry when you go on the battlefield. If anyone is hurt or wounded or even killed in battle today, I will heal their wounds or raise the slain from the dead.” What an invincible army that would be! The wounded and slain would be back in battle on the morrow. Additionally, if he could call down fire from heaven on the enemies, how quickly and easily he might have subdued Rome.

But how different was their Messiah. They could reject him and disbelieve him at will — with impunity! They could renounce him and call him a wine-bibber and a glutton, a friend of publicans and sinners. They could throw stones at him. Finally, they could strike him, spit upon him and crucify him. Who needed a leader such as this? They dared not treat their own religious leaders thus. They dared not treat the Roman rulers thus. A sacrificial lamb was not what they wanted.

Ah, so when the golden moment came to Israel, their finest hour, their appointment with destiny, they rejected the One sent of God. **“He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”** (John 1:11) The tragedy is numbing.



Part II

The Lamb in Revelation

In Revelation 5:6 we have the first reference to the Lamb. He stands between the throne and the four living creatures, and among the 24 Elders.

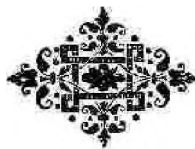
It is interesting to note that when the strong angel asked, “**Who is worthy to open the scroll and break the seals?**” that one of the elders declared, “The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered.” (Revelation 5:2,5)

Oddly enough, it is not the “Lion of the tribe of Judah” that takes the scroll in the scenario. You would normally expect this to happen. If the Lion conquered, you would expect the Lion to step forward for the scroll. But no, it is the Lamb, looking as though it had been slain, that steps forward to take the scroll from the right hand of the One seated on the throne.



True, Jesus was a conqueror from the Davidic line, but he conquered as a Lamb—offering himself in sacrifice. In verse 9, the Lamb is declared worthy to take the scroll because he was slain and became the ransom. In verse 12, the Lamb is declared worthy “to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing.” Then there is a joint acclaim both to the One who sits on the throne, Jehovah, and to the Lamb: “Blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!” (Revelation 5:13) The Lamb here, for the first time, shares in the acclaim that ascends to the Father.

When Jesus was on earth, he permitted no worship of his person. He even said, “Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.” (Mark 10:18) But in his resurrection glory God said, “Let all the angels of God worship him.” (Hebrews 1:6) And so when we honor and worship the Son, we honor the Father.



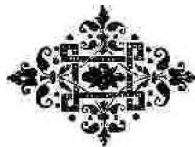
The Lamb Opens 7 Seals



It is the Worthy Lamb who opens the seals. Under the 6th seal, we hear the kings and great men, the generals, the rich and the strong calling to the mountains and rocks, saying, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.” (Revelation 6:16) This compounds the anomaly. The mighty of the earth are seeking refuge from the wrath of the Lamb.

Now a Lamb is not a wrathful creature. Even if they could be enraged by some special method, lambs would be more cute than fearful. But this Lamb shares the great wrath of the One sitting on the throne. The power of God and the Lamb is here recognized. These mighty of earth say, **“For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand it?”** (Revelation 6:17)

The Lamb we speak of has wrath and unlimited power to deal with those who pervert the way of righteousness. Oh, if men would only take heed to this Lamb and his righteous wrath, it might make them more careful. But men somehow feel they are beyond the judgments of the Lord and the Lamb. The greatest folly men indulge in today is believing that somehow they can escape the judgments and punishment due for their pernicious ways. The Lord has allowed the sins of nations and religious institutions to accumulate. He has not settled his accounts with each generation. Rather, the final settling of the national accounts is before us in the coming trouble in the Armageddon crash. The wrath of the Lamb will reach them. The mountains, the caves, and the holes in the rocks will not save any from the wrath of this Lamb.



The Lamb and the Great Company

Revelation 7:9, 10, 13-19

In chapter 7, the scene focuses on the Great Company and its worship of God and the Lamb. The faithful overcomers also worship God and the Lamb, but the Great Company are said to have white robes and to wave palm branches as a symbol of final victory and peace. The Great Company have a delayed victory and owe their final overcoming to the mercy of the Lamb.

While they appear in white robes, representing that they finally attain righteousness, their robes were not always so white. James tells us that pure religion is to **“visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”** (James 1:27) Apparently, the Great Company class failed in this respect. Instead of helping the poor and oppressed, they sought tithes from these and demanded payment in their ministry so they could do great works for God. They added to the affliction of the afflicted.

Additionally, the Great Company became spotted with the world and all its defilements. When a cause became popular in the world, they jumped on the band wagon to look good. But when the kingdoms of this world started to fall around them, they then made their stand for the Lord. They loved the Lord; when placed against the wall they stood for their Master.

Washing in the Blood of the Lamb

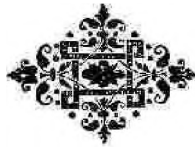
The Revelator tells us they wash their robes “in the blood of the Lamb.”

What does this mean? “In their sufferings they will learn to appreciate as never before their relationship to the Lamb of God and to his atoning merit, and by faith will be permitted to apply the same to their own cleansing.” (*Reprint 4036*) Tribulation will bring about a proper penitence for sin and a proper appreciation of the divine standard of truth and righteousness.

Washing in blood is another anomaly. Normally, blood does not make white, but stains very badly. But the “**blood of the Lamb**” is different. It makes white as snow when properly applied.

Here is the most beautiful anomaly. When the Great Company finally get cleansed and overcome, they shall be “**before the throne of God and serve him day and night within his temple; and he who sits upon the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat.**” (Revelation 7:15,16)

Then —



The Lamb Will Be Their Shepherd



Normally a shepherd leads sheep and lambs. He leads them to pasturage and to streams of living water.

But notice the anomaly here — “For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

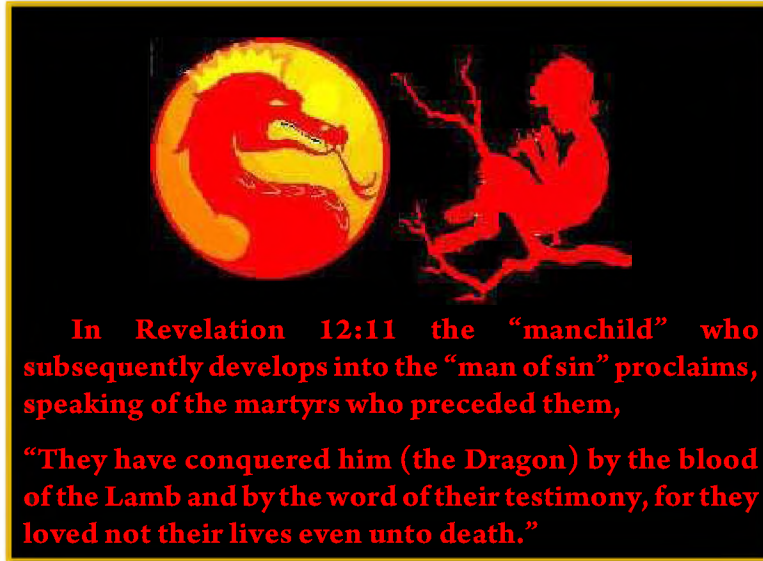
Here the Lamb has reversed the role. He leads the Great Company as a shepherd. How wonderfully blessed to have the Lamb as their shepherd.

Lambs normally do not occupy thrones, but here again we see God’s Lamb is different. He is a regal Lamb invested with the powers of the throne of God.

This Shepherd Lamb vision lingers, it will not leave my vision and I hope not yours either. It is so beautiful, a joy forever. Not only does God love the Great Company, but so does the Lamb. Together they provide for the comfort and refreshment of this tempest-tossed and afflicted class.



The Dragon and the Lamb



True saints did not conquer the Dragon. Whom are they speaking of? We quote *Gibbons*, volume 2, page 363 —

“Many of these fanatics were possessed with the horror of life, and the desire of martyrdom; and they deemed it of little moment by what means, or by what hands, they perished, if their conduct was sanctified by the intention of devoting themselves to the glory of the true faith, and the hope of eternal happiness. Sometimes they rudely disturbed the festivals, and profaned the temples of Paganism, with the design of exciting the most zealous of the idolaters to revenge the insulted honor of their gods.

“They sometimes forced their way into the courts of justice, and compelled the affrighted judge to give orders for their immediate execution. They frequently stopped travelers on the public highways, and obliged them to inflict the stroke of martyrdom, by the promise of a reward, if they consented, and by the threat of instant death, if they refused to grant so very singular a favor. When they were disappointed of every other resource, they announced the day on which, in the presence of their friends and brethren they should cast themselves headlong from some lofty rock; and many precipices were shown, which had acquired fame by the number of religious suicides.

“In the actions of these desperate enthusiasts, who were admired by one party as the martyrs of God, and abhorred by the other as the victims of Satan, an impartial philosopher may discover the influence and the last abuse of that inflexible spirit, which was originally derived from the character and principles of the Jewish nation.”

Nowhere is self immolation taught in the Scriptures, yet we see here how, under the frenzy of Satan’s spirit, men became enamored with martyrdom. The path was paved for the man of sin to grow and flourish. These were not true martyrs for Christ. These were martyrs who imitated the Christian faith. If Moses’ rod could be turned into a serpent, so Jannus and Jambres could do the same. Indeed, it is true, **“They loved not their lives unto death.”** We doubt the class referred to here are true saints. Rather, a class **claiming** to be true Israelites or Jews, **claiming** to be of the Lamb, but really of the **“synagogue of Satan.”** (Revelation 2:9)

The Lamb's "Book of Life"



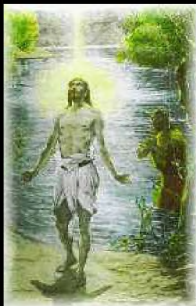
Lambs normally do not have a book — much less a book of life. We read in Revelation 13:8, of “the book of life of the Lamb that was slain.”

People go through a great deal of effort sometimes to get their names to appear in books, magazines and papers. It is big business having names appear in bronze on doors, or on stained glass windows, or in “Who’s Who.” Having your name appear in prestigious circles is a must for those aspiring to amount to something in this world. Some have built monuments to their names, from great pyramids to whole cities. Dynasties were built on names. Ruling houses and corporate dominions thrive on names and so do businesses.

A funny thing happened to my little business — a shoe box operation. Somebody called Dunn and Bradstreet to find out about my business. Well, they had no information on me, so presto, they picked up the phone and called me to make a telephone inquiry about my business, picking up over the phone bits of information. Lo and behold, my little operation was on Dunn and Bradstreet. Suddenly, I received a great increase of financial papers and all kinds of mail intended for Dunn and Bradstreet-listed companies. Not only that, but I received an invitation to write up some kind of pedigree as a possible listing of “Who’s Who” in the Midwest, which I promptly disposed of. I figured if I could appear in Who’s Who, it wasn’t worth anything. The world thrives on phony information! Who needs to be a part of that!

There is only one place that is important for our name to appear—in the Lamb’s book of life. All else counts for nothing. If your name is in the Lamb’s book, you are something. If it is not there, you are nothing. No matter how one’s name may be emblazoned in the sky, unless our names get into the Lamb’s book of life and remains there, all is lost. We get a probationary listing in the Lamb’s book now, but if we overcome, Jesus has promised, **“I will not blot his name out of the book of life; I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.”** (Revelation 3:5) Yes, Jesus has a blotter which can erase your name and mine from that wonderful book. Let us give all diligence to overcome so that our name will remain there.

The only way we will prove overcomers is by being like the Lamb who holds this book. He has the **“heart of a servant.”** Never mind the “Who’s Who.” Jesus said, “Learn of me for I am meek and lowly of heart.” Let us be serious about having the “heart of a servant.”



Jesus had the “Heart of a Servant.”

“Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,

“I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”

Psalms 40:7,8

The Lamb on Mount Zion



Revelation 14:1 — “Lo, a lamb stood on Mount Zion and with him an 144,000, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.”

Here is another anomaly of the Lamb. In this vision, Mount Zion, the ruling hill, the place of David’s throne—which was to be an everlasting throne and never lack a ruler to sit upon it—comes to view.

What would you expect to find on this ruling kingdom mountain? A king, of course. And so it is; this Lamb is king. If this Lamb stood on Mount Zion without regal authority, then he would have no right to be there. Does anyone believe this Lamb stood where he ought not be? Was this Lamb on Mount Zion after the kings of earth collapsed? Or was he there before the kings of earth surrendered?

Psalm 2 indicates that the rulers of earth take counsel together against the Lord and His Anointed. To no purpose, however, for God says, **“I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.”** (Psalm 2:6)

This Lamb on Mount Zion was indeed our returned Lord.

Daniel added, **“In the days of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand for ever.”** (Daniel 2:44)

What could be clearer. There were not two kings on Mount Zion. Only one—the Lamb. And by adding the 144,000 with him, it brings us to the date 1878-81. Notice it does not say the 144,000 were granted clothing of fine linen bright and pure. It does not say the 144,000 were called, chosen and faithful. Not at this point.

They did have the Father’s name in their forehead. And they liked to sing. Have you ever tried to sing a hard song and you just couldn’t seem to get the parts right? Well, the song these sang was special. Only the 144,000 seemed to be able to get the melody. Others, try as they might, ended up singing sour notes. It takes the Holy Spirit to tune the tongue, and the notes and music are the harvest message.



Followers of the Lamb

The vision in Revelation 14:4,5 introduces the requirements of the 144,000 who stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion. The record is clear. **“These have not defiled themselves with women, for they are chaste (or virgins); it is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes; these have been redeemed from mankind as first fruits for God and the Lamb, and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are spotless.”** (Revelation 14:4,5) What extraordinary qualities!

Virgins belong only to the Lamb. They are disciplined. They do not flirt with the world as the churches do. They are not God-and-country people. They are not God-and-business people. They are followers of the Lamb.

The record is clear—they **“follow the Lamb wherever he goes.”** What a wonderful company! Many would like to follow the Lamb on occasion, especially if he happens to be going the way they would like to go for the moment. Then, there are those who would like to follow him most of the time and just leave off following once in a while. But such will not be of this class. The record is clear,

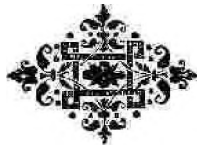


“These follow the Lamb wherever he goes.”

This means the Lamb is on the move. He is active in the harvest work. He is active in proclaiming the Elijah message.

In all these ways, the 144,000 gladly follow. That is the basis of discipleship, “Take up thy cross and follow me.”

In Matthew 8:19 a scribe said to Jesus, **“Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.”** The scribe said this, probably not realizing the great difficulty to be encountered in following Jesus. **“The Son of man did not have a place to lay his head.”** Following the Lamb requires total commitment, courage, and discipline. Yes, the strongest word is **“cross-bearing.”** We are not told what the scribe did, but it seems Jesus’ answer must have discouraged him. Sometimes, discipleship is sold to people without telling them the whole truth. Jesus didn’t do that.



The Song of the Lamb

In Revelation 15:3, we learn of the Song of the Lamb, which is not really new because it is also the song of Moses. (Deuteronomy 32) Now, normally a lamb bleats, but this is an anomaly of this Lamb. He has a song. It is a certain type of song with a specific message. This is not normal for an ordinary lamb. But this Lamb has a song he has taught to the saints and they are able to sing it.

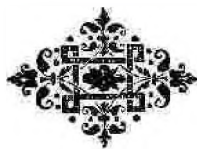
Certainly, we expect the Lamb's song to be sweet and gentle. But no, this Lamb's song tells how God's wrath will end, which is the prelude to the establishment of the Kingdom and the overflowing restitution blessings. Before this can take place, God's judgments must and will be revealed.

Those enemies of God and his people are not going to tip-toe into the kingdom time as make-believe servants of God. These "tares" and "wolves" portrayed themselves as servants of God and righteousness. Therefore, God will manifest the iniquity of their deeds for all the world to see and know.

We do not have to guess at the words of this song, for they are recorded, as follows:

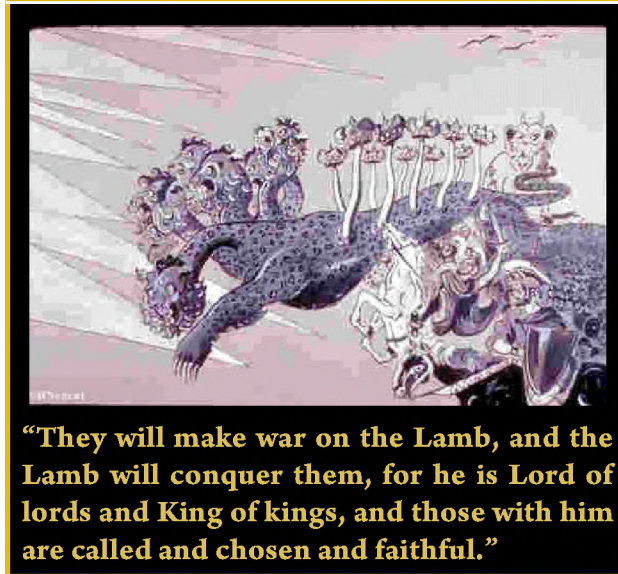


*"Great and wonderful are thy deeds,
O Lord God the Almighty!
Just and true are thy ways,
O King of the ages!
"Who shall not fear and glorify thy name,
O Lord?
For thou alone art holy.
All nations shall come and worship thee,
For thy judgments have been revealed."
Revelation 15:3,4*



War with the Lamb

The story of the Lamb moves toward its climax amongst the mysteries of this awesome book. In Revelation 17:14 we read,



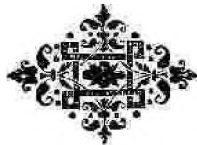
This is the great turning-point in all human history. When this battle is over, the way will be open for the full establishment of the Kingdom. The ten horns are ten kings who have not received kingdoms, but finally do and then give this kingly power to the scarlet-colored beast. Why? That, too, is explained. Because

“God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by being of one mind and giving their royal power to the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.”
(Revelation 17:17)

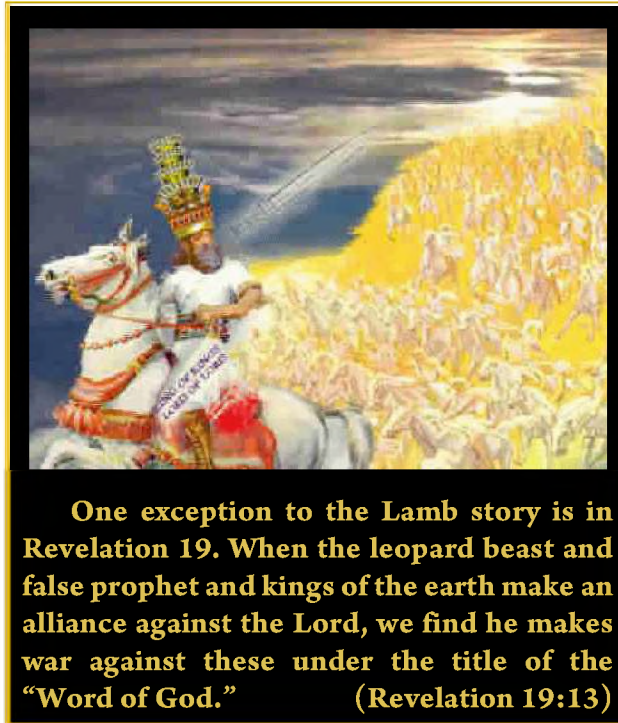
Without going into the details of this chapter, the point we all can agree on and rejoice in is the final judgment and overthrow of this cursed woman, which is **“the great city which has dominion over the kings of the earth.”** Her fall will end the tryst between kings of the earth and this Jezebel woman, or apostate church. Babylon’s fall will herald the binding of Satan and all the powers of darkness that have stood in the way of our Kingdom which cannot be moved.

But of special interest to us in this prophecy is the clear time mechanism which one can misread. The time of this triumphant conflict is not in the past. For at no time could it be argued that **“all with Him are called, chosen and faithful,”** short of believing the door to the heavenly calling is closed. But even here, the “closed-door” Christians are faced with an impossible victory in which the kings, beast and woman still go grandly on. A very hollow victory for the King of kings.

By faith we can savor the sweet taste of victory here. The Lamb overcomes them. If we are among those “called, chosen and faithful” ones, then we will surely say with the Psalmist, “When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, **“The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad.”**” Psalm 126:1-3



The Word of God



In this picture we see our Lord not as a Lamb, but as a representative of God’s Word. You see, God is never referred to as a Lamb. That title or appellation would be inappropriate to Him. There are scripturally limited ways that we may refer to Jehovah. And certainly, the title Lamb would be totally unacceptable applied to God Himself. Hence when it comes to fulfilling the Word of God, the title of Lamb is dropped. The message is loud and clear. When Jesus has on the mantle of God’s Word he is not a Lamb. He speaks for God Almighty and as such the authority and eminence of God’s throne with infinite sovereignty is shown.



The Marriage of the Lamb

The highlight of the Lamb story is the marriage of the Lamb. In Revelation 19:6,7 the announcement is made,

“Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready.”



There is an enigma here. It is not the Lamb, nor, nor is it the bride singing “Hallelujah.” Their feelings are not expressed in this account. Maybe there is no way you could express two thousand years of preparation and anticipation culminating in this marriage of first-borns. But, here, the Great Company is apparently shouting Hallelujah and quite excited about events leading to the consummation of hope and joy in the union of the Bride and the Lamb.

When is the marriage of the Bride and the Lamb? (*Question Book* 300) — When each member is raised to glory the union takes place. (*Question Book* 462) — “When the last member of the body shall have finished his course and has been changed into the glory of the Lord.” (*Reprint* 3200) — “The event of the very near future.”

We believe both thoughts are necessary. In one sense, those resurrected in spiritual glory are joined with the Lord, in a moment in a twinkling of an eye. (1 Corinthians 15:52) There is a very special union that takes place. But there is another sense when the last member shall have finished his course and the bride is finally complete. That will be an exhilarating moment.

Whatever of personal glory and joy comes to each in the resurrection, we must remember that there is a certain sense that there is sorrow and suffering in heaven. As long as one member suffers, they all are concerned and share in that suffering. Hence, their joy cannot be complete, nor can they drink the cup of joy anew with Christ, until they all drink together on the other side of the veil.



Who Are Invited to the Marriage Supper?

Revelation 19:9 says, **“Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”**

Certainly it is not the bride who is invited. She will send out the invitation along with the Bridegroom. While this is the nuptial feast of the Lamb and the Bride, Bro. Russell suggests the Great Company are invited to this feast. (*Reprint* 3834:5) This feast is merely a picture of the joyous occasion that will follow the marriage. (*Question Book* 296:T) In other words, this takes place a short while after the Bride is all glorified and after the Great Company finishes its fiery trials. So the Great Company goes through a great tribulation only to be glorified and invited to the joys of this marriage supper.



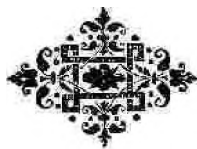
The Lamb's Wife



Revelation 21:9, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb."

Here we read of the glorified church. The bride, it turns out, is the holy city of Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. The bride of the Lamb is portrayed as a jeweled city or government invested with authority from God, and having the glory of God. We can scarcely take it all in!

One thing emerges that is very significant. The city has twelve foundations in its walls bearing the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. (Revelation 21:14) Here dies all claims to apostolic succession. These twelve apostles have a special place in God's Kingdom, eternally. We must never forget, they are the Lamb's apostles. We could not love the Lamb and not honor his choice. Those who love the Lamb will love the Lamb's apostles.



No Temple Here

The New Jerusalem is a city without a temple. The Revelator John, whose keen eye misses nothing, says, "**And I saw no temple in the city.**" (Revelation 21:22)

Not exactly. "**The Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb**" are the temple of it. This city does not need a temple under such conditions—not when God and the Lamb meet with them. They do not need the sun and its gospel light, nor the moon with the light of the Law. Why?

***The Lamb is the city's Lamp.
God is its light.***

Then there is the Lamb's book of life. (Revelation 21:27) No one becomes a resident of this holy city without a listing in this book. You know there are all kinds of "Who's Who" lists, but unless an individual qualifies during the Kingdom time, his name will be nothing.

The Throne of God and the Lamb



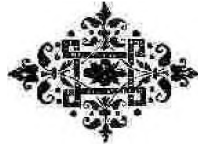
The Lamb provides water. Revelation 22:1,3 — Just as in Eden there was pure water flowing out, so in God’s kingdom God and the Lamb will supply the life-giving water of Truth.

Yes, nothing accursed shall be there. No vestige of sin, no impure teaching, no deception.

Truth, truth, truth—everywhere, all the time. Why? Because the “throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it.”

Revelation 22:5 — **“And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun for the Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.”**

As the nations are healed and cleansed, they shall see God’s face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.



The Lamb Is the Lamp

Remember the **Lamp** of Revelation 21:23. The Lamb is the lamp. Revelation 22:5 — **“They need no light of lamp or sun — for the Lord God will be their light.”**

When the work of restitution is complete, then Christ will step out from between God and men. Then they will not need Gospel sun or the light of the Lamp of the Lamb. The Lord God will be their light. How very beautiful! Then the victors **“shall reign for ever and ever”** — world of mankind. (*Reprint 3572*)





“CASTING DOWN GOLDEN CROWNS”

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Part I

“Casting Down Golden Crowns”

“And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw **four and twenty elders** sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.” Revelation 4:4

No activity is implied here unless one considers being “seated” an activity.

“And before the throne there 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.

“And the first beast was like a **lion**, and the second beast like a **calf**, and the third beast had a face as a **man**, and the fourth beast was like a flying **eagle**.

“And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” Revelation 4:6-8

Who are these four “beasts” (living creatures)?

The number four pertains to God. Bible students generally agree these “four beasts” represent the **four living attributes of God** which surround His throne and to which God must always answer.

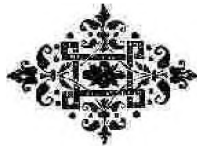


The Four Living Attributes of God

LION		GOD'S JUSTICE
OX		GOD'S POWER
MAN		GOD'S LOVE
FLYING EAGLE		GOD'S ACTIVE WISDOM (Up high where it can see everything.)

**“The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,
“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” Revelation 4:10, 11**

The twenty-four elders worship the One on the throne and sing of God’s glory and honor. The Revelator earnestly tries to share the almost overwhelming vision with us.



“Four and Twenty Elders”

Who do these twenty-four “elders” represent?

The view that has had some acceptance by Bible Students is that first expressed by Bro. W. I. Mann in *Reprint* 529. He said: “There have been, as we count, twenty-four prophets that have prophesied of ‘things pertaining to the kingdom of God.’”

Bible Students have taken this statement of Bro. Mann and concluded that because Bro. Russell published Bro. Mann’s views that he must have concurred in his viewpoint. We do not, however, find this to be the case. Never does Bro. Russell express that viewpoint, hence, it was not his view. Bro. Russell had many contributors in the early Towers, many of whom later differed with Bro. Russell and they had a parting of the ways.

In the opening Tower, Bro. Russell listed the contributors of that time as being J. H. Patton, W. I. Mann, B. W. Keith, H. B. Rice, and A. D. Jones. Then he says, “In no case will the Editor be responsible for all sentiments expressed by correspondents, nor is he to be understood as endorsing every expression in articles selected from other periodicals.”

Here, we see the Pastor distancing himself from his contributors. It was a wise move, for many of these later parted from the Tower. W. I. Mann was one of those with whom Bro. Russell had a troubled relationship. Yet, Bro. Mann contributed several articles, namely, *Reprint* 528, 587, 615, 633.

In 1885, W. I. Mann was listed as Vice President of the Society. He wrote one further article in Aug. 1888, *Reprint* 1052, “Letters to Our Children,” refuting the Trinity, and signed it, *Papa*, W. I. M. That seems to be the last of his contributions. We do not know how the editors missed the signature *Papa*, but they did and it slipped into the Tower. It must not have set well with Bro. Russell, and it seems to have ended Bro. Mann’s contributions. The last thing we needed was a titled *Papa* among us. This information does not disqualify what Bro. Mann had written, but is submitted merely to show Bro. Russell did not necessarily concur with Bro. Mann’s thoughts. Certainly, not the title *Papa*.



Part II

“Elders” in the Bible

“Elders” in Israel were the guides and directors of the nation.
In Numbers 11:16 we read:

“Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be elders of the people, and officers over them.”

These were selected to assist Moses in judging and governing the people. We notice these elders wore no crowns.

“Elders” in the New Testament represent teachers and general overseers of the flock of God.

These were to be spiritual guides in the ecclesias. These also have no crowns. The exception to this was a few brethren at Corinth to whom Paul wrote,

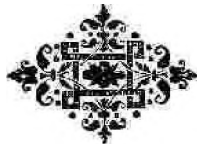
“Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.” 1 Corinthians 4:8, 9

This, however, was a fancied reign, and Paul was challenging its propriety.



“And round about the throne were four and twenty seats [thrones], and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.”
Revelation 4:4

These “elders” have “crowns” on their heads. We see one central throne with twenty-four “seats” [thrones] surrounding it. The central throne is God’s, surrounded by twenty four “thrones” in God’s eternal purpose, together with the “four beasts” [living creatures] and the “seven spirits of God.” These “elders” are clothed in “white raiment,” showing righteousness.



1 Chronicles 13:11, 12; 1 Chronicles 21:29, 30

David wanted to build a house for God. As he had built for himself a wonderful dwelling on Zion's hill, he felt uncomfortable with his luxurious surroundings. David was sitting in the lap of luxury while the house of God wasn't even in its original tent.

Immediately, David decided he would build a house for God. 1 Chronicles 17:1-11 records this information which we will summarize briefly. David declared he would build a house for God. Nathan, the prophet, encouraged David in his purpose.

That night the Lord spoke to Nathan to tell David, "You shall not build me a house to dwell in." God further declared **He would build David a house**. David started out wanting to be magnanimous toward God, and God showed how exceedingly magnanimous He would be to David.

David had more trouble with the Tabernacle than he ever imagined he would. He was full of good intentions, but not careful about details. In bringing up the ark of God, disaster struck. Because they violated God's law in bringing up the ark on a cart, Uzzah died. We read,

"David was angry because the Lord had broken out against Uzzah. ... And David was afraid of God that day..." 1 Chronicles 13:11-12 (ESV)

"For the tabernacle of the Lord, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt offering, were at that time in the high place at Gibeon;

"But David could not go before it to inquire of God: for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the Lord." 1 Chronicles 21:29, 30 (ESV)

The Lord was angry with David for numbering the people and the Lord broke forth upon Israel three days of pestilence. Finally, the Lord commanded the angel to "put his sword again into the sheath" (1 Chronicles 21:27). It was not until then that David could inquire of the Lord.

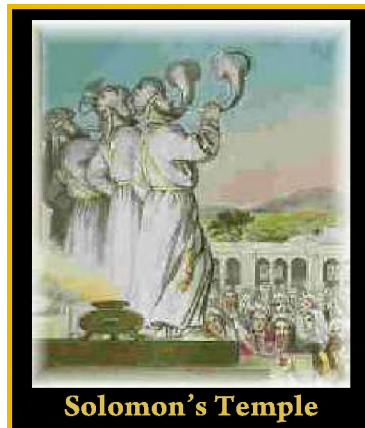
Despite the setbacks, David pursued his goal of building a house for God. Since he could not build it directly, he gathered supplies, money and plans for his son Solomon to build it. Additionally, he arranged for the services of the temple.

Because the temple would be a permanent structure, the Levites would not need to assemble and disassemble it. In 1 Chronicles 23:28-30 new arrangements were given by David. Of the Levites David said,

"Because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron for service of the house of the Lord, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God;

"Both for the shewbread, and for the fine flour for meat offering, and for the unleavened cakes, and for that which is baked in the pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of measure and size;

"And to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even."



Solomon's Temple

So we see all the plans were formulated by David, not Solomon.
That, of course, pleases us very much.

1 Chronicles 24:3, 4

In 1 Chronicles 24, David initiated a new arrangement for the priesthood. Because Eleazar had sixteen sons and Ithamar had eight sons, the priests were organized by lot. They divided the priesthood into twenty-four courses to serve in rotation for one week while their special assignments were determined by lot.

Each course appears to have commenced its work on the Sabbath, the outgoing priests taking the morning sacrifice, and leaving the evening sacrifices to the next course of priests. (2 Chronicles 23:8)



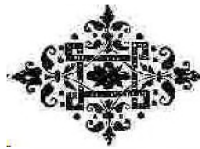
The Levitical Priesthood

This arrangement continued up until the time of Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist.

We read in Luke 1:8, 9:

“Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, according to the custom of the priesthood.” (ESV)

This proves David’s plan was put into practice and continued until the Temple was destroyed. Remember, David created these offices before there was a temple.



1 Chronicles 25



Twenty-four Courses of the Priesthood

In 1 Chronicles 25 the Levites were divided into twenty-four courses to provide singing and music in conjunction with the services of the temple.

Asaph, from one of the Levitical families, was apparently very talented in music and Psalms 50, 73-83 bear his name.

We see that as there were twenty-four courses of the priesthood who served in rotation for one week, their counterparts among the Levites also served in similar manner.

Certain Levites were chosen to provide music and singing during the temple services on a similar basis.

These twenty-four courses of Levites may represent the Great Company who will serve God day and night before the throne.

David Is Divinely Instructed in the Plan for the Temple and Courses of Priests and Levites

David was Divinely instructed in regard to the temple construction, as well as in ordering the courses of Priests and Levites. When David gave Solomon the plans for the temple and its services, it was not on his whim.

In 1 Chronicles 28:11-18 David conveys all the plans of the temple and its services. In 1 Chronicles 28:19 we read:

“All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.”

God, therefore, visited David and engraved these details and plans upon his mind. This was very much like what the Lord did to Moses.



King David

The Lord revealed the Tabernacle details to Moses in Mt. Sinai whereas 1 Chronicles 28:19 made it clear “the Lord made me understand in writing.” God was totally involved here. David was Divinely guided. Read again 1 Chronicles 28:11-19 to get the whole picture.

We read in 2 Chronicles 29:25:

“And he set the Levites in the house of the Lord ... according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king’s seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.”

This information is often overlooked and some think that David did this of his own volition.



“Twenty-four Elders,” “Thrones” and “Crowns”

Twenty-four “elders,” we believe, represent the twenty-four courses of the Priesthood of God. As they appear in this vision, they were only the foreordained “elders.” They existed only in the mind and purpose of God. God speaks of those things which are not as though they were. (Rom. 4:17)

The twenty-four “thrones” or “seats” show that these “elders” were called to occupy God’s chosen offices

The twenty-four “crowns” (apparently one crown to an office) showed the “elders” not only have the offices, but also the “crown” or authority to fulfill their offices.



Why Twenty-four “Elders” and Not Twenty-four “Priests”?

Our study would have been made easier if Revelation had referred to “twenty-four priests” instead of “twenty-four elders.” In fact, the words are quite the same in meaning.

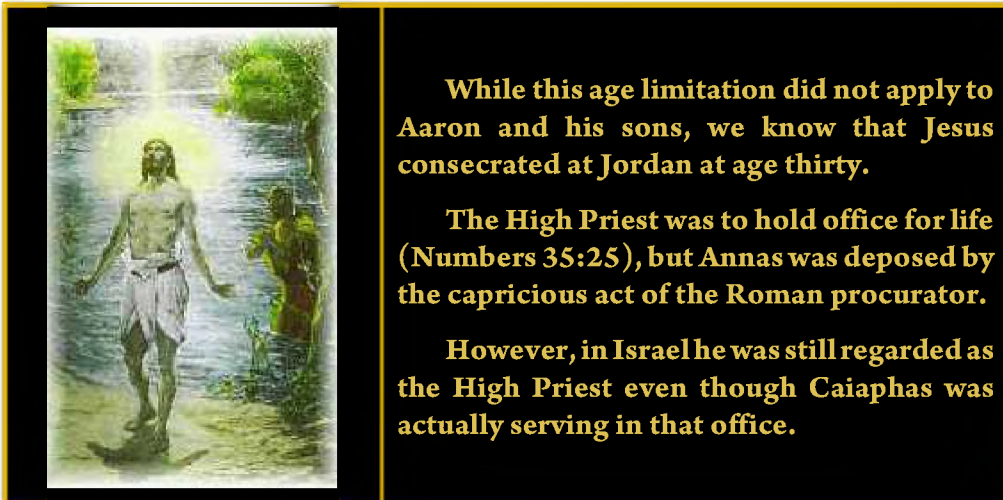
According to the New World Dictionary the word priest derives from the Greek word presbys, which means old or elder. So a priest is, in essence, an “elder.” Now both titles embody the thought of personhood. Only men served as “elders,” and only men served as “priests.”

The first significant body of “elders” were collected to help Moses judge the people. The matters that were too hard for them to decide were then referred to Moses.

Later the Sanhedrin, composed of seventy to seventy-two members, was a judicial body at the time of our Lord. *Peloubet’s* describes them thus: “It consisted of chief priests, or the head of the twenty-four classes into which the priests were divided, elders, men of age and experience, and scribes, lawyers, or those learned in the Jewish law.”

Each of these twenty-four courses had one head or “chief priest,” so there were twenty-four “chief priests.”

Also, we notice a variation in the length of time Levites served in the Tabernacle. They were limited to the ages of thirty to fifty in Numbers 4:3, twenty-five and upward in Numbers 8:24, and twenty years and upward in 1 Chronicles 23:24. The difference of the starting ages seems to have been tied to the severity of the service. As the work lessened, the age for beginning service lowered.



While this age limitation did not apply to Aaron and his sons, we know that Jesus consecrated at Jordan at age thirty.

The High Priest was to hold office for life (Numbers 35:25), but Annas was deposed by the capricious act of the Roman procurator.

However, in Israel he was still regarded as the High Priest even though Caiaphas was actually serving in that office.

After retirement priests entered into the higher role of statesmen, judges, spiritual guides and wise counselors, supposedly represented in the Sanhedrin. The twenty-four “elders” pictured not the sacrificing priesthood of this age, but the glorified and retired sacrificial priests who will function as “elders” and “statesmen,” God’s ultimate role for them. In essence, the twenty-four “elders” would be a kingly priesthood after the order of Melchisedec.



Part III

“Cast Their Crowns Before the Throne”

“The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever; and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” Revelation 4:10, 11

Why do these twenty-four elders cast their crowns before the throne of God?



Each course of these priestly elders cast their crowns before the throne of God. This is **an act of deference**, showing that their power and authority comes from the one seated on the throne. It is fitting that they should do this. None of those who will be of this body will ever forget their own unworthiness. They will always ascribe glory to the one seated on the throne.

Here is where eyebrows may be raised. Alert readers will notice that the true church does not, in fact, exist at the time of this vision. It is only in the fifth chapter that the worthy Lamb appears and is pronounced worthy to open the seals of the book in the right hand of the One seated upon the throne.

How could the church be represented here even before the Lamb appears?

The answer is relatively simple. The twenty-four courses of “elders” are the “elders” foreknown and predestined of God. Just as the “seven Spirits of God” are burning before the throne before the true church has been developed, yet they are the “seven Spirits”—promises to the overcomers of the Gospel age. We must view this vision from the standpoint of God’s eternal purpose.

On the one hand the “elders” are foreordained, their qualifications and spiritual requirements all pre-determined. Throughout the Gospel age the “elders” elected to the high calling will gradually (as they prove overcomers) attain to the purpose for which they are called. That which was foreordained and those who are finally ordained will one day become one.

In nearly every instance where the twenty-four “elders” are mentioned, they are found singing and praising God. That is exactly the calling of the church. We read in Ephesians 1:4-6, 12:

“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

“To the praise of the glory of his grace, ...

“That we should be to the praise of his glory.”

That is our calling, brethren, to be for “the praise of his glory.” Every mention of these “elders” finds them praising and glorifying God.

“Who Is Worthy?”

“Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?” Revelation 5:2

The scene progresses into a series of events, centering on the One found worthy to “open the book” “sealed with seven seals.” We are taken back in time before our Lord was found worthy. In other words, Revelation is something like a play. It can go backward and forward in time to depict certain scenes.

Revelation was written in around CE nineties, so we know Jesus had already come and died and was resurrected. This vision takes us back before that time.

As John beholds this drama unfolding, he begins to weep and sob, “because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon” (Revelation 5:4).

This drama was so real and intense that John found himself drawn into it emotionally. He feared the information contained in that wonderful scroll would never be made known. Notice that there is a time warp here. John was carried in vision before Jesus was found worthy in CE 33. He was actually living in the late nineties.



“One of the Elders Saith unto Me, Weep Not”

**“And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.”
Revelation 5:5**

John was not alone in seeing this vision. There was a chief spokesman for one of the twenty-four “elders” seeing the same vision and apparently knowing how matters would evolve.



John Weeping

Understanding this is easier if we think of it as viewing a play which can have scenes past, present and future.

He consoled John out of kindness, but possibly also to allow the vision to continue to unfold without John’s sobs to interrupt it.

Who was this kindly elder speaking here for one of the courses of the priesthood?

We would suggest that this was the Apostle Paul who had visions and revelations more abundant than all the other apostles. He saw many things not lawful for him to utter. (2 Corinthians 12:1,4) Some feel Genesis 49:10 is the “elder” prophecy here. It says,

“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.”

Genesis 49:9 says,

“Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?”

But none of this tells us anything about Jesus being worthy.

In order to be worthy, one would have to fulfil the law—that would mean more than merely keeping the law. Fulfilling the law would require that he fulfill all the types stated in the Scriptures. He must first suffer and die, and then enter into glory. We cannot see how Genesis 49:9, 10 would explain our Lord’s worthiness.

Actually three tribes were represented by a lion.



Dan and Judah are almost identified alike as lions. Which lion was worthy? We can think of no Old Testament prophecy that suffices here. Having a “sceptre” did not mean one could keep the Law. We know even the beloved David broke the law.

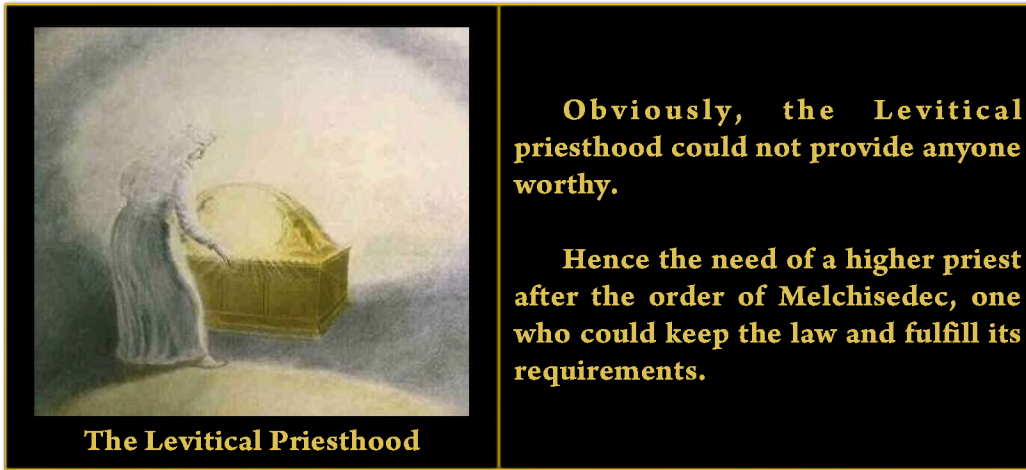
This spokes-elder says,

“Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals” (Revelation 5:5).

“If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec,

“... For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. ...

**“For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”
Hebrews 7:11, 14, 17**



Obviously, the Levitical priesthood could not provide anyone worthy.

Hence the need of a higher priest after the order of Melchisedec, one who could keep the law and fulfill its requirements.

Also 2 Timothy 2:8 reads:

“Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel.”

If Jesus rose from under the second veil, that is all the proof we need that he was worthy.

We submit, Paul is the kindly elder of Revelation 5:5, the spokesperson for the graduated priesthood who no longer offer sacrifices for sin. Remember what Paul said, “Moses spake nothing concerning [the] priesthood” coming from Judah. (Hebrews 7:14)



Twenty-four “Elders” with “Harps” and “Golden Vials [Bowls]”

“Four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials [bowls] full of the prayers of saints.” Revelation 5:8

Now, we are receiving some vital evidence to help solve this case. The scriptures of the Old Testament may well be considered harps of God, but it is unlikely they would be considered as **having harps**. Also, some prayers of prophetic nature are recorded of our Lord Jesus, i.e., Psalms 22, etc. It would be hard for the Old Testament to contain the prayers of the saints, except in a very staid and perfunctory manner.

The saints may repeat certain expressions such as the prayer of David, “Cleanse thou me from secret faults,” and similar statements, but that would not be a full embodiment of their prayers. Why wouldn’t the recorded prayers of the New Testament be added as well?

Do we have definite word from Bro. Russell on what these harps represent?

Yes! *THE NEW CREATION*, p. 233, he says: “The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments constitute what the Lord himself designates ‘the harp of God’ (Revelation 15:2) and the various testimonies of the Law and the prophets are the several chords of that harp.”

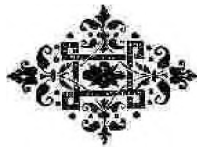
The Old and New Testaments constitute the “harp of God.”

The twenty-four “elders” have “harps,” and they know how to make sweet music with them.

Bro. Russell further says, “that harp, which when tuned by the holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts, and swept by the fingers of the devoted servants and searchers after divine truth, yields the most enchanting strains that ever fell on mortal ears.”



So we see Bro. Russell felt “devoted servants and searchers after divine truth” play enchanting strains of beautiful music. That is what a harp does when properly used. The “elders” of Revelation and the saints do the same thing—play harps and make beautiful heavenly music.



How Can the “144,000” Sing Before the “Elders”?

“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, 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 [living creatures], 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.” Revelation 14:1-5

This represents the saints who have been resurrected during our Lord’s *parousia*, and might also include those who are “sealed” with the “Father’s name written in their foreheads.”

The problem seems to be that the saints are singing before the throne, **and** the four “living creatures,” **and** the “twenty-four elders.” How can that be? This has turned many away from the concept that the “24 elders” in some way represent the true church.

Revelation is a book of symbols. Just as the “four living creatures” may sing before the throne and the One seated upon it, so the saints may sing in the presence of their offices, which they may be assigned to, but will not occupy until they are joined with Christ in glory of office.

The President of the United States is elected in the fall, but does not take office until January. He is the President elect. Of course, our presidents usually sing one tune before they take office and another one after they take office. Not so with the saints.

The Twenty-four "Elders" and the "144,000" Sing the Same New Song

"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 [men-A] to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

"And hast made us [them-SA] unto our God kings and priests: and we [they-SA] shall reign on the earth."

Revelation 5:9, 10



The "saints" and the "twenty-four elders" have a very special relationship. We notice that both the "elders" and the "saints" like to sing. There is no problem with the twenty-four "elders" who were foreordained of God, singing outside of their offices.

The key to this verse is the fact that the twenty-four "elders" sing the "new song." What does that tell you? A lot. In Revelation 14:1-3 we learn the "144,000" sing this same new song and "no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."

Now, supposing you had no preconceived idea as to whom these twenty-four "elders" might be and that all you knew was that they sing the "new song" that only the "144,000 saints" can sing. The equation would be:

X : New Song = New Song : 144,000 Saints

**Twenty-four Elders : New Song = New Song : 144,000
Saints**

Yes, the "144,000 saints" and the twenty-four "elders" are related very closely. **They both sing the same song which is known only to the "144,000 saints."** This, added to the fact that they both have "harps" to help their singing makes a strong case. Both groups sing the same song that only the "saints" can sing. Geometry taught us that "things equal to the same thing are equal to each other."

"Golden Vials [Bowls]"

"And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials [bowls] full of odors, which are the prayers of saints." Revelation 5:8

Twice in Revelation "golden vials [bowls]" are mentioned. It is interesting to note these "golden bowls" are full of "odors" or the fragrance of the prayers of saints. Normally, we don't think of prayers as being a bowl of conveyance of our prayers. Yet the bowl is a low flat vessel which may be used to pour out what it is we hope to convey. Our prayers are not narrow messages, which God receives, but we can pour out our hearts before the Lord in substantial fashion.



The Golden Vials [Bowls]

The bowls seem to represent the extravagant means we have in prayer to convey all that is in our hearts, our praise, thanksgiving, adoration, heartfelt appreciation, the warmth, the love, the tenderness, the concerns, the burdens we share for others and for ourselves.

The list could go on and on. It takes bowls to contain all these and they in turn are poured out to our Heavenly Father. It is a beautiful symbol.

God also has some bowls he pledges he will pour out. As a matter of fact, he has “seven bowls” which will “fill up the wrath of God.” We read in Revelation 15:7:

“And one of the four beasts [living creatures, Justice] gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials [bowls] full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.”

This is a reference to Revelation 14: 9, 10:

“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.”

That is God’s answer to Revelation 13:14-17 where the “image of the beast” speaks and threatens all who do not “worship the beast” or its “image.” They say you must receive our “mark” in your “forehead” or in your “right hand.” You don’t necessarily have to believe as we do, but co-operate with us if you want religious liberty.

God says you must not. If anyone does, they shall drink the undiluted wrath of God, full strength, the “poison hemlock.”

In Revelation 15:2 we learn of those who refused to bow to the edict of the “image” and the “beast.” These “had gotten the victory over the beast and over his image.” These are then divinely provided with “seven golden vials [bowls]” which will fill up the “wrath of God.” The seven “last plagues” cannot be delivered in their intended strength until these “vials [bowls]” are provided.

Do not ask what these bowls are. God has to provide them, and he will. Without them, the seven “last plagues” may only be delivered in diluted form and only in token potency.

By the way, the saints getting the victory over the “beast” and its “image” is not some small feat. Jesus calls extravagant attention to this class in Revelation 20:4. He says of these, they “had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands.”

In other words, no one who gets the “mark of the beast” and its “image” may hope to be of the bride of Christ. That would be out of the question. This should be a warning to all the Lord’s people.



“What Are These in White Robes?”

“And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest.

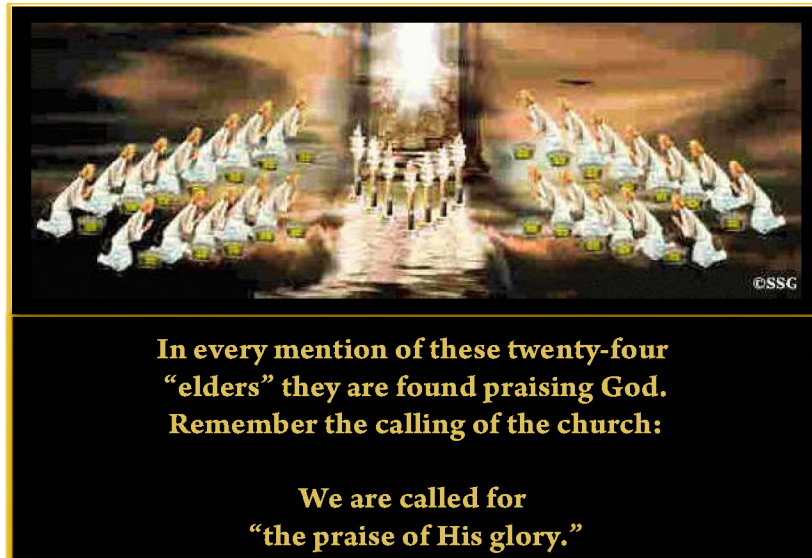
“And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Revelation 7:13, 14

Here the chief elder, probably Paul, speaks for one of the courses of “elders.” He asks John if he knew who this class was who needed to “wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb.” John, says, “Sir, thou knowest.” It would be strange to address a book of the Bible as “Sir.”

In Revelation 7:11 we find the “elders”

“...fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

“Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.”



Who are this “great multitude” which stood “before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands”? Revelation 7:9

Most brethren know the answer. Where did we get the answer? From Bro. Russell. Where did he get the answer? From Paul, the spokesperson for this course of the “elders.”

It is Paul who shows us the inside story of the Great Company. The first person we know he consigned to the Great Company is recorded in 1 Corinthians 5:4, 5 (RSV) where he says,


“When you are assembled, and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are

“To deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”

Here, Paul demanded that the church at Corinth commit this brother to Satan. They were not asked to decide his case. They were told what they must do.

Two other brethren we know by name were also remanded to Satan.

“Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.” 1 Timothy 1:20

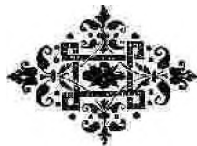
 <p>House to be built on Christ our Rock</p>	<p>In 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 we learn of two classes.</p> <p>One builds with “gold, silver and precious stones,” whereas the other with “wood, hay and stubble.”</p> <p>Both classes build upon that rock which is Christ.</p> <p>However, one class will suffer loss, but their faith structure will be saved but so as by fire, and their spirits will be saved.</p>
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None of us could know these things without the writings of the Apostle Paul.

The Old Testament does have illustrations of the Great Company, such as the scapegoat for Azazel, and many other scriptures that we can look back on as illustrating the Great Company. However, we could not understand these types without the writings of Paul. Types do not teach doctrines—they only illustrate them.

It is Paul, beyond doubt, who gives us the true understanding of the Great Company. He also places three people there, two by name. This is not theoretical.

Remember that John addresses this “elder” as “my Lord” or “Sir.” It is a personal title of respect. Could he call a prophecy “My Lord” or “Sir”? It would be most unusual if he did. It fits properly when we apply it to Paul, as representative of one of the twenty-four courses of “elders.”



“We Give Thee Thanks”

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord [probably, Jehovah], and of his Christ [head and body members]; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

“And the **four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,**

**“Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.”
Revelation 11:15-17**

We notice in this instance the four “beasts” [living creatures] are not mentioned. Here the whole body of “elders” seems to be singing and praising God because a critical moment in the plan of God has begun.

This holy body seems bent on singing and praising God in every instance recorded in Revelation. This ties in with the calling of the church who are called for “the praise of His glory.” We notice a progression in the status of events. In this event, “the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats [thrones], fell upon their faces, and worshipped God.”



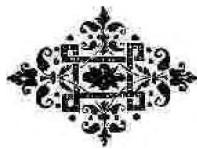
In Revelation 4:10 it reads a little differently.

“The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever.”

The difference is that in Revelation 11:16 it specifically says, “fell upon their faces.” This could not take place even in token form until the resurrection of the sleeping saints.

This foreordained body of “elders” has “faces” associated with it and the personalities of the vast majority of the saints. We are not meaning to imply that the twenty-four courses of “elders” are complete and operational. This will not be so until the complete number have the “Father’s name written in their foreheads” (Revelation 14:1).

When the “marriage” of the Bride and the Lamb is consummated then those who were foreordained will fuse into oneness with those who are “called, chosen and faithful.”



Last Mention of the “Four and Twenty Elders”

“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:

“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 [memory of her evil reign] rose up for ever and ever.

“And the **four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.” Revelation 19:1-4**

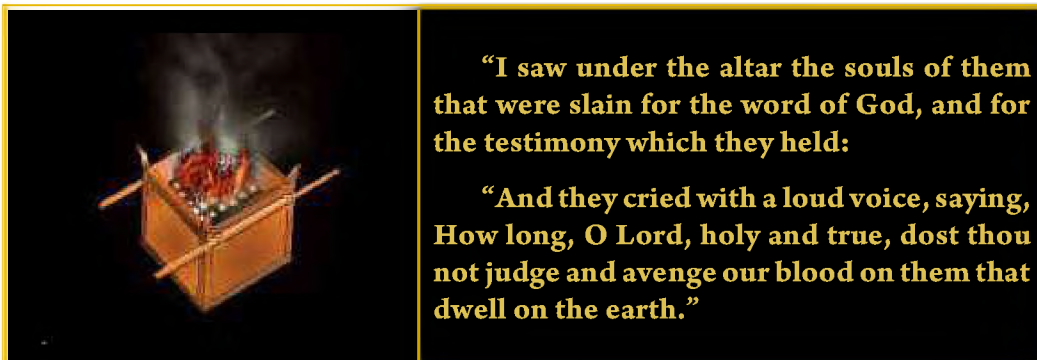
We find considerable exuberance when Babylon, that great and abominable “woman” that reigns over the kingdoms of this world, is judged and about to be destroyed.

This is a proclamation which has not yet been heard because Babylon, that “great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth,” has not been visited with the judgment and destruction. It still awaits her (Revelation 17:18).

In this judgment the four “living creatures” as well as the “four and twenty elders” together fall down in praise and worship of the One sitting on the throne. All have waited a long time to see this moment when righteousness and justice will at last be served. No, God is not slack concerning His promises.

God has a due time for everything. We simply must await this due time. It will surely come and it will not tarry. No one will be able to say, this evil system escaped a just punishment for her sins.

In Revelation 6:9, 10 we hear a cry for justice:



There are two scriptures referring to that moment when justice is at last served. When in Revelation 16:4-7, the third angel pours out his “vial” [bowl] on “rivers and fountains of waters” [the theological schools and seminaries and all fountain sources of false teaching], we hear a cry go up at this moment.

“And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

“For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.”

It is important that God be vindicated and it is known that these events are not just some happenstance of history. No, it is God’s appointed moment of vengeance. All “righteous blood” unjustly shed must be accounted for in God’s books. “Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord” (Romans 12:19).



Triumphal Entry of Christ

Revelation 19:1, 2 presents the second Biblical vindication of God's justice.

Jesus appeared on a donkey at his first advent.

His Second Advent is quite different.

In Revelation 19:11, 14 we get the rest of the story.

The returned Lord is seen with “armies” (plural) in the heavens of earth who are on “white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.” He appears in righteousness to judge and make war. He cannot fail or be defeated because he comes with the invincible title, “Word of God.”

We know God's Word cannot be broken, hence, only victory can attend our Lord and his “armies in white.” How very appropriate that both the “four beasts” [living creatures] and the “four and twenty elders” sing, “Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great” (Revelation 19:4, 5).

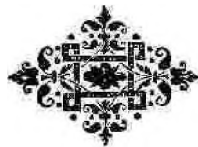
We live in a no fault society, and hence justice is not very important. Somehow, the long history of evil associated with the false religious systems tends to fade into obscurity.

Not so in God's books. All “righteous blood” spilled must be accounted for. That includes the murder and persecution of all the saints throughout history. The last place anyone would want to be is in those systems that perpetrated all the evils of the inquisition, with the vast numbers of innocent people tortured and killed, and where the false church confiscated their properties. They not only killed, but they stole the possessions of their victims leaving mothers and children homeless.

The inquisition became the tool for the church amassing great wealth as it stole all its victims' properties. At one point the church owned one-third of the lands of Europe—much of it ill gotten, staining the hands of the possessors with the blood of saints.

This is the last mention of the four and twenty “elders.” From first to last they are praising God. We believe that after this last battle of Revelation 19 ensues, when the “leopard beast” and the “false prophet” are cast “alive” into the lake of fire, then will come the moment when the elect and glorified church will enter into the marriage.


That will be a great moment in history, when the plan of God will have reached a glorious fulfillment. From thenceforth they shall have reached the fruition of their calling to be for “the praise of His glory,” now and forever. Amen.



Part IV


The Prophecies of the Old Testament

In conclusion, we wish to acknowledge our respect for the Old Testament as the Word of God. However, we must remember that the Old Testament by itself did not give a clear revelation of God's purpose. It was full of tantalizing and wonderful promises, but all very hard to bring into clear focus.

	<p>It was Jesus who “abolished death” and “brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel” (2 Timothy 1:10).</p> <p>We also know that while the “Law was given by Moses,” yet “grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17).</p> <p>The New Testament did not detract from the Old, though we must realize the mystery of God was veiled while the prophets spoke.</p> <p>Further, it was Jesus “who showed us the Father” and made known to us “exceeding great and precious promises.”</p>
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True, the Old Testament does provide confirmation of all God's promises when properly understood; yet, that understanding depends on the New Testament. It seems a true statement that the “Old Testament is the Word of God concealed and the New Testament is the Word of God revealed.”

Why would Zechariah 4:2, 3 show us the candlestick representing the church with its seven “lamps” getting its oil from the “two olive trees” which represent the Old and New Testaments?

	<p>In Zechariah 4:14 we are given God's definition as to what these two olive trees represent:</p> <p>“These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”</p> <p>God's Word is shown as being in two parts, in two olive trees.</p>
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Why would the second “olive tree” be left out in Revelation? Certainly, if the Word of God is to be crowned and enthroned it would include the New Testament as well as the Old. We read in 2 Corinthians 3:7-10:

“If the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:

“How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?

“For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

“For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.”

This is an eloquent statement by Paul to include the glory of the New Testament. Also, let us never forget Hebrews 1:1, 2:


“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

“Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.”

Again, in Hebrews 2:3:

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.”

Why, we ask, would the Old Testament prophecies be in such exalted settings when the still more important point of interest is in a “scroll sealed with seven seals” until One is found and proved worthy to receive its message from God. The whole vision centers around the slain Lamb and the “scroll sealed with seven seals” which contained special revelations God gave to Jesus Christ and which he, in turn, interpreted and conveyed to the angels of the seven churches.

 <p>Woman in the Wilderness <i>Revelation 12:14</i></p>	<p>Another point is that the “woman” of Revelation 12:14 was given “two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished” for three and one-half times.</p> <p>You never saw an eagle fly with one wing, did you?</p> <p>You need both Old and New Testaments.</p>
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It is the church whom God has chosen to be for “the praise of his glory.” When those twenty-four offices of the “elders,” are finally filled by the elect church of God, and when that which was foreordained becomes one with those who are ordained, the “called, chosen and faithful” of this Gospel age, then another milestone is reached in God’s plan.



Brother Russell's View of the Twenty-four Elders

In the *QUESTION BOOK*, p. 720, 1912, when Brother Russell was asked: "What is the meaning of the twenty-four elders which we read about in the book of Revelations?" "Answer—I think it is in the seventh volume." Bro. Russell did not give forth much information on this subject.

We believe that his thinking is best summed up in *THE NEW CREATION*, p. 233, already quoted. It shows the "harps" of God are the Old and New Testaments. Bro. Russell said: "That harp, which when tuned by the holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts, and swept by the fingers of the devoted servants and searchers after divine truth, yields the most enchanting strains that ever fell on mortal ears."

Remember, the twenty-four "elders" have "harps," as do the 144,000 saints of Revelation 14:1-3, and they play the same song. Things equal to the same thing are equal to each other.

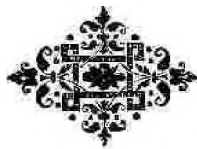
One last point—perhaps, not of great strength—is that some hymns portray the saints as "casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea." Hymn 165 says, "Till we cast our crowns before Thee, Lost in wonder, love and praise." More weighty than this, however, is Hymn Appendix B. It was added to our hymnal in 1916. If ever a hymn would have had to pass under Bro. Russell's scrutiny, it is this hymn. It was carefully revised to read in an acceptable manner to Bible Students.

The hymn is, "Holy, Holy, Holy—Blessed Trinity." It was revised to: "Holy, Holy, Holy—Blessed Majesty." Notice the words: "All the saints adore Thee, casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea."

A quote from Revelation 4:10:

"The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth forever, and cast their crowns before the throne."

Of course, this does not really establish anything, because hymnbook theology often has a lot of mistakes which we endure under poetic license. If one holds to a different view on the twenty-four "elders," it shouldn't prejudice anyone on Appendix B and Hymn 165.



Twenty-two Books of the Bible

—Ernest L. Martin

Leeser suggests the books of the Old Testament add up to twenty-four. However, Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., writing in *THE ORIGINAL BIBLE RESTORED*, says, concerning the OT: “These 22 books of the Old Testament (and their arrangement as indicated) should be the standard followed by every version of the Bible today.”

The arrangement referred to three parts of the Old Testament.

I THE LAW	II THE PROPHETS	III THE HOLY WRITINGS
1 Genesis 2 Exodus 3 Leviticus 4 Numbers 5 Deuteronomy	6 Joshua and Judges 7 The Books of Kingdoms (Samuel & Kings) 8 Isaiah 9 Jeremiah 10 Ezekiel 11 The Twelve (Hosea to Malachi)	(Or The Psalms) 12 Psalms 13 Proverbs 14 Job 15 Songs of Songs 16 Ruth 17 Lamentations 18 Ecclesiastes 19 Esther 20 Daniel 21 Ezra-Nehemiah 22 The Book of Chronicles

The Old Testament was divided into three parts by Jesus himself in Luke 24:44,

“These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.”

Dr. Martin says: “The original Scriptures had exactly 49 books: 22 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New. This number is, of course, 7 times 7, and *seven* represents the symbolic number of *completion or finalization*” (p.13).

7 x 7 gives us 49 which symbolizes completeness.

The Book of Jubilees, written by a sect of the Dead Sea community in Jubilees 2:23, says: “God made 22 things on the six days of creation. These 22 events paralleled the 22 generations from Adam to Jacob, the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, and the 22 books of the Holy Scriptures.”

Twenty-two church fathers from Melito (170 A.D.) to Richard of St. Victor (13th century) all confirmed twenty-two books for the OT. However, more importantly, we have a biblical basis for twenty-two books to the Old Testament.

In Exodus 25:33, 34 we read concerning the candlestick:



“Three bowls made like unto almonds, with a knop and a flower in one branch; and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, with a knop and a flower: so in the six branches that come of the candlestick.

“And in the candlestick shall be four bowls made like unto almonds, with their knops and their flowers.”


There are three bowls, knops and flowers on each of six branches with four bowls, knops and flowers on the main stem. This is a total of twenty-two each. What does this mean? Might this not confirm the twenty-two books of the Old Testament? Interestingly, if we add up the total number of bowls, knops and flowers we have sixty-six, the number of books in the Bible.

Sometime in the last part of the first century or the beginning of the second, the Jewish authorities decided to re-divide the books of the Old Testament into twenty-four. The Jews in Babylon were the first to devise this new number.

Sixtus Senensis gave the explanation for the change from 22 to 24 as follows: “Since there was only one *yodh* among the 22 letters, and because the Jews started a peculiar habit of writing the unpronounceable name YHWH with three *yodhs*, it was necessary, so Sixtus tells us, to renumber the *Old Testament books* by the addition of two extra *yodhs*.”

This was an artificial literary device and could hardly have any relevance to the original numbering of the books of the Old Testament. By numbering the Bible into 66 (39 + 27) books, by each book being counted separately, we see the number six plainly and emphatically denotes it to be a human book in human dress.

Jewish authorities could well see that 22 Old Testament and 27 New Testament books would make a total of forty-nine, a complete divine revelation. By changing to a 24 Old Testament standard, that gave the 24 and 27 an insignificant 51 which would tend to discredit the New Testament.

 <p>John the Baptist</p>	<p>Jesus says in Luke 16:16: “The law and the prophets were until John.”</p> <p>This makes John one of the last of the prophets and from Jesus own words also the greatest or at least among the greatest. “There has risen no one greater than John the Baptist.” (Matthew 11:11, ESV)</p> <p>However, John the Baptist does not have a book to bear his name. He was a prophet, and one of the greatest, but not listed in the Old Testament, only the New.</p>
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Hence, twenty-four courses of the priesthood are the only biblical twenty-four we have to match the twenty-four “elders” of Revelation. It is our thought that the four and twenty elders of Revelation are the twenty-four foreordained courses of the Priesthood, designated before the Temple is complete and operational.

When the temple is complete, then we would change the word foreordained to ordained, for the personhood of the saints then will be added to the twenty-four offices, twenty-four thrones with their twenty-four crowns.



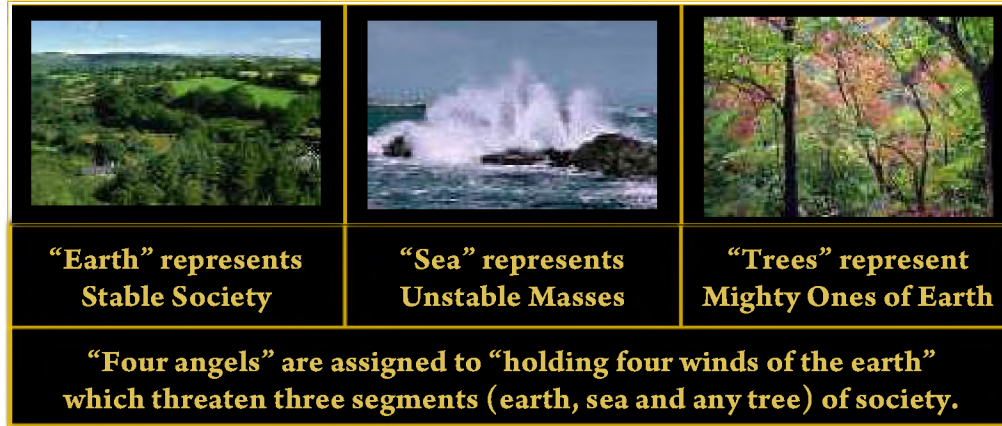


“HOLDING THE FOUR WINDS”

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Part I

“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 [stable society], nor on the sea [restless society], nor on any tree [right-hearted and more prominent of earth—Bro. Russell included the Household of Faith].” Revelation 7:1



While the “four winds” are being held, we do not understand there to be a great calm with no wind. Rather, **the “four winds” are held or restrained sufficiently from blowing into a whirlwind.**

Already we see a Muslim wind blowing fiercely against the Western Christian world. In Pakistan it is blowing against the Hindu or Eastern religious world. In Africa the Muslim powers have killed over two million Christians. The Humanist (Communists, Socialists and Atheists) is threatening the Western Christian world in North Korea. Some winds are blowing rather hard even now, but all winds are not yet involved.

“Four Winds” Blowing Toward the “Earth”

1.	Western World representing Christianity and capitalistic governments—church and state already confronting Islam terrorism and Iraq and Pagan Humanist North Korea at present.
2.	Far Eastern religions (Hindu, Shinto, Brahman, New Age, Wicca, etc.) and governments which are spreading Eastern religion and political unrest in India and confronting Islam Pakistan at present.
3.	Muslim religions and governments spreading Muslim (Islam) religion and political agendas in the form of terrorism, genocide and war almost world-wide.
4.	Humanism (Communism, Socialism, and Atheism) religion and government without God confronting Western Christian powers (as in North Korea confronting Western Powers).

At this time the Muslim wind is being forced to blow because it is failing as a successful economic power or as an intellectually competitive society. It is effective in getting followers, but not able to feed or give jobs to their followers. Economically they are dead in the water. Oil has been their only main source of revenue. This is being threatened by newer technology. They, therefore, must blame the Western world for their failure, even though this is not true. It is failing because the Muslim religion is run very much the way the Catholic Church was run in the Dark Ages. It is bigoted, intolerant and repressive. They do not allow open exchanges of information in religion or politics. They are big on mind control. They are driven to convert the world to Islam religion, just as the Christians still hope to convert the world to Christianity. However, the Christian world is still an open society, whereas the Muslim world is not.

Why Is Our Text Mentioned Under the Sixth Seal?

Please notice that the “sixth seal” is opened in Revelation 6:12 and the “seventh seal” is not opened until Revelation 8:1. Theoretically, we would have preferred it if the Revelator had transposed verse 7:1 somewhere after 8:1. But really, this is no problem.

The “sixth seal” coincides with the Reformation period and also takes in the French Revolution. Not stopping there the Revelator continues without pause into the period of the last “seal” and beyond that to include the Great Company standing triumphantly “before the throne of God” (Revelation 7:14-17).

So, in fact, without a pause the Revelator in chapter seven passes into the seventh seal without saying so. However, the student knows from the narrative where the sixth seal ends (with the French Revolution) and what happens during the seventh seal (after the saints are “sealed”). The time when this takes place is when the “angel [Christ] from the rising of the sun [his second presence], with the seal of the living God” (ESV) is here. This is during the seventh seal.

There are **two scene changes in Revelation 7**.

The **first** “after these things” (Revelation 7:1) introduces the “four winds.”

The **second** “after this I beheld” (Revelation 7:9) introduces the Great Company.

The story being told under the sixth seal does not stop at the end of the sixth seal, but follows on into the seventh seal and the Kingdom glory before the throne. Revelation chapter eight introduces the “seventh seal” belatedly, with many things already described. It is under this “seal” in point of time that both the “four winds” are held back and that then successively the Great Company is glorified. You can do this in story telling and vision telling, just as it was done here.

What needs to be observed is that the two events described under the “sixth seal” actually happen under the “seventh seal.” Clearly the “winds” are not loosed, nor is the Great Company taken before the throne until some time after the “seventh seal” is opened. We have all heard of getting ahead of you in telling the story. This is what happened here.



What Do We Know About the “Four Winds”?

The “four winds” have been around for a long while.

“Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of heaven strove upon the great sea. [Notice the “four winds” strove in stirring up the sea, not the earth, sea and trees as in Revelation 7.]

“And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.”



Beast Like a Lion

“The first was like a lion [Babylon], and had eagle’s wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it.”



Beast Like a Bear

“And behold, another beast, a second, like to a bear [Medo-Persia], and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs [Heruli, Eastern Exarchate and Ostrogoths] in the mouth of it between the teeth of it; and they said thus unto it: Arise, devour much flesh.”



Beast Like a Leopard

“After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard [Grecia], which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads [four generals divided the power of Grecia after Alexander’s death]; and dominion was given to it.



Dreadful Beast

“After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast [Rome], dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it. ...” *Daniel 7:2-7*

The “four winds” were found in Daniel’s time “striving upon the sea.” They were not carrying the same labels as now. Any religion that could control the people was all that was necessary. In yesteryear it seems the “winds” were prevented from reaching whirlwind proportions by allowing each of the “four winds” a turn at religious power in the successive four empires of a “lion,” “bear,” “leopard” and the last dreadful “beast” of Rome.

It was not only Satan who wanted power, but the evil spirits also wanted to try their hand at religion in world government. A compromise was reached that allowed a certain rotation of power although Satan always bullied them.

How the Fallen Angels Operated Before and After the Flood

Before the flood, the fallen angels could materialize and were able to influence the world through physical force and violence. After the flood, the fallen angels were placed in chains of darkness.



The Tower of Babel

The first scheme was to build the Tower of Babel — one world — “come ... let us make a name for ourselves” (Genesis 11:4 ESV).

It seems this was an attempt by Satan and the fallen angels to gain control of humankind through one universal government and probably through the start of false religion.

We know how the Lord frustrated this grab for power, by confusing the tongues of men and scattering them over the earth. This ended the one-world government, leaving only false religion open to them.



Sacrificing Children to Moloch

“They sacrificed unto devils [*Leeser*, evil spirits], not to God; to gods whom they knew not.” Deuteronomy 32:17

Evil spirits were behind many of those terrible religions, starting with Nimrod, then declining to such debased gods as Moloch, Astoreth, Baal, etc., which so successfully appealed to Israel.

Evil spirits in religion affected nearly all the nations.

Sometimes we think evil spirits contented themselves with possessing people, or in seances in rapping and tapping. But they also strove to control the minds of men and nations. They enchanted the minds of people with false religion, even as Satan has done in the development of the “mother of harlots” and her “daughters.”

All false religions have appeals to various levels of people. To the noble-minded, false religion has religious philosophy that can be very high sounding. To the baser elements, they can appeal to sensuality. To others the appeal may be superstition and fear.

The important thing to remember is that the demons are involved in more than witchcraft. They are eager for power and glory and honor, just as is Satan, and false religion is their *modus operandi*.

As long as Israel was God’s Kingdom on earth, the Gentile nations had no hope of universal dominion. The nations were fragmented, and the Lord apparently did not allow any one nation to have world dominion. After all, it was God that confused the “tongues” to disperse the peoples.

When the Lord was about to take away Israel as His Kingdom nation, the “four winds of heaven” (Daniel 7:2 ESV) were “stirring up the great sea” of restless humanity. Out of this, there arose the four beastly governments recorded in Daniel.

We think the Lord allowed each of the “four winds” some representation in the four universal empires. The demons were represented heavily in the first three world dominions of Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece (especially the false religions of these empires). Satan dominates the last dominion of the Roman Empire, the largest and cruelest of all. The “dragon” of Rome is called the “Devil and Satan,” Rev. 12:9.

“Four winds” in Daniel 8:8:

“Therefore the he goat [Greece] waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn [Alexander the Great] was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.”

When Alexander died, his four generals (Ptolemy in Egypt, Seleucus in Asia, Lysimachus in Asia Minor and Cassander in Macedonia) took control, fragmenting the empire of Greece to the “four winds of heaven” (to the powers of spiritual control).

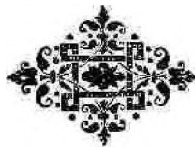
Notice that in Daniel the eighth chapter there are only **two beasts**:



Nothing is said about a “beast” to represent Rome, as in Daniel chapter seven. That is odd. The explanation for this is that while Rome beat Greece on the battlefield, Rome was never able to beat the intellectual influence of Greece. Grecian philosophy, science, and culture cast a tall shadow over Rome.

The significant thing is that a “little horn” (papacy) arose to dominate the “host of heaven” (Daniel 8:10). The fall of Alexander the Great did not in chapter eight create another “beast,” but fused the Grecian goat into the Roman Empire which somehow accommodated (possibly by overpowering them) all four “winds of heaven.”

The “little horn” was a powerful influence on these “four winds.” It is this influence that amalgamates Rome into one empire. It is not until the returned Lord gives greater liberties to the evil spirits that the “four winds” pose a problem again. Then it is that Satan loses considerable control over the evil spirit world.



Part II

“I Have Spread You Abroad as Four Winds”

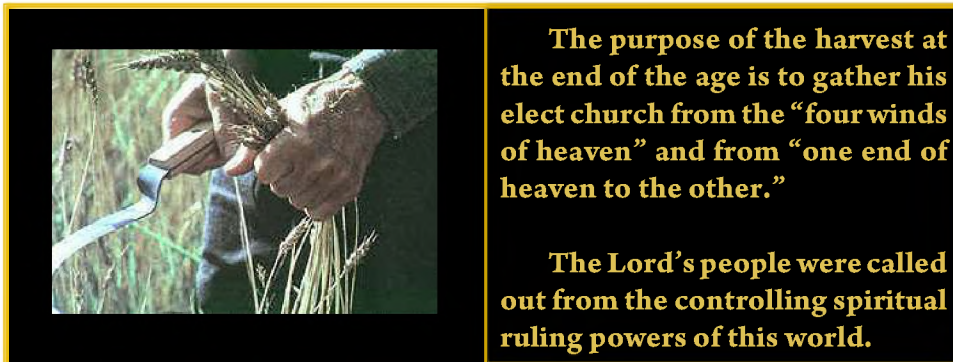
“Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the Lord: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the Lord.”
Zechariah 2:6

This may apply to natural Israel taken into captivity in Babylon and invited later to return to their homeland. Also, it might apply to natural Israel invited to flee from northern Europe.

But we think the main application is to spiritual Israel taken captive in antitypical Babylon. It is from spiritual Babylon that the Lord calls his people, from the “four winds of heaven.”

This is confirmed in Matthew 24:31.

“And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”



“Four Winds of Heaven”

Zechariah 6:5

“Four winds” are mentioned in Zechariah 6:5. This is a difficult chapter, and traditional Bible Student writings have no comment on it. Chapter six opens with a description of “four chariots” coming forth from between two copper mountains.

Bro. Meggison suggests these mountains, being of copper, represent the Kingdom of Adam and the Kingdom of God at the end of the Millennium.

Bro. Loomis had a somewhat different thought, suggesting the two kingdoms of copper were essentially the professed Kingdom of God (which is really the kingdom of this world) and the earthly phase of the true Kingdom (Israel) which replaces the counterfeit Kingdom.

There are “four chariots” powered by “four horses.” “Chariots” may well represent organizations, and “horses” may represent teachings or doctrines. The color sequence of the horses is not in the same order as in Revelation 6:1-8.

	Zechariah 6:2, 3	Revelation 6:1-8
	Horses with chariots	Horses (no chariots)
1	Red (bay, NEB, or reddish brown)	White
2	Black	Red
	White	Black
4	Grisled and bay (dappled, NEB, or roan) (Probably black with gray spots)	Pale

Revelation 6:1-8 is given to show the deterioration that took place in four successive stages of the Gospel church (covering a long period of time).

Zechariah 6:1-8 seems to speak of something rather contemporaneous. Each of the horses and its chariot goes forth to a different quarter in the same time-frame.

“And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth.”
Zechariah 6:5

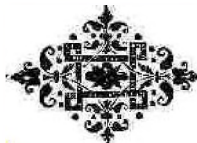
The King James calls them “four spirits,” but it should really be “four winds.” In Daniel the “four winds of heaven” represented the evil spirit world that was striving among themselves for preeminence, then placated when religious blocks of power were gained successively in Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece. The devil and his counterfeit religion, which supplanted true Christianity, controlled Rome as the fourth dominion. Daniel gives us a long view of history.

Zechariah’s prophecy parallels Revelation 7:1-4 in time sequence. The difference is, Zechariah speaks of the “**four winds of heaven,**” whereas Revelation 7:1 speaks of holding back “**the winds of earth.**”

The “**winds of heaven**” have to do with controlling **the spiritual or religious mechanisms of this world.** The “**winds**” of the “**earth**” are **religions attempting to control civil governments and world powers.**

It is important to know that evil spirit powers did not care what false teachings might be used. The only thing necessary is that it be successful in controlling the masses along with the government.

Zechariah	Revelation
4 Winds of Heaven	4 Winds of Earth
= Controlling the spiritual or religious systems	= Religions attempting to control civil governments and world powers



Zechariah 6:1-8
Shows Spirit World's Influence in Religion
(Recommended NEB Here)

The color in listing of the "horses" in Zechariah 6:2, 3 are different in Zechariah 6:6, 7.

BLACK HORSES



Teachings which destroy light and truth, whether false doctrines or humanistic faith destroying teachings.

How do these quiet "my [God's] spirit in the north country" [where God is represented] (Zechariah 6:8)?

These dark teachings have not interfered with the development of the true church and their sealing because they are children of light.

God knew these false doctrines would not affect the "sealing" work in the saints and, therefore, this event "quieted my spirit."

WHITE HORSES



White is a symbol of purity and hence this horse would embody certain Biblical truths.

In Acts 16:17 an evil spirit of divination using a woman said, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation."

While what she said was true, Paul was annoyed by her testimony and exorcised her.

Likewise, certain truths affirmed by the World-Wide Church (Herbert Armstrong who attended Bible Student meetings many years ago), Seventh-Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christadelphians and many other Christian groups who teach certain truths, always manage to come up short of teaching the whole counsel of God.

They teach, no doubt, for the Lord's sake, but not for His glory. Consequently, whatever truth they teach, tends to serve their own agenda and not God's Divine purpose.

DAPPLED AND GRAY HORSES



These are spirits' teachings involved in eastern religions, new age, occult, and the like.

These are mind-controlling forces used by evil spirits to dominate certain segments of society.

They bring enhanced power to the evil spirits in this time of "judgment of the Great Day."

These are all operating now under Divine review and permission—but not with His blessing.

Rather they serve to reveal the character of these fallen spirits in bringing God's final judgment.

Remember how Sodom put in its worst performance on the very day it was destroyed.

God sent his angels there to give a final review before destroying them.

So we should expect the "four winds of heaven" to proceed with vigor until their final review comes.

RED HORSE (Bay, NEB—actually reddish brown)



Red is a symbol of sin and is also used to represent sin-atonement.

Red mixed with brown (the color of earth) seems to be a commingling of "red" teachings of redemption with political or earthly interests.

Hence it is the sinful use of religious teachings to promote selfish world-ambitions while appealing to pride and power lust.

Bro. Loomis' views are epitomized here with the realization that he left it rather open-ended. It is better to leave room for improvement and sharpening our insights rather than to try for a final reading when we still have loose-ends to deal with.

Summarizing Zechariah's vision and the "four winds of heaven," we believe it is showing the religious mind-conditioning going on in the world as the nations organize, saying,

"Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

"He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision"
(Psalms 2:3, 4).

Religion is embodied in the "four winds of heaven." It is religion that creates the mind-set needed to create one-world order, which Satan is moving to establish without success. We know that religions have been very nationalistic in the last two world wars.

Embarrassingly, Christian nations (so-called) were fighting each other under different flags. Now Satan knew that really was an awkward situation to be in. The present scheme of things is moving toward a wobbly one-world government which will not be realized.

Part III

Daniel's "Four Winds" Abated

Going back to Daniel seven, we found the "four winds of heaven" striving upon the sea (the restless masses). They seem to have been placated when the four universal empires came forth successively.

We gather from this that the "four winds of heaven" represent divisions in the evil spirit world. Like Satan, they want a kingdom and power and glory. It is reasonable to assume these segments of evil spirits had a hand in false religions in the first three world empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece, with Satan taking full command of Rome and particularly the "little horn" of Daniel eight.



Hence, false religions abounded in these world empires.

In Babylon, the demons created another form of idolatry with the **golden image** that was set up in the plain of Dura. It was intended to entrap and destroy those who worshipped the true God. This may picture the "**image of the beast**" in Revelation 13:15. We know the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. The spirit world was very active in false religion and tried to prevent worship of the true God.



Then the "**little horn**" of Daniel emerged. Satan, who controlled Rome, decided to put a little distance between him and the false gods. After all, Jesus had said, "No man can serve two masters." How much less all kinds of gods. Satan's masterpiece was to make Christianity into a counterfeit kingdom of God.

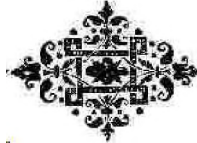
We see, therefore, how the "FOUR WINDS OF HEAVEN" were kept from creating havoc on the "sea" class by being allowed expression in the world empires. By engaging the demons in false world religions, even when the universal empires fell, the evil spirits were allowed to continue exercising influence over the same segments of society as previously. In this way they were placated from raging into a whirlwind.

The Rulers of Darkness

Paul tells us in Ephesians 6:12:

“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.”

It does not take too much imagination to see the “evil spirit world” in all of this. Controlling the minds of men to ingratiate their power lust and their desire for glory are very much a part of the spirit world’s agenda.



“Four Corners of the Earth”

Revelation 7:1

The world is shaping up into the following four quarters or segments of world power. The following observation is tentative and needs to be watched carefully to see how these “winds” will be unleashed in whirlwind strength.

- (1) There are capitalistic forces in alleged Christian nations such as Europe and USA, which are trying to form a community of nations with Canada, Mexico and South America.
- (2) There is also the Far Eastern Block of nations of India, Japan, etc., (Hindu, Shinto, etc.) with republican representative forms of government.
- (3) There are the anti-imperialistic forces as in the Middle East and Africa.
- (4) There is the Eastern Block (Humanists, Pagans) under Russia (now the Commonwealth of Russia), China, North Korea, etc.

The “four winds of heaven” are again striving and vying for control of these four segments of society. Each wind desires dominance in world government. Just as in Daniel, these “four winds” strove for control with some sort of compromise averting a whirlwind.

Now the world is more complicated by finance, technology, science, industry and military power. Compromises are more difficult. There are other players in the world arena, but apparently the same “four winds of heaven” are at work again, only more refined and sharply honed, seeking for dominance in world power.



What are the “Four Winds of Earth”?

Revelation 7:1

Why the switch of metaphor from “four winds of heaven” in Daniel to the “four winds of the earth” in Revelation? It is not an insignificant difference.

The difference is not so much in the “winds,” but the way in which they are directed, whether toward the mental processes which we call spiritual, or whether the winds are trying to influence and control the earth (the social order).

We believe the “winds of heaven” are the spirit world’s involvement in false religions. This, then, becomes a tool to exercise spiritual control over the minds of people.

	<p>We know of Baal, Moloch, Astoreth, Bel, Diana, Thor, Anu, Enlil, Ea Tiamat, Nannar, Istar, Venus, Shamash, Adad and the list could go on and on.</p> <p>Some of these gods were worshipped in many nations and cultures. Some simply had a different name in one country than the other. But always these false gods were tools to control the minds of people.</p> <p>They all thrived on darkness and were generally very cruel without regard for human suffering.</p>
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Great World Religions

Today there are the **great world religions** which are more than metal or stone idols. They are formed into world religions such as Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhists, Brahman, Shinto, and now New Age and the like which control and subjugate countless millions of earth. False religions, present and past, make up the “**winds of heaven.**”

When Montezuma was crowned King, he had 5,000 people sacrificed. That was a part of the festivities.

In pre-Columbian Latin America, 50,000 people were garroted and eviscerated on the same day and in the same place. That is how the demon-gods were assuaged.

The Ottoman Turks attempted to liquidate all Armenians—no doubt, for the praise of Islam’s Allah.

Even in our time, there was the final solution of the Jews in which almost five million innocents were incinerated, if not with the cooperation of the Christian churches, at least with their consent. The Western world knew what was happening, but made no attempt to bomb the railroad bridges or the crematoriums.

The list could go on and on in a hall of shame, which traces man’s inhumanity to man, most often controlled by religions which in turn were controlled by demons or Satan.

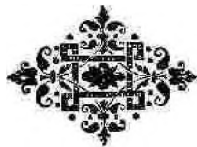
***Why are they “Winds of Earth”
Instead of “Heaven”?***

Paul warned against being “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.” Ephesians 4:14

When these “winds” blow in the spiritual realm, they are “winds of heaven.”

When the “winds” blow to control earthly or civil matters, they are “winds of earth.”

In other words, **when religious teachings are calculated to motivate world politics, to influence the social order, they cease to be “heaven” winds and become “earth” oriented.**



Part IV

THE KEYS OF THIS BLOOD ***Pope John Paul II versus Russia*** ***And the West for Control of the*** ***New World Order*** **By Malachi Martin**

Malachi Martin, a former Jesuit and professor at the Vatican's Pontifical Biblical Institute, writes about the Catholic Church and the present pope. Malachi Martin is a consummate insider in the Vatican and one of its intelligence experts.

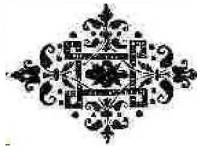


St. Peter's Basilica

In his book, he takes us inside the Vatican and gives us a view from Pope John Paul II's eyes.

This refers to the Polish Pope Karol Wojtyla.

This book is quite informative.



A Church Pulled in All Directions

When Wojtyla came to power, there were forces (evil spirits) at work wrenching the Catholic Church in all directions. Units within the church, calling themselves the "American Church," the "French Church," the "German Church," "Women—Church," the "Homosexual Church," the "Liberation Church," and so on (p. 86).

Being a big church makes for big problems. Behind this monolithic structure are powerful forces that would move the church in various directions to fulfill the whims or desires of certain classes. How do you keep everybody happy and from jumping over the tracks? It is not easy to do.



Pope John Paul II

When Wojtyla took office, everybody thought that he would turn his attention to all the contentious fragments of the church and try to use the "keys of Peter" to lay down the law to his troops and end the internal hemorrhaging.

It is logical for the physician to first heal himself before he turns to heal the world of its ills.

Wojtyla had other priorities. He became a contradiction and an enigma to his friends and foes alike.

Martin says, “What lay at the heart of that towering dimension of John Paul’s vision of the near future that so many would have given so much to fathom? A vision of his own about the way our human affairs would go in the not distant future. From the moment John Paul answered ‘yes’ to the ritual Conclave question ‘will you accept the papacy?’ asked of him in 1978, he placed everything that had been entrusted to him as Pope on the line in his decision to enter that same grand-scale, winner take-all competition” (p. 87).

Wojtyla was not going to address the internal conflicts of the church, but he was going after the geopolitical world to fashion it as his vision led him. He believed he was being guided even as Constantine was, when under the cross he was told “by this sign conquer.”


The “winner take all” philosophy is simply this: Once you have established yourself in the political scheme of things, particularly in the New World order, then you can easily take care of religious matters. Once you are seated on top of the political hill, you can then line up the opposing forces within the church and those outside of the church. Then they will listen. Nothing succeeds like success. And nothing succeeds without power.

Wojtyla and his successors know they cannot heal the internal problems facing the church unless they position themselves in political power on a world scale. Once one has that position, then he can speak with all the weight of authority to those pulling the church apart within and those hostile to the church without. In essence, while the Pope claims the authority of Peter, he knows that doesn’t play well without political power. Once enthroned in power, then his claim to have the “keys of Peter” is suddenly more believable. That is the pope’s and his successors game plan in world affairs.

THE KEYS OF THIS BLOOD goes into a lengthy description of Pope Wojtyla’s involvement on the geopolitical scene. Needless to say, it is very informative. Without the time or desire to get involved in the geopolitical movements of Wojtyla, suffice it to say he is known as the socialist pope.

The pope’s lengthy review of world ills might very well parallel the writings contained in *THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON*. They both speak of world poverty and lay blame on the Western World.

In *THE KEYS OF THIS BLOOD*, there are two chapters on The Morality of Nations: Rich Man, Poor Man ... Beggar man, Thief. You guessed it; the Western World is cast in the role as a thief and the have-not nations as beggar men.

	<p>The present pope speaks out for the poor and underprivileged of the world in no uncertain terms.</p> <p>He asks the Western nations to cease getting things for the cheapest price they can extract and to pay the have-not nations a just price for their resources.</p>
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Contrary to church history, when the church lived deliciously with the “kings of the earth,” we see this pope making “sweet music” to all the oppressed and poor people of earth.



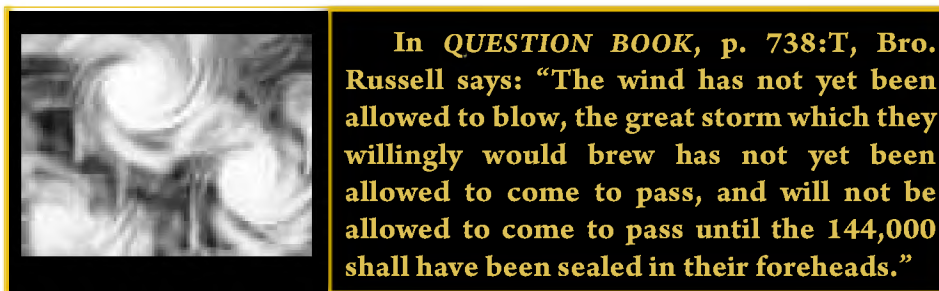
Identifying the “Four Winds of Earth”

They are called the “The powers of the air—the fallen angels, who have been under the control of Satan” (*Reprint* 5470:1; 5318:4; 4880:6; 4822:6; *QUESTION BOOK* 737:3; 623:4). When they are fully loosed, they will constitute the “whirlwind” which will take Elijah to heaven (*Reprint* 4822:6). Wars, violence, strife, and anarchy are also descriptive of what it will be like when the “four winds” are released.

We have to keep in mind that there are two sides of the coin here. **One side, the demons and their false teachings being placated as they see progress in reaching their goals, and the other side, the desperation and anger which will occur when they see their cause is going down in defeat.**

When they perceive they are going down, then the losers will turn their energies for destruction, that is when the “whirlwind” occurs. As long as they perceive they are making some progress in grabbing power and influence in world affairs, they will not explode into “whirlwind” violence.

The Pastor did make some projections as in *Reprint* 5753:2 that “the present European war is the letting loose of the four winds.” Because he believed the end was very near at the time, he felt his task was to look at all possibilities. However, he always tied the “loosing” to the “sealing of the saints,” and hence, looking back we have no reason to believe the 144,000 were “sealed” back there. If so, most of us could not be of the “Little Flock.”



We cannot bring Bro. Russell’s evaluation to present circumstances, so we must see what forces are at work in the world today. The “four angels” being held back are labeled certain failure. As long as the “four winds” are having some success, they will be restrained. **When failure is certain, they have nothing to lose and will explode, hoping to take everyone down with them.**



The Piggyback Globalists Endeavoring to Influence the Open Christian World

In *THE KEYS OF THIS BLOOD* John Paul identifies three groups which threaten the Western Christian World: the Humanists, the Mega-Religionists and the New Agers (Eastern religions).

The Mega-Religionists was first formed in 1893. It started with the Parliament of World Religions which Bro. Russell reports on in *THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON*, p. 182.

These are three religious forces that are trying to penetrate Satan’s Western Christian world to weaken it. However, unlike the old days of colonial empires, when armies and navies were used to go forth into the world, by way of contrast, these mind-controlling forces ride piggyback on the structural setups of everyone else’s organization, “whispering sweet universalisms into the ears of their leaders and adherents” (p. 292-3).

(1) Humanism (Paganism)

Its siren call is not to be holy, but to be happy. It flourishes in Western schools to sabotage Christianity. “In the certainty that all the glory of life is right here, and right now.” “It is directed against any notion of divinity that does not make God an integral part of this exclusive human cosmos. Beings loosely called spirits or devils or devas are not necessarily excluded. In fact, they are essential to New Agers. But because they, too, are conceived as constituent parts of man’s universe, they are tolerated even by Humanists.” (p. 294)

The Humanist (Pagan) religion is one part of the evil spirit world. This book shows how John Dewey started the concept that human perfection is to be attained by human efforts in this cosmos. Paul Kurtz went further, saying, “It is not liquidation the Humanists should seek, but the transformation, control, and direction of all associations and institutions. ... This is the purpose and the program of Humanism.” (p. 295)

This started humanists on the way to taking over the educational systems, the courts, and all institutions they could take over in the Western World, even as it had taken over the Communist nations.

Humanists use piggyback tactics to promote their revolution—“through public education; federal, state and municipal administrations; publicity, advertising and entertainment; churches, cultural and political associations, colleges and universities. Nothing could be exempt” (p. 295).



John Paul read and reread the Humanist Magazine, which said, “The classroom must and will become the area of combat between the rotting corpse of Christianity ... and the new faith of Humanism.”

Clearly this was an attempt to weaken the Christian forces of the Western world.

“There are over 60 Humanist organizations, bloodlessly and carefully flourishing in 23 countries. Humanist forces are blowing in all four “winds of earth.” (p. 295)

Humanist agendas in an open Western society have gained ground and are calculated to weaken Christian influences. It has little effect on the Islam world that is very closed.

(2) Mega-Religionists

“Where the Humanists have a respectable sixty or so groups around the world, the Mega-Religionists have some five hundred. Take their ability to ride piggyback on the structural setups of governments, religions and associations already in place around the world. Where the Humanists must seek the control and direction of such institutions in the best way they can, Mega-Religionists are very often expected to—and do—control and direct those institutions as a matter of course.” (p. 297)

A list is given of some of the Mega-Religionists’ beautiful people in this world: “Yehudi Menuhin, Dwight D. Eisenhower, John Foster Dulles, Henry R. Luce, George Meany, Queen Elizabeth II, the Duke of Edinburgh, Pierre Trudeau, Robert McNamara, John D. Rockefeller,” etc. p. 298.

The Mega-Religionists serve two purposes:

(1) To keep the five thousand world religions pacified or at least from going after each other’s throats. Religions are nasty and brutal forces in this world. Hence an extravagant effort is put forward to homogenize religion to make it less explosive. Mostly in Western culture where it is permitted freedom it serves to weaken the Christian influences in the world.

(2) By pushing pluralism in religion it prevents Christian forces from controlling civil institutions such as schools, courts, etc., which they once did control.

Quoting further: “Humanists are still preoccupied with what they call the ‘bane of religion.’ The Mega-Religionist mind, by contrast, is devoted to the proposition that comfort is not always as exclusively physical as Humanists like to insist. Religion, too, is essential to the comfort of human civilization, and to the comfort of its differing cultures. It’s just that separate religions are neither necessary nor desirable. In fact, for the sake of peace, all religions must fuse into one great religion—one Mega-religion—as quickly and painless as possible.” (p. 298)

The Mega-religionists want all religious groups to pull for one world government in a united front. It knows it is virtually impossible to harmonize all the religions, but by this pretense it weakens the bid of the Western Christian world to control the governments of earth. It has succeeded in robbing the churches from control over many institutions they once dominated.

The recent gathering in 1993, on the 100th anniversary of world religions held in Chicago, is a part of this Mega-Religion replay of the 1893 conference Bro. Russell wrote about as aforementioned. After 100 years, we saw how far Mega-Religion has penetrated the religious thought and the world order.

Pope John Paul realizes these forces have penetrated deeply into the churches, deeply weakening the Catholic Church—about which he is not very happy. It clearly is a thorn in the side of the Christian churches. Everyone knows you cannot homogenize all world religions and sterilize their hostile intentions, but in pretending to do so, it relegates the once powerful churches into just one of many religions—a very successful ploy.

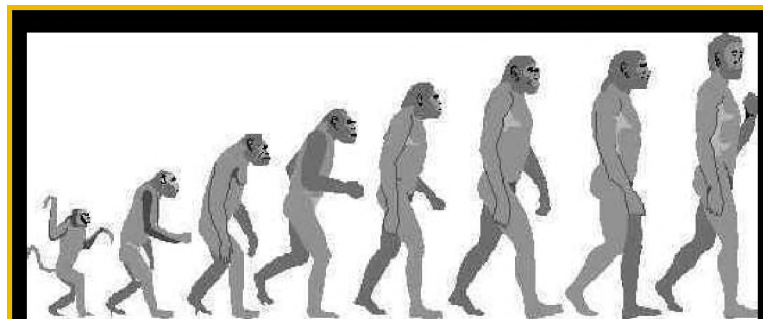
(3) New Age

Unlike the Humanists or the Mega-Religionists, they have no geopolitical power groups and not much glitter to speak of. Their success is proof of its appeal to the common man.

John Paul says if “it ever came to a contest between the Humanists, the Mega-Religionists and the New Agers, New Age would win the prize for riding atop everyone else’s organizational systems, and co-opting the members of those organizations into the quest for the mystically material glory of the New Age.”

The first point of the New Age is:

“There is no reality beyond this world. No cheating and no pretending. Everything ... is exclusively human [not too different from the Humanists].”



The second principle is even more important than the first.

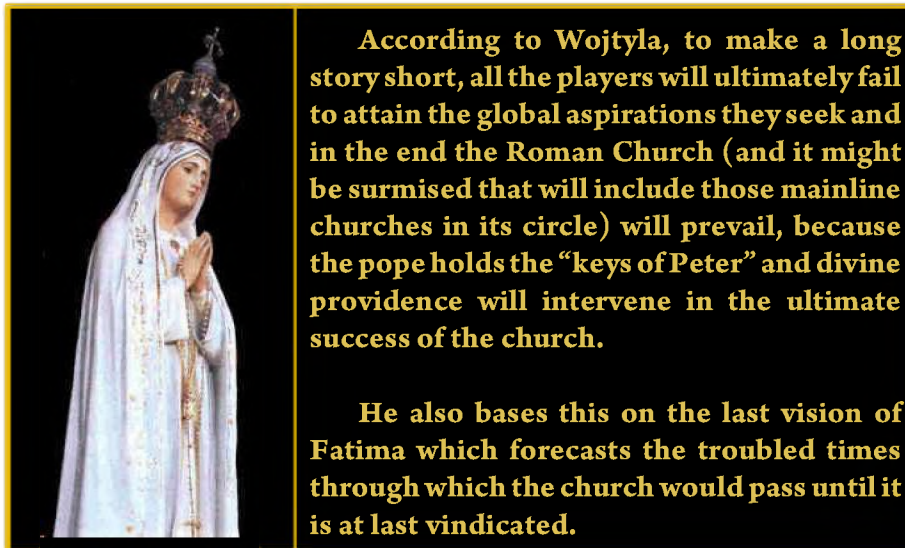
It teaches man is an “animal evolving on an upward curve of increasing, all-inclusive perfecting that will result, very soon now, in millennial conditions for humankind.”

The Roman Church has within it New Agers as well as Mega-Religionists. Roman Catholic New Ager, Matthew Fox, quoting a witch named Starhawk, said, “The New Age will be one in which no one is ruled or ruler, where no promise of Heaven offers us false compensation for our present pain, but where we tend together the earth’s living, fruitful flesh.” (p. 307)

According to the Catholic estimate, the New Agers number in the hundreds of millions and are sprouting like mushrooms in the Western world, but also among the Chinese, the Japanese, the Indians and the Africans.

The Humanists and the Mega-Religionists tend to appeal to the middle and upper-middle classes. The New Agers seem to have something for everyone. The free Western Christian world is perfect for spreading New Age religion because unlike the Muslim world where all freedom is prohibited, the Christian world is open to anything and everything. This is an evil force weakening the Christian churches' influence. Keep in mind that Satan has been the creator of the World Christian Churches as a power in the earth. Hence, the demons in attacking the Christian forces are weakening his kingdom.

The above three categories are all out to contain and weaken the Roman church and main-line Protestants. On the cover of *THE KEYS OF THIS BLOOD* it says, "Pope John Paul II versus Russia and the West for control of the New World Order." As this book portrays, the contestants in the struggle for global domination is real.

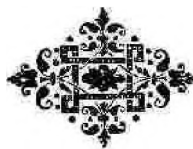


Of course, we have another view here. Whatever solace the thought of having Peter's keys may bring them, we hold they shall be very disappointed when they open the box to secure the keys, they will not find them there. Christ has them and always will have them.

The mainline churches still believe they have a mission to establish God's Kingdom on earth, and their cry is the "Kingdom Now."

The four possible identities of the "four winds" blowing toward the "earth" are the Christian Western World, the Far Eastern world (Hindu, Shinto, New Age, etc.), the Muslim World (Islam religion) and the Humanist World (communists, socialists).

The direction of all these religious powers is not just religion for religion's sake, but rather a **global scheme to dominate the civil quarters of the earth** in its New World order. All of these forces are awake and active in endeavoring to grab control of the world.



Part V


What or Who are the “Four Angels” Holding the “Winds”?

Bro. Russell said the four angels were “agents.” We need not think literal angels or powerful spiritual hosts are sent from heaven to hold the “four winds of earth.” Rather, any messenger or message serving to restrain these spiritual powers would suffice to fulfill this prophecy.

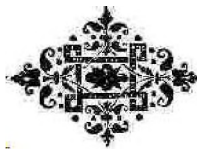
We believe the overpowering reason these “four winds” are being held from blowing up a whirlwind of anarchy is the fact that each of them sees they are having a field day in reaching some of their global quests. We believe it is something like this:

The present Lord has given each of these competing religious segments a long leash. As long as they are running along toward their goals there is no reason to kick up a storm. Their very freedom and success keeps them from turning toward world destruction. They read the message of their success and freedom as being a good reason to show restraint. Why make trouble when you are having success?

It is when they each come to the end of their leash, and they feel the choking, constraint and failure, they will vent their fury upon the earth like cornered animals.

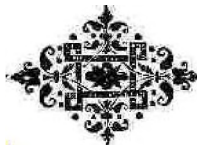
 <p>Pharaoh</p>	<p>Remember Pharaoh. It was his very success in resisting God’s will through nine plagues that made him more determined and strong-willed.</p> <p>It is the very temporary success of these “four winds” that constrains them from turning violent.</p>
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Each “wind” hears his own angel “message” saying that this is no time for the ultimate confrontation because, after all, you are having some success. When the reality of failure abruptly registers, then the “four angels” will no longer restrain them.



“Till We Have Sealed the Servants of Our God” Revelation 7:3

“Sealing” is the critical part of our study. That is what this whole lesson centers on. Once the “sealing of the saints” is complete, the “four winds of earth” will be permitted to wreak violence and destruction. That will begin the Armageddon crash, when universal anarchy will reign.



“Sealing” the Saints

What is meant by “till we have sealed the servants of our God”? Bro. Russell often spoke of “sealing” as an intellectual sealing with the knowledge of present truth. This was the purpose of the harvest work.

If this definition is viewed too generally, it leaves the impression that many more than 144,000 are “sealed.” Many in this harvest time either knew or know the truth, but not all those were faithful to the knowledge they possessed.

Bro. Russell used this same expression to indicate the full number “sealed” when the “door is shut.” In *THY KINGDOM COME*, p. 225, he says: “You may know that ‘the door is shut,’ that all the wise virgins have entered in, that all have been proved, and that all vacancies have been acceptably filled. All the special ‘servants of God’ having by that time been ‘sealed in their foreheads’ (given an intellectual appreciation of God’s plan), the four winds will be loosed (Revelation 7:3), and will produce the great ‘whirlwind.’”

Here, Bro. Russell ties the “shutting” of the door to the high calling with the sealing work being complete and when the winds will be no longer restrained.

On p. 212 he says, “God will not permit anything to put an end to his work until it is finished. Then, all the true and faithful servants of God will have been sealed in their foreheads; and, the work of the Gospel age being finished, no more can enter into that work.”

The Revelator confirms this same lesson, telling us, “I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000.” (Revelation 7:4, ESV) No less and no more will be “sealed.” **This is talking about the ultimate seal, marking them forever as the overcomers of the Gospel age.**



Part VI

“Dragon, Beast and False Prophet” Revelation 16

The “four winds of earth,” as best as we can perceive them, are: **Western Christian World** (Roman Catholic and main line Protestant churches), the **Far Eastern World** (Hindu, Shinto, New Age, Wicca, etc.), the **Muslim World** (Islam religion) and the **Pagan Humanists** (Communists, Socialists, Atheists, etc.).

Who of these four contenders will gain geopolitical predominance? Revelation 16:13 makes it clear that at the time of the Armageddon crash or whirlwind, it is the “Dragon” (Roman civil power), the “Beast” (Roman religious power) and its closely allied daughter, the “False Prophet” (Protestants under the direction of the Church of England working with the mother church). These are also described as Herod, Herodias and Salome.



John the Baptist	Salome	Herodius	Herod
True Church	“False Prophet”	“Beast”	“Dragon”
At End of Age	Protestants under	Roman	Roman

Here will be unleashed the cataclysmic forces of Armageddon. When the other contenders for power finally realize they have lost out, then they will vent their fury in creating the whirlwind.

It is important to realize that these “four winds” are fluid and are not bottled up exclusively in any region. We see even now how the Muslim religion has attacked the Western Christian World and also Far Eastern Hindu India. It has systematically slaughtered two million Christians in Africa. The Muslims have succeeded in securing great numbers of followers, but the Muslim nations are a dismal economic failure. Their economic failure is an “Albatross” about their neck.



Last Plague Poured Out on the “Air”

**“The seventh angel poured out his vial [bowl] into the air,
and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven,
from the throne, saying It is done.”**

Revelation 16:17

This last plague will be an expose’ concerning the powers of darkness that have controlled the religious of the world, especially “the Prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2). When the people realize how greatly deceived and misled they were in believing that the kingdoms of the world were a part of the Kingdom of God, they shall arise in universal anarchy.

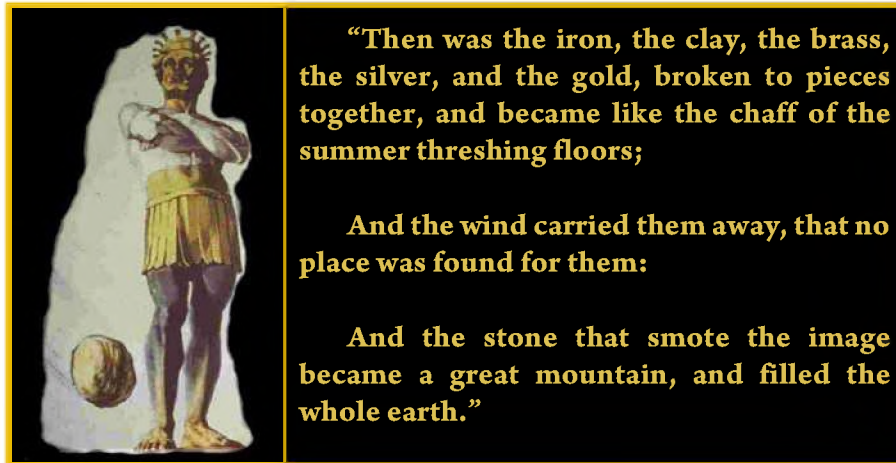
When this plague is released, “the great city” Babylon will be divided into “**three parts**”—“**the dragon,**” “**the beast**” and the “**false prophet**”—each for itself. Then will follow the “**great earthquake, ... so mighty an earthquake and so great**” as never was before. This will also be the time of the “**great whirlwind**” of anarchy.

“Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

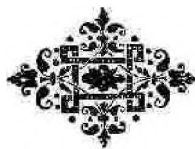
So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.” Ezekiel 37:9, 10

“**Breath**” and “**life**” will not come into Israel until the “**four winds**” blow the dust of the four universal empires away.

Daniel 2:35, speaking of Nebuchadnezzar’s image, says,



That is when the “**stone**” can grow and fill the whole earth.





THE SONG OF MOSES AND THE LAMB

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Part I

Song of Moses:

“Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.”

Deuteronomy 32: 3, 4

Song of Moses and the Lamb:

“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 thy judgments are made manifest.”

Revelation 15:3, 4

Moses said: “Just and right” are God’s “judgments.”

Deuteronomy 32

The Lamb says: “Just and true” are “thy judgments.”

Revelation 15.

The Song of Moses is the one given by Moses to Israel the day that he died. It is called the Song of Moses and also the Song of the Lamb, because the Lamb later confirms that same Song to us. That brings certain majesty to it.

Moses may very well have been one of the greatest men of God that ever lived. When we combine his Song with the Song of the Lamb, the Son of God, that is a duet that will long live in our hearts and memories. There is an unforgettable beauty and melody that lingers to all who hear it.

There were two songs given by Moses, forty years apart, one at the crossing of the Red Sea and the other was the song Moses sang the day that he died.

**Moses' Song
at the Crossing of the Red Sea**



Song of Moses after Red Sea

The first song of Moses was a song of triumph and of God's judgment on His enemies.

This song will be sung at the end of the Millennium, after all the people of God have passed the Second Death.

It is a song of deliverance for God's people and judgment against their enemies.



Crossing the Red Sea

The song sung after the crossing of the Red Sea is recorded in Exodus 15:1-19.

Both Moses and the children of Israel sang this together.

**Moses' Song
at his Death**



Israel Taken into Captivity

Whereas the Song of Moses and the Lamb proclaims God's judgments and punishments against His own people.

When that work is done, He receives His chastened people and then punishes the enemies of His people.



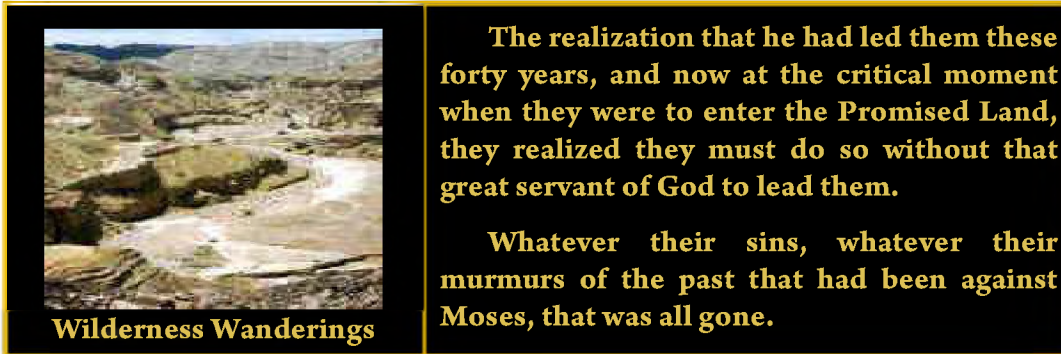
Israel Persecuted

The Song of Moses and the Lamb is a two-fold punishment. This, therefore, pertains to both the Jewish and Gospel Ages.

It is similar to the Major Prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel who pronounced judgments against Israel but also against their enemies. Because it covers two ages it became the Song of Moses and the Lamb.

The real Song of Moses is the one that he sang the day that he died. The Lord then took him, putting him to sleep by the word or mouth (I like to think of it as a kiss) of the Lord. This song contains the parting message of one of the greatest servants of God that ever lived, our Lord Jesus being excepted. It is this song that the Lamb also sings.

Moses visited each of the tribes before he offered this song. No doubt he had many wonderful things to tell each tribe. There were personal ties and warm friendship involved in this last exchange as well as very serious exhortations. They knew he was to leave them. There was a serenity and sense of awe and wonderment that gripped the people still living there on the other side of the Jordan waiting to enter the Promised Land.



They could not, at this point in time, hide their great love and affection for Moses. They truly loved him.

Love has a way of winning out at the end. If you can't win people with love you can't win them any better way. Moses' love for his people had finally won, and they truly loved him.

Unquestionably, he had been their meeting place with God. They all knew this. Now that the nation had finally come to appreciate him for the legend that he was among them, he was to leave them. No longer would they have his awe-inspiring presence and his great leadership.

Great moments such as this have not often come. When they do, few are aware of the great drama occurring. But here, the whole nation was awake. They were at full attention. They were listening to Moses, the servant of God, even while tears of sorrow filled their eyes.

How could they hold back their sorrow and tears knowing this was the last time their beloved leader would speak to them—that would last forever in their hearts and minds.

This song was no ordinary song. This song was never to be forgotten and to make certain of this the Lamb of God picked it up and taught it to the saints. We must never forget it either. Once having heard it, we also must learn it and sing it with him. We will refer to Revelation 15 later.

Do not think that Moses' last words were full of sweetness and tender reflections on the journey that they had shared in the wilderness. This refrain of the Lamb is heard in Revelation 15 and constitutes the chorus to the Song of Moses.

Considering Moses' last words, we learn there was no need for Moses to build monuments with words touching those great things that had happened in their singular relationship with God. Moses needed to spend no time generating warmth and affection. It was there already.

You see, Moses was a Prophet, and as a Prophet sometimes there is unhappiness about knowing things which will come to pass. It had been revealed to Moses what would happen at his passing. He knew things that were heavy on his heart.

Let us not underestimate the value of prophecy. How often we do. We are not encouraged to do so by any scripture. In Hosea 12:13 we read:

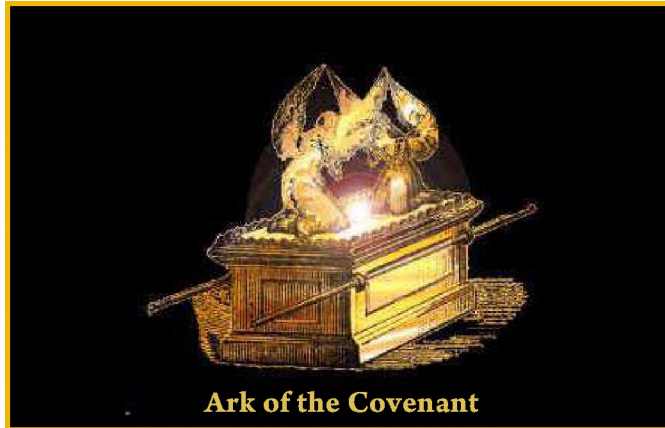
“And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved.”

Prophecy is necessary for both being delivered and preserved. The Song of Moses was written down as a part of the Book of the Law. It was taught to the people and later it was preserved in the Ark of the Covenant. It became a part of Law together with the two tables of stone. Yes, the Song of Moses was there also. We read this in Deuteronomy 31:24-26:

“And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished,

“That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying,

“Take this book of the law and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.”



Ark of the Covenant

This showed its eternal qualities and the weight God associated with these words.

The reason for this song, therefore, was that Moses was a Prophet, and God had revealed to him what was going to befall the people of God after they entered the land of promise. He said to them in Deuteronomy 31:27-30:

“For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the Lord; and how much more after my death?

“Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth to record against them.

“For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands.

“And Moses spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song, until they were ended.”



Israel in the wilderness forty years.

Standing there, the children of Israel, perhaps found it hard to believe their future conduct would be so perverse.

Here they were, full of love and affection for Moses and really for the Lord, as they reflected on the long and terrible journey through the wilderness together these forty years.

How could these predictions be true of them and their children? Surely, they would be better for all the experiences they had shared with Moses. Perhaps these things would happen way down the road. And to a certain extent that was true. We read in Joshua 24:31:

“And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel.”

For **eighty years** after Moses, the children of Israel at least made some effort in keeping God’s law.



Knowledge Does not Automatically Improve Our Performance

Sometimes, we think, when we have adequate knowledge it automatically insures protection against taking a wrong course. Knowledge may guide us in the right way only if acted upon. Moses’ words in Deuteronomy 31:19-21:

“Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel.

“For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swore unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and break my covenant.

“And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: for I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I swore.”



Israel turned to worshipping Moloch

How true that prophecy was. **One of the tragedies of life is in the fact that one generation cannot give to the next generation their wisdom.** How often parents see their children take a course they know will bring them sorrow and pain, and yet they are powerless to change matters.

It seems every generation wishes to make mistakes of their own choosing. How often youth feels strong and impervious to life's pitfalls, only to be taken in the snare that countless millions who preceded them had fallen into.

Thank God for the resurrection when all mankind will have a chance to relive life with personal knowledge of the consequences of sin, when peer pressure will always be to do the will of God.

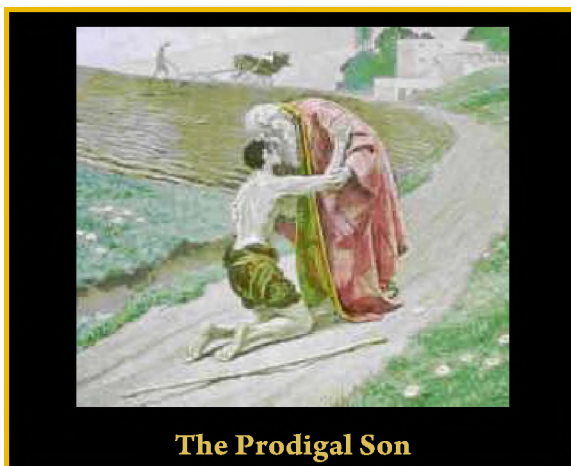
By the spirit of prophecy Moses gave the children of Israel an awesome lesson that was never to be forgotten. The dangers lurked down the road, when they entered the land and would become comfortable and full. That is when they would relax their disciplines, and that is when temptations to be like the people round about would take hold of them.

While these words of Moses served as a witness against them, more importantly, they would be a consolation to those who took the wrong course in departing from the Lord. The words of Moses in Deuteronomy 30:1-3 would also be remembered.

“And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee,

“And shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;

“That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee.”



The Prodigal Son

These words are an indictment against Israel, but also a consolation. Yes, Israel, like the prodigal son, would in the end find it must return to the Father's house, thoroughly humbled, thoroughly chastened, but oh so glad to return to the house of the Father.

The Lord will have compassion on His people. We read in Deuteronomy 32:36:

“For the Lord will vindicate his people and have compassion on his servants, when he sees that their power is gone, and there is none remaining, bond or free.” (ESV)

Yes, the Lord will vindicate both His natural people and His spiritual people.



This Commandment Is Not Too Hard for You!

Another thing to remember is that the Lord had not given His people an impossible Law to keep. True, none could keep God's Law perfectly, but they could keep its essence while walking humbly before the Lord.

They would be blessed in basket and in store, they would be blessed when they arose and when they lay down, they would be blessed when they went out and when they came in. They would be blessed and freed from the sicknesses of the surrounding nations. They would stand before their enemies while their enemies would fall before them.

Sometimes it is easy to conclude that the Law arrangement was an Albatross hanging around Israel's neck impeding all of their progress and all of their hopes. Such is not the case.



The Law was beautiful and worthy of their meditation day and night.

While it could not bring them life in the truest sense, yet it provided the disciplines necessary for them to walk humbly with their God.

To some, it actually was a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, while to others it was a stumbling-stone and a rock of offense.

No the Israelites could not keep the Law to gain everlasting life, but indeed they could keep it in a way that would bless them richly.

We read in Deuteronomy 30:11-14 (ESV):

“For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off.


“It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’

“Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’

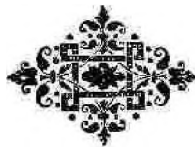
“But the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.”

Yes, “You can do it!” That is the message Moses left with the people, and that is what we must never forget.

Many might be inclined to say, “Why should God and Moses bother with a people who are going to forget God?” Why not just let them go unhindered in the evil course they were disposed to take? Why tell them that they would be chastened for their evil ways and that afterward God would be gracious to them?

 <p>Ezra Reading Law to People</p>	<p>Because God loved the people and He tried to provide them with the entire moral helps and strengths He could instill within them.</p> <p>That even if they wandered from Him they would remember their way back to God’s fold.</p>
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God is always merciful and gracious to receive them, when at last they return with all their heart to Him.



Part II

The Song of Moses Itself

Now we come to the song itself in Deuteronomy 32:1-3 (ESV):

“Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth.

“May my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distil as the dew, like gentle rain upon the tender grass, and like showers upon the herb.

“For I will proclaim the name of the Lord. Ascribe greatness to our God!”

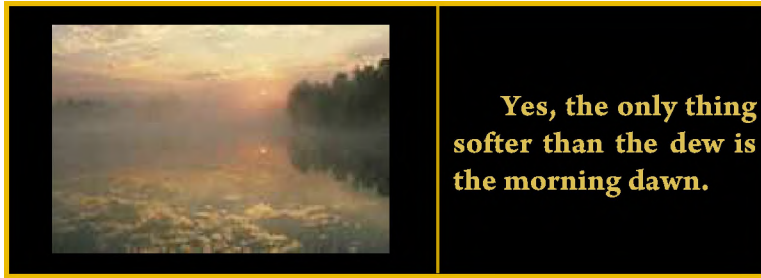


**We have the promise that
the Lord's Word would distil as the dew.**

What a wonderful lesson we have here. How did the Harvest Message come to us? Did Bro. Russell engage a team of brilliant Bible Students as a kind of brain trust with sledgehammer blows to forge the truths of our time? No. It did not happen that way.

Let me quote from *Reprint 2453* where Bro. Russell explains how present truth came about. He says:

“But as we claim that what we present is not *our own*, not *new*, but ‘The Old Theology,’ so old that it had been lost sight of for centuries, we must disclaim any credit even for the finding and rearrangement of the jewels of truth. ‘It is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.’ The writer wholly disclaims superior ability or qualification for the reorganization of the truth in its present solidarity. As the time had come for the bringing together of the scattered thoughts of past centuries in the marvelous inventions of our day—so the time had come for the bringing together of the fragmentary hopes and promises of God’s Word scattered through Christendom. To deny that the Lord has simply ‘poured out’ this harvest time blessing of ‘present truth’ in his own due time and in his own way, would be as wrong as to claim it is of our own invention. ‘Poured out’ exactly expresses the truth on this point, too, for he neither ‘burned the midnight oil,’ nor racked his brain, nor otherwise forged the chain of truth with heavy sledge blows of human reason on the anvil of knowledge. On the contrary, it came gradually, silently, as comes the morning dawn: the only effort necessary was to keep *awake* and face in the right direction. And the greatest aid in so doing was the effort put forth to awaken others of the ‘household of faith’ and point them to the light and in turn to urge upon them the necessity for serving also, if they would overcome the lethargic ‘spirit of the world,’ and be ready to go in to the marriage of the Lamb.”

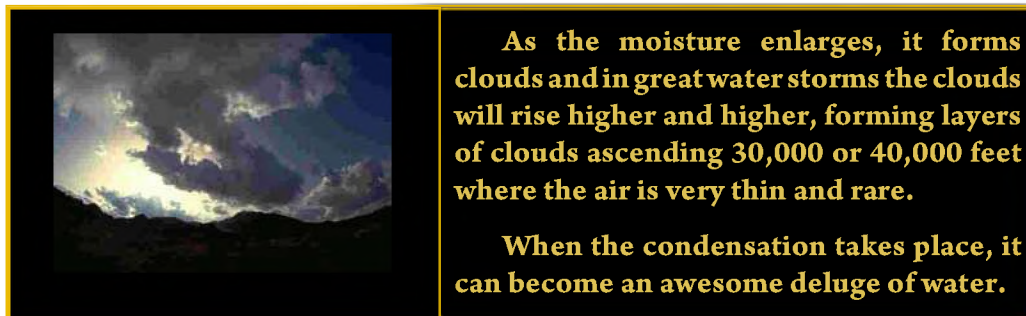


That is indeed how the truth came to us, and that is the way the Lord said His word would come. I love his unpretentious explanation. He is simply telling it like it was.

Yes, **the truth distilled as the dew and the gentle rain**, and that is the way it should be. God has not chosen the lightning bolts to strike His people nor the thunder to define His truths.

They are finding out in our time about **the miracle of the dew and the rain**. Scientifically, water is much heavier than air and theoretically air should not hold water. But it does. How does it do it? Well, that is a miracle. Water simply evaporates into the air.

If you leave a glass of water standing long enough in the open air the water will gradually disappear. Little molecules of water lift off the surface of water and into the air. The sun greatly accelerates this process. The air is miraculously made to retain molecules of water.



By way of contrast the dew forms from the moisture condensing from the air on the earth in such a gentle way that it forms droplets of water without the sound of a drop of rain.

That is how the truth has come to us.



The Rock

We proceed to Deuteronomy 32:4, 5 (ESV):

“The Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and right is he.

“They have dealt corruptly with Him, they are no longer his children because they are blemished; they are a crooked and twisted generation.”

There are many scriptures confirming **God is our Rock**.



**“Look to the rock from which you were hewn.”
Isaiah 51:1 (ESV)**



**“The Lord is my rock, and my fortress,
and my deliverer, my God, my rock,
in whom I take refuge.”
Psalms 18:2**



**“The Rock of Israel has said to me:
when one rules justly over men,
ruling in the fear of God,
he dawns on them like the morning light.”
2 Samuel 23:3, 4 (ESV)**



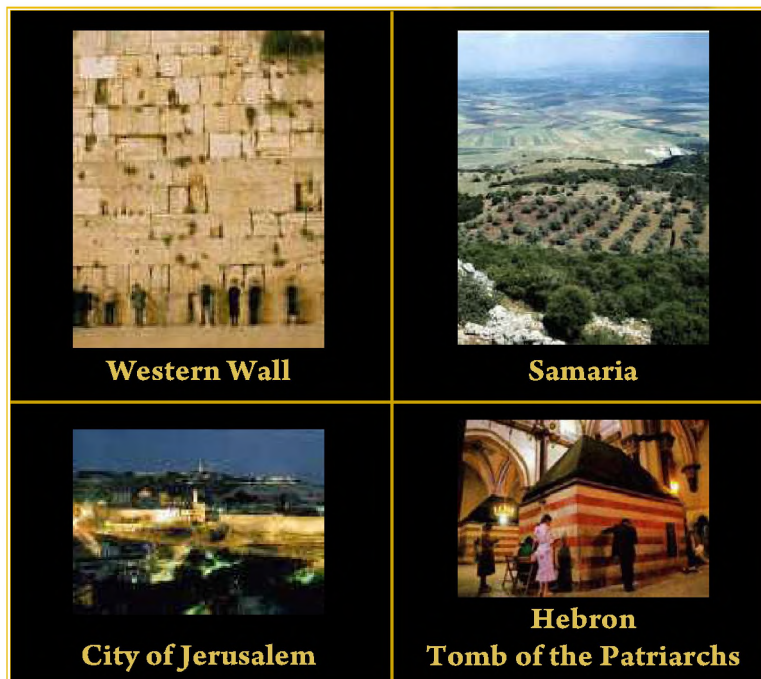
Jacob His Allotted Heritage

In Deuteronomy 32:7-9 (ESV) we quote in part:

“Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you; your elders, and they will tell you.

“When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God.

“But the Lord’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.”



This is a reminder of history referring back to Genesis 10, where we find some seventy people were assigned their portions of land. This was shortly after the flood, but their fathers and elders probably remembered this bit of history.

This was important to the children of Israel then, because they were standing at the gate of the Promised Land. It was important for them to know the land they were about to take was their God given heritage. They were not taking something that was not theirs, like some thief, but only claiming what the Lord had given them.

In Genesis 10:25 (ESV) we read:

“To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided, and his brother’s name was Joktan.”

It was in Peleg’s time the earth was divided and Peleg followed in the lineage of Shem. We think this scrap of history is very interesting even now, but then it was a reminder that they were claiming their heritage.

“He Found Him in a Desert Land”

We read from Deuteronomy 32:10:

“He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.”



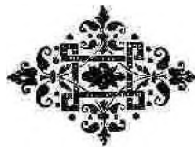
Wilderness Wanderings

God found Israel in the wilderness and placed his love upon them during the forty years of their wandering.

Because God led them, they successfully found their way through the treacherous passes and canyons on their long journey.

Without God’s guidance they would not know the right way, the hidden dangers, and could easily have been entrapped and suffered severe losses. The wilderness can be very unforgiving and harsh on travelers ignorant of the dangers. So God prepared the way before them, and they avoided all the pitfalls and dangers of traveling in that howling wilderness.

Yes, “He kept them as the apple of His eye.” It doesn’t get better than that. It is wonderful to be kept by the power of God.



“As an Eagle Stirreth Up Her Nest”

“As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings:

“So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.”

Deuteronomy 32:11-12

The Lord uses the eagle here to illustrate His care for Israel. The eagle is a remarkable creature. It can use high winds to soar to great heights. It has keen vision that can see a mouse from a mile high and can also look at the sun at noonday.



Eagle with Young in Nest

Here it speaks of the eagle stirring up her nest. Because eagles are big birds, they use sticks to make their nest. When the eaglets become of age to leave the nest, the mother eagle will tear out all the grass and down from within the nest and suddenly that comfortable nest begins to poke and stick the eaglets. It is time to leave the nest.

As the eaglets spread their wings while learning to fly on their rocky ledges, the mother eagle flutters over her young. When each eaglet takes its maiden voyage, the mother eagle will spread her wings under her eaglet and bear them up, literally bearing them on eagle wings until they have sufficient strength to fly alone.

The last thing the eaglets are taught is how to soar. Unless these young eagles learn how to set their wings and harness the opposing winds, the winds would exhaust them quickly. By setting the wings at the proper angle they can stay aloft using the high winds to give them lift just as a sailplane.

The lesson is very clear. The Lord does not leave His people in comfortable nests for long. The day must come in every Christian's life when the Lord will stir up the nest, turning us out into the elements, but all the while fluttering over us and quickly bearing us up on eagle wings when our weak wings falter.

Then we must learn to soar on eagle wings, using the opposing forces of life to soar to higher heights, renewing our strength as the eagle. The eagle does not fight the opposing winds, but harnesses them while renewing its strength.



“Jeshurun Waxed Fat”

“But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.

“They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger.

“They sacrificed unto devils [BBE, evil spirits], not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.”

Deuteronomy 32:15-17

What does Jeshurun mean? It is a pet name for Israel and means the “darling upright.” Can you imagine God calling them this? He did. God generously gives them a little more credit than they deserve.

Still, in their early experiences Israel did put in some beautiful devotion to God. We sometimes look at all their backsliding, but God gives them credit as he does us, by counting us faithful.

It is when they entered the land of promise and became full and fat that they forsook the Lord. How sad to read:

**“He forsook God which made him,
and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.”**



Sacrificing Children to Moloch

That is exactly what happened. This is why this song was given, because the Lord knew they would forsake him.

Not only so, but they went after strange gods (evil spirits) and entered into the abominable practices of the nations round about, sacrificing their sons and daughters to demons.

How could this happen, we ask? I am sure they did not start out to do this. However, leaving their steadfastness to the Lord, little by little, they were beguiled until they had debased themselves to such a wretched condition. However, He did not cast them off forever, but rather he wanted to make them jealous.



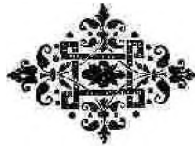
“They Moved Me to Jealousy”

“They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.”

Deuteronomy 32:21

The mere fact that God tries to provoke them to jealousy shows He still loved His people. This verse points us to the fact that God turned His attention to the Gentiles, those who are not a people, and from these He selects a people for His name.

Meanwhile, God hopes the Jews see His affections being extended to the Gentiles, that they would become jealous and seek Him again. As Gentiles, it is humbling to know that we really are playing second fiddle to the Jews, but to obtain God’s favor we are glad to be second fiddle or third fiddle if need be. We are not worthy of this honor, however you look upon it.



Part III

God Punishes His People

The lesson of the “Song of Moses” is that God punishes His people when they turn their backs on Him. Not only does He punish His people, but also He punishes the enemies of His people. Let us consider the first punishment.

“For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

“I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them.

“They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust.

“The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs.”

Deuteronomy 32:22-25



**Parable of the
Rich Man and Lazarus**

This is illustrated in the story of the rich man and Lazarus. We see the once “rich man” Israel being placed in a very distressing situation for all their sins and unfaithfulness.

Paul mentions the same lesson in Romans 10:19-21:

“But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.

“But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.

“But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.”

God loved them, but they did not show love in return.



**The Destruction
of Jerusalem**

The terror and punishment of the Lord followed them in their unfaithfulness.

We remember the overthrow of Jerusalem. There was starvation in the city. The Jews would torture one another if they thought they were hiding food anywhere.

It was so bad that some cases were reported of them eating their own children.

No, the punishment was not just some poetic words. It was real.



Why Doesn't God Cast Them Away as His People?

The question may arise: Why doesn't God cast Israel away? He could have done that very easily. The answer is given in Deuteronomy 32:26, 27:

"I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men:

"Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this."

Just as Moses prayed when God wanted to destroy this people, what would the enemies of Israel say.

"For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth?" Exodus 32:12

If their enemies could exalt over Israel, in another sense they could exalt over God. So God chose another method. He decided to punish His people for their sins, but later receive them into favor. That is something many people in Christendom do not understand.

The lesson here is just as it is recorded in Deuteronomy 32:36:

"For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left."

The Lord begins His judgment with His people first. The Christian world has indeed seen the affliction of the children of Israel and has concluded they have been cast off forever. That is a big mistake.



The Church Persecuting Jews

In that the churches have been large contributors to Israel's sufferings through the centuries, it seems to escape them that the Lord is now going to punish the enemies of His people Israel: both natural Israel after the flesh and spiritual Israel after the spirit.

This brings us to the next part of our lesson, the punishment of the enemies of God's people.



“Sealed up Among My Treasures”

“For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

“For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter:

“Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.

“Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?”

Deuteronomy 32:31-34

Here we come to the enemies of Israel, both natural and spiritual. The rock of the enemies is not our Rock. The rock of our enemies is their great institutions and great monetary resources.

They trust in the power they have leveraged in the nations, the great numbers of followers, all the pomp and glory that has been attained by consorting with the world. By changing the glorious Gospel of Christ into a narrow salvation that fails to reach earth’s billions but promises heaven to its very own supporters, they have succeeded in convincing the multitudes within their vaunted walls that heaven is theirs by merely naming the name of Christ.



Study the history of the vine of “Sodom” and of the fields of “Gomorrah” and see how they persecuted natural Israel even into our own era in the Nazi-Fascist alliance of church and state.

See how they persecuted the true spiritual Israelites, forcing them to seek refuge in these United States.

The wine of our enemies is the “poison of dragons and the cruel venom of asps.” While preaching God’s love, they have been most unloving and uncharitable. Before you are the open pages of history.

So offensive has been their history that in our time they are seeking to revise it and make it something that it was not. That is the new look. The name for it is revisionism, the ability to rewrite history to make it read the way you would like it to read.

No matter how they fool the people, God doesn’t read history as men write it, but as it actually happened. Therefore, God has stored up a treasury of vengeance. Because God does not punish people on the spot for their sins, we may get the idea that He isn’t going to punish them at all. Nothing could be further from the truth.



God's Declaration

“See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.

“For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.

“If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.

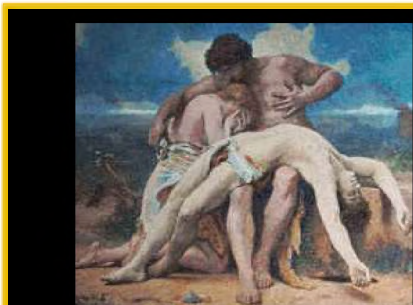
“I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.”

Deuteronomy 32:39-42

Who are His enemies? His enemies are those who oppose His people, both natural and true spiritual Israel. All righteous blood that has been poured out from Jesus' time until now must be accounted for. Not one drop of righteous blood will pass unnoticed and unrequited.

God did not punish all sins as quickly as they were committed. I am sure, if He had, it would have been a great deterrent to sin. Because sins can be committed with seeming impunity for days, months, years and centuries, the wicked have been emboldened into thinking they are free from all punishment.

That is the great deception of sin. They don't realize it is sin now and pay later, and pay they will as surely as the sun will rise. God allows sins against His people to accumulate. In Matthew 23:35, 36 we read:



The Slaying of Righteous Abel

“That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

“Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation.”

At the end of this age we find the same principle applies. **God will require of this generation all the righteous blood shed throughout the Gospel age both for His spiritual Israel and natural Israel.**

There is no doubt that this delay in judgment has strengthened the wickedness of people and nations. They seemingly got away with terrible sins. God is handling the sins against the righteous just the way our nation is handling the national debt, by dumping the debt on our children. God will visit the children of this generation with judgment.

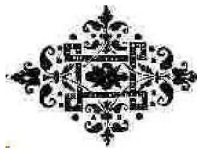
In God's case it is an act of kindness to allow the previous generations to live and continue the population growth. If God punished people summarily for all sins committed against the righteous, earth's population would be much smaller.

God's treasury of judgment has been kept in store until these last days. He has promised with an oath, and that calls extravagant attention to it, that once His hand lays hold on His sword, it will not be stayed until He has visited punishment for those for whom it is intended. Deuteronomy 32:41-43 reads:

“I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.

“I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.

“Praise His people ye nations: [margin reading] for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.”



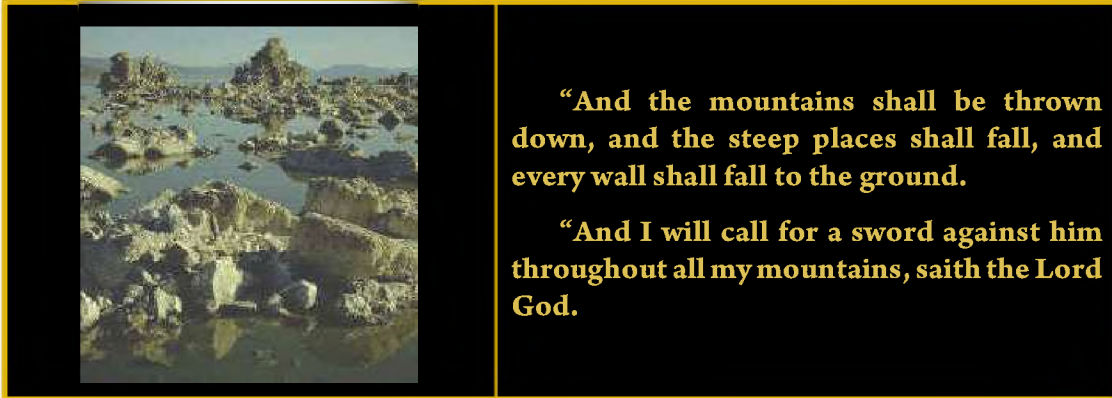
Part IV

Ezekiel 38:18-21, 23

“When Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face.

“For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel;

“So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence,



“And the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.

“And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God.

“ ... Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord.”

Notice the story here. God is likened to a man who has been angered for a long time. His anger keeps building until they push Him to the limits. His fury comes up in His face.

Just as a man who is being provoked. First the person turns red, then white and finally a purplish-white, and that is when the person explodes into action.

Gog’s invasion into the Holy Land is like the last straw. At this point God’s wrath brings on the final Armageddon crash, in which the nations fall and following this, universal anarchy occurs. This is when the Lord unsheathes His sword and swings into judgment.

God has sworn by an oath that once His hand takes hold of that sword He will not put it back until He has meted out His full fury upon His enemies.

Remember that there are two parts to this story of the Song of Moses and the Lamb. First God punishes His people. This is true with natural Israel and also of spiritual Israel. **“Judgment must begin at the house of God.”** 1 Peter 4:17

Those whom God loves He rebukes and chastens. After the punishments come the blessings. He then punishes the enemies of His people.

All of God’s people, having been chastened and corrected, will be a blessing and praise to the nations. All of God’s dealings have an end view of bringing blessings and honor and glory to the peoples of earth.



The Song of the Lamb

The Song of the Lamb is recorded as we indicated in our opening text:

“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 the saints [ages].

“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.”

Revelation 15:3, 4

This is not a long song, but it is to the point. When this song is finally delivered, the nations will learn a valuable lesson. They will know that God’s ways are “just and true.” Most people would profess that God’s ways are “just and true.” However, in practice and in their works they do not believe God’s ways are “just and true.” Why should they?



Tyndale’s Persecution

They have seen the proud delivered and spreading themselves as the “green bay tree.”

They have seen the righteous on the scaffold while the wicked bear the rule.

They have seen the people of God killed in every age with seeming impunity.

Why should they think God is waiting to bring about justice and truth?

There is a big difference between what appears and what is. Their scale of observation does not provide the proof that God will do anything about evil.

The preachers may try to scare them with an afterlife of punishment in hell, but no one really believes it. Many know hellfire is borrowed from Greek mythology and read into the Bible. The churches score personal sins but fail to observe the Christian churches involved in the dirty politics of this world, even blessing its horrible wars. They aligned with Hitler and Mussolini in a diabolical war that destroyed some fifty million people.

How are they different from the world? They will soon see that God will hold the Christian churches accountable for the centuries of their ruthless reign of power and evil. Just as God punished the evil among His natural people Israel, so He will punish the evil that has been done in nominal spiritual Israel.

God’s ways are equal.



Jeremiah Persecuted

The overcomers of natural Israel were only a minority.

Yet they can be found in every period of the Jewish Age.

At times, as in the case of Jeremiah, he seemed to be one man of God against the nation.

When Elijah thought he was the only one serving God, he was told there were 7,000 who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

The overcoming saints have always been a minority and at times may only be very small in number. So it will be when the saints come to the closing scenes of the time of trouble. The righteous blood of the overcomers of the Jewish period was finally required of the nation and His servants were finally vindicated.

The Gospel period will be dealt with similarly. All the righteous blood spilled along with all the evil and abuse heaped upon the faithful will at last be required of this generation.

God will vindicate His people. This is an absolute truth that you may rest in. God has sworn to avenge His faithful people. Justice will be done.

Sometimes brethren have suggested that this world will go down in general anarchy without God manifesting His judgments against certain classes. This is not possible. Christendom will not fall simultaneously with the nations and the financial and political kings of the earth. No, for we read:

“Therefore shall her plagues come in one day [year, Reprint 2553], death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

“And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning.” Revelation 18:8, 9

Notice here that the “kings” are still around to lament her fall. They are standing afar off, not wishing to appear as among her lovers. They lament because her fall is a herald that they are next to fall.



Overcoming the Beast and His Image

“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.”
Revelation 15:2



Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego

Have you gotten the “victory over the beast and its image?” If so, it has been oh, so easy.

Before the plagues are poured out, those who were given “the victory over the beast and over his image” are identified.

They refused like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, to bow before the “image” and the “beast.”

No, they are not taken to heaven, but rather are engaged in singing **“the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb.”** (Revelation 15:3) That is what is recorded in the very Word of the Lord.

They refused to bow, refused to worship, standing defiant before world, apparently victorious in defying the orders given them. It is they whom the Lord then engages to sing this song and have a part in executing the judgments written.

The sequence of events that follow in order are:

- (1) The “seven angels having the seven last plagues” (Revelation 15:1) are given seven “golden vials” [bowls] to pour out the “seven last plagues” (Revelation 15:7).
- (2) The Temple is filled with God’s glory.
- (3) From the Temple come the “seven angels” each pouring out his bowl in this order: upon earth, sea, rivers and fountains of water, sun, seat of the beast, Euphrates and finally upon the air.

One last point needs clarification. Do seven messengers of the Gospel Age deliver the seven last plagues or does the seventh and last messenger’s hand accomplish this?

In Ezekiel 9 and 10 we find the answer. The same messenger with the writer’s **“inkhorn”** who was engaged in marking those who **“sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done”** (Ezek. 9:4) in the city is the same one engaged to take **“coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city.”** (Ezek. 10:2-4)

This teaches the seven last plagues are delivered from the same hand that penned the Harvest message. This is clearly done after the man with the **“inkhorn”** says, **“I have done as thou hast commanded me.”** (Ezek. 9:11) Not at his death, but when the work of **“marking”** is completed. So after the sealing work is completed, then from the same hand the coals of fire are cast over the city.



“It Is Your Life”

Why should we spend our time studying this Song of Moses and the Lamb? Some may think it unnecessary; others may think it boring. Why bother our heads about these matters when we could dwell on more gratifying portions of God’s Word? There is a tendency to do this. It is so easy to say this part of the Lord’s Word is not necessary.

Did God ever ask anyone to go through His Word and label what is important? I don’t know where He has done this. Certainly, we know that this Song we have been dwelling on is very important. Why? Moses tells us that this Song is important. That’s why. We read in **Deuteronomy 32:46-47**:

“And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law.

“For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.”

Yes, **it is your life**. That is pretty important. This lesson today is not something that you may take or leave at your own pleasure. It is central to our life and well being. We must understand God’s way of dealing as it pertains to His people, as well as to the enemies of God’s people.

If we are wise, we will receive these words into our hearts and act upon them. These words, Moses reminded them, are not too hard for you. They are intended for you and me and we will be blest if we act in accordance with them.

Another feature is intended in this Song, which is not for the overcomers of the Jewish or Gospel period, but intended for the wayward, the recalcitrant and the backsliders of both ages, who in the end show that they love the Lord after they are chastened and reprovved.

This Song was meant as a comfort to them. They may all realize that God’s intentions in afflicting them was to recover their hearts and to strengthen their purposes of good in returning to the Lord with their whole heart. Many in natural Israel have been of this disposition.

During this Gospel period, the Great Company is a class that the Lord has dealt with and will deal with severely. It will be a great blessing for these to know that beyond their chastening God has great blessings for them. He does love them and will deal graciously with them after they have been corrected. Yes, the promise to these is:

“For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

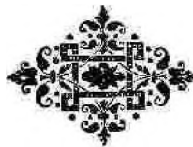
Revelation 7:17





DEDICATING THE TEMPLE

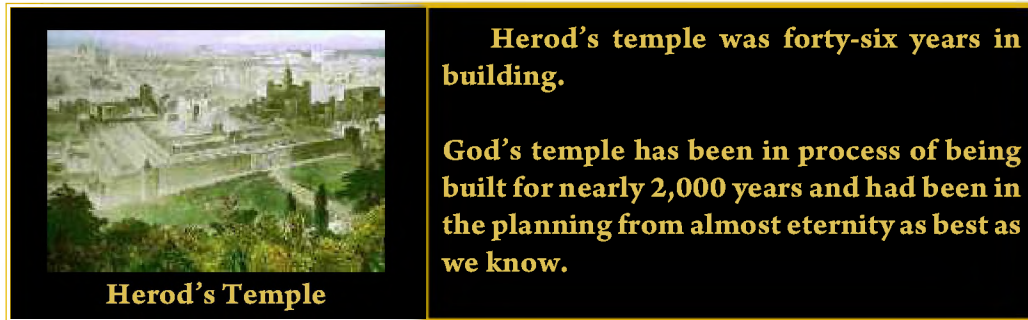
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Part I

“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.” Revelation 15:8

Building a temple takes an enormous amount of effort and time and resources. This is true of human temples, but the temple of God will come into being by God’s mighty power.



The Temple God had in mind had enormous planning and preparation even before the Temple was to be put together. Nothing even remotely can be compared to it.

Temples are mostly a tribute of man’s skills and ingenuity even when they are dedicated to God. God’s Temple is to be a monument to God’s glory and honor and power and wisdom and riches forever. Never will anything be built like it again or compare in glory to it. It is a once in eternity Temple to God’s glory. Today we will refer to five dedications in God’s Word.

When Peter the Great of Russia built himself a beautiful palace, he asked his skillful architect if he could build a building more glorious than he had built for himself. The architect pondered for awhile and answered that possibly he could.

The Czar then ordered him to be blinded so that he could not make another building more glorious than the one he had built for the Czar. The motive was jealousy. He didn’t want his architect to outdo himself in building another structure more glorious than he had.

We don’t know if God could make another Temple more glorious than He is making now. We doubt it very much. This is God’s ultimate building. He has been in process of building this Temple, from one standpoint from eternity. It was the gleam in God’s eye when he created the Logos and the heavenly hosts and finally the first human pair.

Man has seen only smidgens of God’s glory and it has been overwhelming. Now with Hubble and Chandra out there in space, they are finding, like the Queen of Sheba said, “The half was never told.”

The University of California has been studying a newly found “bursting pulsar,” for lack of a better description. It is believed to be a binary star with one neutron star that has consumed its energy and is believed to be about the size of the Sears Tower, but weighs ten times the weight of our Sun. In its death throes it is not going “gently into the night,” but “raging, raging against the dying of the light.”

The star locked in with this dying star is being dragged by this dying star, pulling great swatches from its hydrogen atmosphere down to its surface, concussing nuclear explosions (*Chicago Tribune*, Feb. 28, 1996).

They have found nothing like this before and suddenly realize they are like children throwing stones in the ocean shoreline with no idea of the magnitude of waters that lie beyond where the stone fell. Every week they are seeing a little more of God’s glory and it is breathtaking, awesome. Yes, “we are like the dust on the balance.”



Yet, all these billions of galaxies with all their billions of stars, and all the great gaseous clouds, and all the dark holes that spread endlessly throughout space, we are not able to fathom even with all our marvelous resources.

The mystery of the universe becomes more amazing and complex.

All of this tells us something of God's glory and power.

If the stars and heavens were all we had to know about God, how limited would be our knowledge of God. We could contemplate His power and His wisdom in some small way, but what would we know of His love and justice, of His compassion and tenderness? Very little, indeed. It is God's Temple, the Church Head and body, that will be the habitation of God.

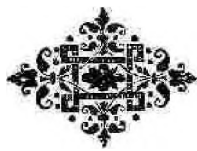
Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:20-22,

We “are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

“In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

“In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

Can it be that we, you and I, are being “framed together,” growing into an “Holy Temple in the Lord?” Can it be that God is designing us to be His “habitation” through the Spirit forever? Can we comprehend this? What shall we say? The Scripture has so stated this matter and, therefore, it is true. Our ability to comprehend this deep truth has no bearing upon its truthfulness.



The Church's Concept of God



**“Hell Fire”—
A Doctrine of Demons**

Now some of our good friends in the churches think that God has called them to heaven mostly as an escape from “everlasting torture.”

They praise God that “being saved” they will not have to endure the torture and torment of hell, not for a day, or a week, or for a month or for a year, nor for ever.


We look at the horror of the death camps of Germany and the mass graves in Bosnia and we shudder. How could people be so mean and ruthless? Yet, our dear friends conjure up thoughts of God presiding over billions of people, not dead and without feeling, but somehow alive and feeling all the torture and pain that God can inflict upon them. It makes Hitler look pretty good compared to God who seems to glory in torturing people forever.

How thankful we are to know the hellfire doctrine is a Devil-inspired teaching which the churches have stolen from Greek philosophy and by theology have read into the Bible. Not a shred of truth in it. Lies, all of it. God would be more like the Devil than the God of love.

When Moses wanted to see God's glory, he really didn't realize God's glory by his sight, but by hearing as the Lord passed by,

“The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.” Exodus 34:6, 7


That has become the refrain of the Bible. It appears in partial quotations some sixty-six times in Scripture. Yes, God is merciful and gracious. He is not like Hitler or some of the Bosnians or the Hutus or the Tutus or the Cambodian Khmer Rouge who seemed to have a total disregard for human suffering and human life.

 <p>Noah after the Flood</p>	<p>Man was made in God's image and his life was precious and sacred.</p> <p>No one has a right to commit murder.</p> <p>God told Noah and all living after the flood, which includes us today, “Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man” (Genesis 9:6).</p>
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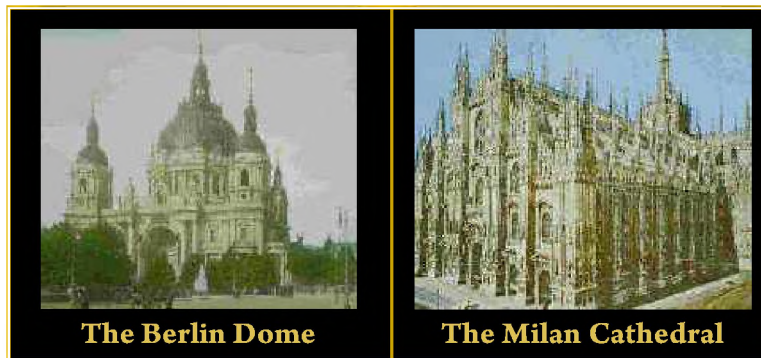
God requires a “life for a life.” No less, no more, while we are still living in the Second World, the “present evil world.”

The churches of today do not have a clear concept of God's purpose in calling and selecting his elect. We hear them talk of walking on golden streets and playing harps in heaven, of floating on clouds aimlessly with no purpose but to exist in heaven taking up space. You would think they would be engaged in trying to save souls from their traditional hell.

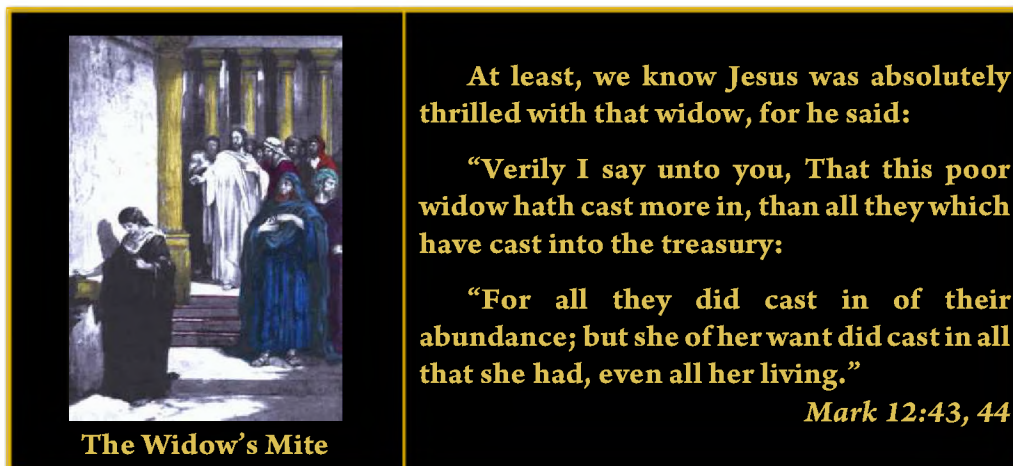
However, if we could imagine them engaged in soul-saving, they must be frustrated and disingenuous in their efforts, because very few of earth's billions are being reached. Why, oh, why, would God want a Temple of such glory and honor while at the same time He would be tormenting unsaved billions? We are used to seeing opulence on one side of town and the slums on the other. We don't expect this in heaven.

	<p>Solomon said,</p> <p>“But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee:</p> <p>How much less this house which I have built.”</p> <p>2 Chronicles 6:18</p>
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Solomon knew the house he had built with the most extravagant resources available to him and with the finest workmanship was as nothing in God's eyes. It was most unworthy to receive the God of heaven, or to be the place where God would meet with them.



Notwithstanding this, countless edifices have been built for God's glory. How much pleasure does God have in such edifices? We think God had more pleasure in seeing the widow throw her two mites into the Temple treasury, seeing she gave all that she had, than He did in that Temple that Herod had built.



When David besought the Lord, wishing to build God an house, God sent Nathan the Prophet saying:

“Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in:

“For I have not dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another.

“Wheresoever I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Why have ye not built me an house of cedars?” 1 Chronicles 17:4-6

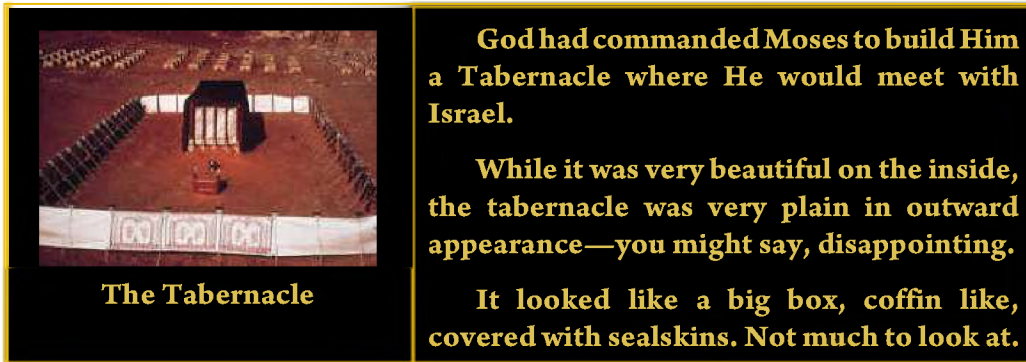
While God did allow Solomon to ultimately build Him a house, yet He chose to dwell from “tent to tent.”

Why? While God dwelt from “tent to tent,” it pictured how God would live with His saints as they tabernacled in the flesh, going from place to place, homeless pilgrims journeying toward the Heavenly City. This beautifully pictures the Gospel Age where God has no house of cedar.

All the buildings they have built have never been God's dwelling place. God has dwelt only with consecrated saints, journeying with them from place to place, from tent to tent, until such time as all the 144,000 are completed. Then God will have the most magnificent Temple ever to be found in heaven or earth, the Church of the Living God.

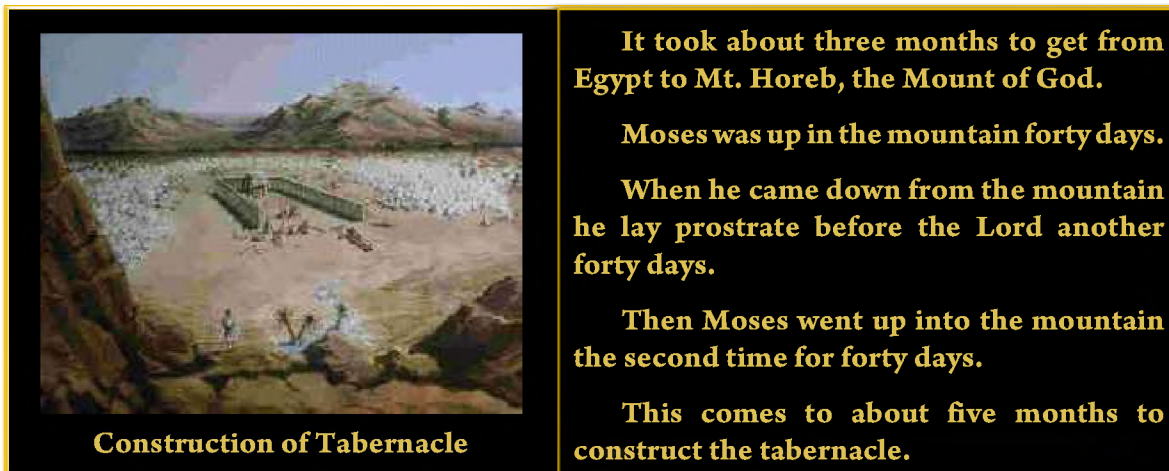
Part II

(1) *The Dedication of the Tabernacle*



In that the people never really saw the inside of the Tabernacle, it seems to have become very commonplace in later years and neglected. It did not take long to build either. We read in Exodus 40:17 (ASV):

“And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up.”



How long did it take to put the Tabernacle together once it was made? One day. We just read in Exodus 40:17 that the Tabernacle was reared up on the “first day of the month.”

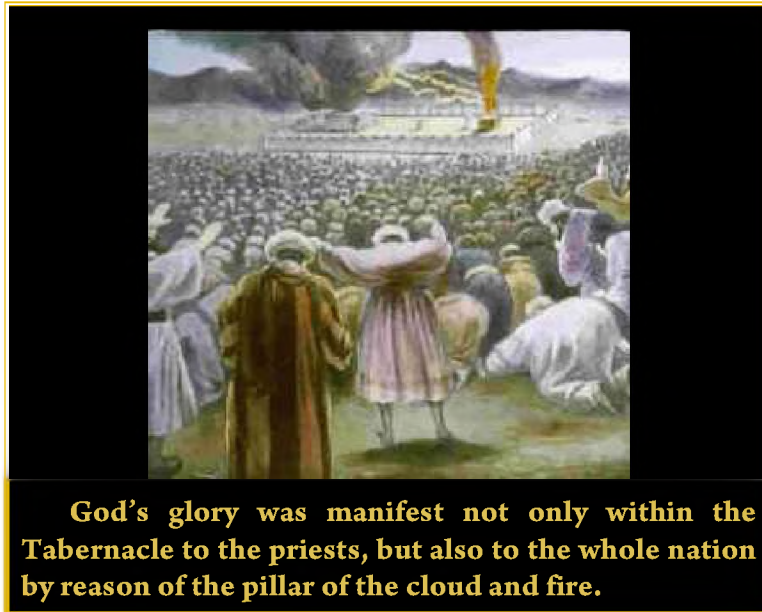
“Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

“And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.” Exodus 40:34, 35

The Israelites were not familiar with the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day until the Tabernacle was dedicated. Numbers 9:15, 16 reads:

“On the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning.

“So it was always; the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night.”



The Tabernacle could not be used for its intended purpose until it was dedicated and filled with the “smoke of God’s glory.” This became a witness to everyone in Israel, especially to Moses and the Priests and Levites.

It must have been awesome standing there in such glory. Perhaps a trembling came upon them, as they realized God was meeting with them there. While He was not visible to them, His power and majesty were felt.

No one thereafter could doubt this whole arrangement was from God. When they had complied with all the requirements in building it, God accepted their labors and sacrifices and was pleased to meet with them there.

We shall see that God dedicates every Temple or Tabernacle, temporal or spiritual, before it is used for its intended purpose. God does not have many ceremonies, but this is one ceremony He consistently employs without exception. So we do well to take note of it.

We notice the blessings of the Tabernacle arrangement could not be invoked or any sacrifices be offered up until the dedication was completed. There was a time pause here in which God’s glory was manifested and His approval was given. This is most important.

Unless it can be demonstrated that God’s glory is dwelling therein, any edifice or building would lack the credentials it needs to represent God. Men can build all the temples in the world, lavished with gold and silver and jewels, but unless they have evidence of God’s glory within they are nothing.



Preparing to Bring Home the Ark

Next, we look at Solomon's Temple. The Tabernacle had lost its place among the children of Israel. It had been housed at Shiloh through most of the period of the Judges, but came into disrepair and soon just the Ark and some of the holy articles were in order.

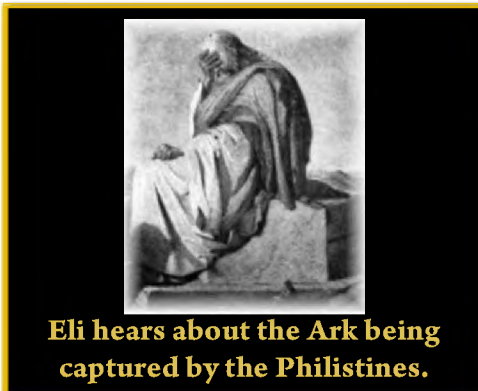


Philistines Capturing the Ark of the Covenant

Their troubles started when they took the Ark of the Covenant onto the battlefield thinking God would have to save it and them in that battle.

But, lo and behold, to their amazement the Lord allowed the Philistines to capture it.

The Lord plagued the Philistines all the while they kept it, so they sent it back on a wooden cart pulled by two cows.



Eli hears about the Ark being captured by the Philistines.

The Ark was taken by the Philistines during the closing days of the Judges.

When Eli heard the Ark had been taken in battle, he fell over and died.

From this time on the Tabernacle began to languish.

Saul did nothing to restore it to its former glory.

David, had built himself a splendid house on Zion's hill. As he sat in such splendor he realized the Ark and the Tabernacle were not being used. He wanted to bring the Ark from where it was housed at Kiriath-jearim (ESV).

With much fan-fare they placed the Ark on a new cart and started out toward Jerusalem. You remember how, as the Ark began to shake, Uzzah tried to steady it. We read:

“He died there before God.

“And David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah.”

1 Chronicles 13:10,11

Sometimes our good intentions turn into disaster. Indeed, David meant well. Why would the Lord seemingly rebuke him before the whole nation even while his heart was right before the Lord? Then we read:

“David was afraid of God that day; saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?” 1 Chronicles 13:12

This is a question he should have asked at the outset. Sometimes it takes us a while to find what we must do.



Ark of the Covenant

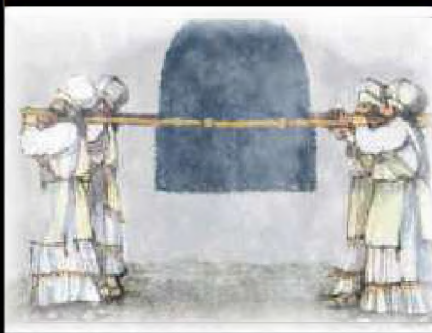
Because of the tragedy, David had placed the Ark in the house of Obededom, the nearest place he could find after Uzzah's death. While the Ark was there we read:

"The Lord blessed the house of Obededom, and all that he had."

1 Chronicles 13:14

When the Ark was held by the Philistines it only brought them plagues and death. The same Ark brought blessings to Obededom's household. How beautiful! It is a principle, "Those that honor me I will honor."

Obededom's heart was right before the Lord, and he and his house revered the Ark and treated it with holy devotion. What a blessing came to him and his house.



Only the Levites were to carry the Ark of the Covenant.

"David made him houses in the city of David, and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent."

"Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the Lord chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever."

1 Chronicles 15:1, 2

This information was available to David before, but in his haste to bring home the Ark he did not seek guidance from the Lord. This is a lesson we may all learn as well. Good intentions are not enough.

David had Asaph and his brethren sing that wonderful song on the day they delivered the Ark into its tent in Jerusalem. It is when the antitypical Ark is finally brought to its place that true meaning of 1 Chronicles 16:31-34 will be realized.



Carrying the Ark

"Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth."

"Let the sea roar, and all the fulness thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein."

"Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the Lord, because he cometh to judge the earth."

"O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endures for ever!"

1 Chronicles 16:31-36

Then will follow the blessings the Lord has so abundantly in store for the world.

(2) Solomon's Temple

David now had the Ark in Jerusalem. We read in 1 Chronicles 17:1, 2:

“Now it came to pass, as David sat in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, Lo, I dwell in an house of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord remaineth under curtains.

“Then Nathan said to David, Do all that is in thine heart; for God is with thee.”

David's desire to bring the Ark to Jerusalem was frustrated for a while until he learned how to do it properly. Now, he wanted to build a Temple for the Lord. Millions of people often desire to do something for the Lord. However, much of what people want to do for God He does not want done. If only we could learn this lesson.

Think of all the great sacrifices being made every day and every year through the centuries supposedly for the Lord's glory. Most of it has not been for His glory, and only a tiny portion was for His sake. Even Nathan was carried away by David's largess in wanting to build a temple.

Well, we know the story. Nathan had no sooner left David's presence when the Lord turned him right around and told him to go to David and say:

“Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in.” 1 Chronicles 17:4

Twice David had started out to do something for the Lord, and twice he met with negative results. Someone of lesser stature might have withdrawn in discouragement. Just because our first efforts are not accepted is no sign to stop.

David had the right heart attitude and the right discipline in reading God's will. David could have said, “All right. I'll just give up on this whole idea.” He could have become morose and discouraged and left off seeking the Lord.



If David could not build the house of the Lord, at least, he would make provisions for his son, Solomon, whom God had said would build the Temple.

He set about gathering all the materials and resources that he could husband to insure the speedy success of this task under Solomon.

He not only gathered supplies but he also arranged the Priesthood into 24 courses to serve in the Temple and the Levites into 24 courses of singers to serve in turn in the music of the Temple.

Now, you can see why David was a man after God's own heart. Even when rebuked and denied, he never lost heart but proceeded with dispatch in those areas where he could serve. How many of the Lord's people have lost blessings because when they were not privileged to do things they aspired to do in the Lord's service, they decided not to serve at all.

Now it may seem that the Temple and the new arrangements in the service of the Temple were just David's off-hand idea. Such is not the case. In 1 Chronicles 28:19 we learn:

“All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writings by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.”

Also in 2 Chronicles 29:25 it states:

“According to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets.”

(See also 1 Chronicles 28:11-18.)



David and Solomon

The Lord instructed David just as he did Moses.

The Lord made it clear how the Temple was to be built and how it would be serviced.

David gave to Solomon what the Lord had given him in the way of instructions.

In the fourth year of Solomon's reign work on the Temple was begun. Solomon began **"to build in the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign"** (2 Chronicles 3:2). It took nearly seven and one half years to complete, after which it was dedicated.

Every edifice of God was always dedicated. Solomon's Temple was no exception. The building was unique in that it went together without the sound of a hammer. All the cutting and shaping was done beforehand. When finally shaped and polished each stone was placed in its respective place.



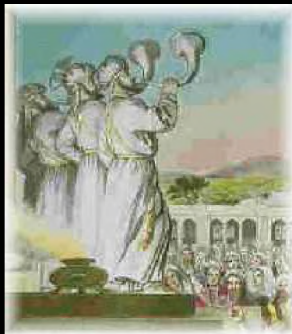
Building Solomon's Temple

Every beam and piece of wood was cut and sanded and then placed in its setting. There was no noise, no confusion, and no fanfare.

Everything was quietly and efficiently seated in its place, just as the true Temple of God in this Gospel Age is placed in the body of Christ.

Here, the Lord is putting together the most magnificent Temple where He will dwell forever, and the world does not know what is going on. Because it is being done quietly, no one recognizes God's work.

Oddly, the Temple seems to have been dedicated before it was completed. In *Reprint 5713 Bro. Russell* says: "It was dedicated about a month before it was completely finished. Doubtless this contained some important typical lesson, which we may some day more fully understand." Actually, we learn the Ark was brought into the Temple on the beginning of the seventh month. We read:



Priests Praising God

"Wherefore all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto the king in the feast which was in the seventh month." 2 Chronicles 5:3

That is when the Ark was brought to the Temple. Then as the singers were praising and thanking God, we read:

"That then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord.

"So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God."


2 Chronicles 5:13, 14

We learn in 2 Chronicles 7:10, 11:

“And on the three and twentieth day of the seventh month he sent the people away into their tents, glad and merry in heart for the goodness that the Lord had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people.

“Thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord, and the king’s house.”

This makes it about really three weeks difference before the dedication started and when it is declared finished.


	<p>Perhaps the priests were startled by this event. Especially, the fact that it was a “dark cloud.”</p> <p>Usually, we associate darkness with evil and trouble but not in this case.</p> <p>Solomon says: “The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.”</p> <p>2 Chronicles 6:1</p>
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In 1 Kings 8:12 we read:

“The Lord [has set the sun in the heavens, but has] said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.”

This is something of an enigma. The Hebrew does not sustain “The Lord has set the sun in the heavens,” but He did say He “would dwell in the thick darkness.” Just before the Church, the Christ of God, “shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father,” it is preceded by the Dedication wherein God dwells in the thick “darkness.”

Maybe we do not understand the full meaning of all this. In *Reprint* 3283 Bro. Russell suggests: “That which outwardly had the appearance of a cloud in the Sanctuary on the mercy seat represented an extreme brightness, so great that the priests could no longer remain in the Holy.”

 <p>Dedication of Solomon’s Temple</p>	<p>Whether it was brightness in the Most Holy that made the cloud in the holy as a blinding fog or whether indeed it was a “darkness” that was profoundly dense so that it seemed impenetrable, we do not really know.</p>
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God’s presence was generally shown in the cloud above the Tabernacle by day and a pillar of fire by night. However, there is nothing said about this in regard to the Temple.

At any rate there was a glory in this Temple that left the priests with the awesome realization of God’s presence and power. Perhaps the time of the dedication of the true Temple will be a time of darkness in the world such as was never before, Armageddon darkness. At such a time as this God takes up His abode in His Holy Temple.

“The Ark, representing typically the divine covenant with Abraham, the fulfillment of which centered in the Christ, must be transferred from the Tabernacle to the Temple, that thus the latter might supersede the former as the meeting place between God and his covenant people” (*Reprint* 3282, last paragraph). It is not, therefore, until the Church is dedicated with the Ark being placed in it, that the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant will come to Israel and the world.

What Is the Meaning in Dedicating the Temple before It Was Finished?

Bro. Russell mused on what might be the meaning in the Temple being dedicated before it was completed, as the Scriptures we read earlier seem to indicate. He says in *Reprint 5714*, last paragraph:

“The fact that the typical Temple was filled with the glory of the Lord before it was entirely completed seems to imply that at this present time there will be some manifestation of God’s favor toward His Church in glorification while yet the work of construction is not quite finished. However, it is difficult to read prophecy in advance of its fulfillment. We must wait to see what will be the fulfillment of this feature.”

Bro. Russell is turning over in his mind what might be the possible meaning here. We notice his great caution but none the less he suggests something that seemed plausible to him. Yes, “there will be some manifestation of God’s favor toward His Church in glorification while yet the work of construction is not quite finished.”

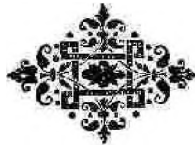
This very well might imply God’s favor would be manifested toward His Church while some sealed members are on this side of the veil, just before they are taken to glory. This would tie in very well with Bro. Russell’s expectation that the saints would, while in the flesh, be instrumental in executing

“Vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;

“To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

“To execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all his saints.”

Psalms 149:7-9



Part III

(3) *The Man With the Writer's Inkhorn*



We wish to continue our comparative study. So often brethren will tell only half the story of the man with the writer's inkhorn and leave the most majestic part unsaid. Our study forces us to address the rest of the story because it has to do with the glory of the Lord filling the Temple. In Ezekiel 9:2-4:

“Six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brazen altar.

“And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side;

“And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.”

We understand this represents the work of Harvest wherein the Harvest Message is used to mark those who are out of harmony with antitypical Jerusalem in its sinful state. That message has gone forth and as long as the Harvest writings are going forth, the work remains unfinished.

The Lord is marking those who are not in sympathy with the sins of Christendom, and who sigh and cry as they look within the systems. Such are marked in the forehead and will be spared the faith destroying work that follows the man with the writer's inkhorn.



The man with the inkhorn we believe to be Bro. Russell, but the “inkhorn” represents his writings and the truths he made known that are still reaching people, one here and one there who are not in harmony with the sins of antitypical Jerusalem, Christendom.

Contemporaneously, six men with slaughter weapons follow the man with the “inkhorn.” Their task was to slaughter those not having the mark in the foreheads.

This pictures a faith-destroying work beginning in the sanctuary and ultimately reaching the inhabitants of Jerusalem. We see how higher criticism, Christian Science, Theosophy, Spiritism, Evolution, New Age, and some types of psychology are being used as slaughter weapons in Christendom, destroying faith in the blood of Christ.

When this work of marking is completed by the writer's inkhorn, then the man reports, “I have done as thou hast commanded me.” (Ezekiel 9:11) Some apply this at Bro. Russell's death, whereas this can only apply when the work of his “inkhorn” has accomplished its intended purpose. His “inkhorn” is still marking. It marked you and me, and one here and one there. When that work is done, then what?

The Second Assignment to the Man with the Writer's Inkhorn

The story does not stop at the close of Ezekiel 9. That is only half of the story. In Ezekiel 10:2-4 we read about the other half:

“And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city. And he went in my sight.

“Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.

“Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory.”

Here we see the **second commission** given to the man with the writer's inkhorn. Please notice that it is only the seventh messenger, Bro. Russell, who is assigned to “scatter” “coals of fire” over the city of Jerusalem. Just as the man in “linen” marked those that sighed and cried in the city, so it is his writings that contain the “coals of fire” for him to scatter over the city. This would picture the **second work of delivering the “judgments of the Lord” against that city, which in antitype is Christendom.**

In Ezekiel 10:7 we learn that one “cherub” reached in and supplied the “coals of fire” to the man with the “inkhorn.” These four “cherubs” with their “wheels” pictured the four attributes of God: power, love, justice and wisdom. It is apparently the cherub of justice that initiates this activity.

The Harvest message will have this last function, but only after the house of the Lord is “filled with the cloud” of the Lord's glory. It is a beautiful picture. More importantly, it is a detailed study involving the timing of executing the judgments written. The work of marking those that sigh and cry does not go on simultaneously with scattering coals of fire over the city. How readest thou? Read it carefully, and you will see two separate works, the last work is one of judgment.

This was Bro. Russell's thought. In Vol. 4, p. 18, we read: “The treading of the winepress is the last feature of harvest. The reaping and gathering is all done first.” Somehow, the idea still persists that the Harvest of the true wheat and the treading of the winepress are contemporaneous works. Such was never Bro. Russell's view nor do the Scriptures present that scenario.



“Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap: for the harvest of the earth is ripe.



“And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

“And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.



“And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying,

“Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.”

Revelation 14:15-18

Here we see two separate works being described. “The treading of the winepress is the last feature of Harvest.” (*THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON*, p. 18) There is nothing to indicate that the Harvest of the “true vine” and the final Harvests of the “vine of the earth” are contemporaneous. If the “vine of the earth” is already harvested while we are still harvesting “wheat,” it leads to confusion.

“The Parable of the Wheat and Tares” seems to teach a similar lesson. Matthew 13:30 says:



“Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.”

While this verse does not show when the tares are burned, it shows the two works of gathering and binding the tares into bundles and the gathering of the wheat to be contemporaneous. However, the burning of the tares is never simultaneous with the harvest. In wheat season when there is a lot of dry straw everywhere, you make sure you have your wheat in the barn and your neighbor has his wheat in the barn before you light any matches.

While it is true that many tares have ceased to be tares throughout the Harvest because enamored with Communism or some other enchanting philosophy, we must know there are more tares today than in Bro. Russell’s time. Estimates on the world Christian population varies between 15% to 30%.

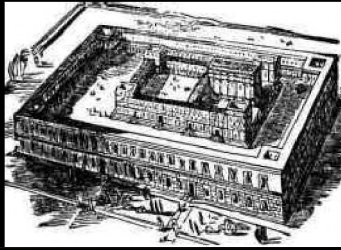
In *Reprint 5951*, “The Harvest is not Ended,” Bro. Russell observes:

“The garnering of the wheat continues; but apparently the consuming of the tares will correspond very closely with the division of Jordan. The tares are a class of (often) noble people who have risen up out of the world infused with hopes and aims of a benevolent character, but misled into thinking that they are the church.

“From the tare viewpoint, the wheat is an abnormal growth, a peculiar people, few in number, and not held in high esteem. The smiting of the waters will reveal the truth in respect to what is the real church of Christ, and what are imitations; and the honest-minded tare class will be undeceived, and cease to longer pretend that they are the church of Christ, thus they will be burned or cease to be as tares, continuing however as noble-minded worldly people and will have a share in the general blessings of the ‘sweet by and by’ under the kingdom, for which we still pray.”

Notice here, how Bro. Russell projects the thought that the “tares” will learn the truth concerning the real Church and thereby be undeceived. Not only don’t the tares know who the true saints are, neither do we know yet.

(4) The Dedication of Ezekiel's Temple



Ezekiel's Temple

Ezekiel's Temple was never really built. Just the same, it is pictured as being built and therefore conveys lessons of great interest to the saints.

The East Gate of Ezekiel's Temple is well known to the Arabs who fear any construction by the Jews of anything near it.

It portends the thought that the Lord might enter through that East Gate should it be built. So they are almost hysterical about any suggestion of an East Gate.

The only point we have time to consider is the fact that Ezekiel's Temple, though not actually built, was dedicated. As a matter of fact, it was dedicated twice. We read in Ezekiel 43:2-5:

“And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.

“And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city: and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face.

“And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east.

“So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house.”



The Golden Gate is the Eastern Gate of Jerusalem Today

The time will come when the Lord shall enter His Temple and from the information at hand, that may be while some saints are on this side of the veil.

The “east gate” represents the door to the high calling.

Just as the entrance of the Tabernacle was on the East Side, so here the Temple conveys the same thought. When that door is shut, and it is the Lord that commands it to be shut (not any man or organization), none may enter into the high calling forever. Then the Lord leaves by way of the “East Gate.”

Then the command was given in Ezekiel 44:2:

“Then said the Lord unto me; This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut.”

That gate closes forever, even as does the door to the high calling when the moment spoken of occurs. However, then we read in Ezekiel 44:4:

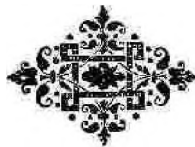
“Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house: and I looked, and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord: and I fell upon my face.”

We see here two recordings of the “glory” filling the house, one when the Lord enters the “East Gate” and the other when the “North Gate” is entered. What might this mean? It is hard to know exactly. We may only venture a guess.

Possibly, closing the “East Gate” indicates the ending of the “high calling” while some saints are still sealed and remain in the flesh, just as Solomon’s Temple was dedicated before it was completed. The second filling with “glory” occurs when the “North Gate” is entered. This may be the time when all the saints are glorified with the Lord in the air. If you have a better thought, I should be glad to hear it. We cannot help muse on this point because these verses are trying to tell us something.

Some have thought the Lord may literally have some rare phenomena in the heavens to mark the “filling of the house of God with glory” even as he had the star guide the wise men from the east, only of greater splendor. Something glorious may occur when this great moment in history and in all time occurs.

After all, that will mark the great moment when God will enter his Temple, which Temple ye are. He planned for eternity for this event and when it happens it seems logical that God would have some extravagant celebration.



Part IV


(5) God's True Temple "Filled with Smoke from the Glory of God"

At last we come to our reading on the dedication of God's true Temple recorded in Revelation 15:8. It reads:

"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."

Here we see the final dedication of the true Temple of God, which Temple ye are. The moment comes when "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened" (Revelation 15:5).

That is a strange statement. The Temple was a permanent structure whereas the Tabernacle was a temporary one. We know what the Temple represents easily. But what was the "tabernacle of the testimony" (or witness)?

 <p>Only the Two Tables of Stone were in the Ark of the Covenant in Solomon's Temple.</p>	<p>When the Ark was brought into Solomon's Temple, there was nothing in it save "two tables of stone." In 1 Kings 8:9 we read:</p> <p>"There was nothing in the Ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt."</p>
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What happened to the other three articles? Where were "Aaron's rod that budded" and the "golden pot of manna?" Also, Moses added his closing words of the Law in Deuteronomy 31:24-26:

"And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished,

"That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, saying,

"Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee."

We know this latter witness would not be needed with regard to the saints, as they shall have proved their love for God to the full. However, the other two items will be in the true Temple of God. We read concerning the golden pot of manna:

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna." Revelation 2:17

This pictured immortal life that will be theirs. Also, after Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled and were destroyed, Moses did not want another rebellion. In Numbers 17 he ordered all the leaders of each tribe to place the "rod" of each tribe leader within the Ark. Aaron also placed his "rod" there. We read in Numbers 17:8:

"And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the Tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds."

This was the third witness establishing who were the ordained and chosen representatives of God. No one could gainsay this, ever. The Lord's choice was abundantly shown. It was a witness forever. So, we believe, this might indicate that the "tabernacle of the testimony" or witness would include three immutable proofs.



Tablets of the Law

(1) The Temple of the Lord will house the tables of God's Law and show that the Temple class fulfill the "righteousness of the Law ... who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit" (Romans 8:4).

The Temple of God will embody the righteousness of God, but will become the "righteousness of Jehovah."



Golden Pot of Manna

2) The Temple class will partake of the "Golden Pot of Manna" reserved for the overcomers.

The Priests of the Tabernacle were not permitted to eat that "manna," but we shall.



Almond Branch

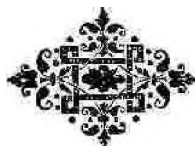
(3) In 2 Timothy 2:19 we read: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

None may question the Lord's choice. Just as Aaron, who was God's choice, needed additional confirmation, so the true temple class will have this seal of God just as Aaron's rod that budded.

When the "Temple of the Tabernacle of the testimony in heaven" is opened, then it will appear as to whom are identified as being a part of this Temple class.

The true Temple will thus have what Solomon's never had. Solomon's Temple only had one witness, which was the "two tables" of the Law. Whereas, the true Temple will have three witnesses or testimonies, the "two tables of the Law," the "Golden Pot of manna" and "Aaron's rod that budded," or the seal that they are indeed God's dwelling place forever.

This opening or revealment of the true Temple class must be what Bro. Russell suggested when he told us the "tares would be burned" when they recognize who the true church class is.



What Happens Next?

The proceeding has been the build-up to the biblical climax. What follows is most important. We read in Revelation 15:6-8:

“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 [bowls] full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever 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.”

Trying to grasp the scenario’s meaning we notice it is not until the Temple in heaven was “opened” that then “seven angels” or messages come out of the Temple “having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.”

That is a good starting place, but two things more are necessary before the seven “plagues” can be poured out.



**Living Creature
like a Lion
represents Justice**

(1) “One of the four beasts [justice]” must give “seven golden vials [bowls] full of the wrath of God” to these seven angels. They cannot deliver their plagues without a bowl or means of communicating the plague.

(2) The Temple must be dedicated and “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.”

What three conditions must be met before the plagues can be poured out?



(1) What are the Divinely supplied “bowls” and when have they been provided?

(2) Has the true Temple been dedicated, being filled with God’s glory?

(3) How can we explain that no “man was able to enter into the temple” during its dedication?

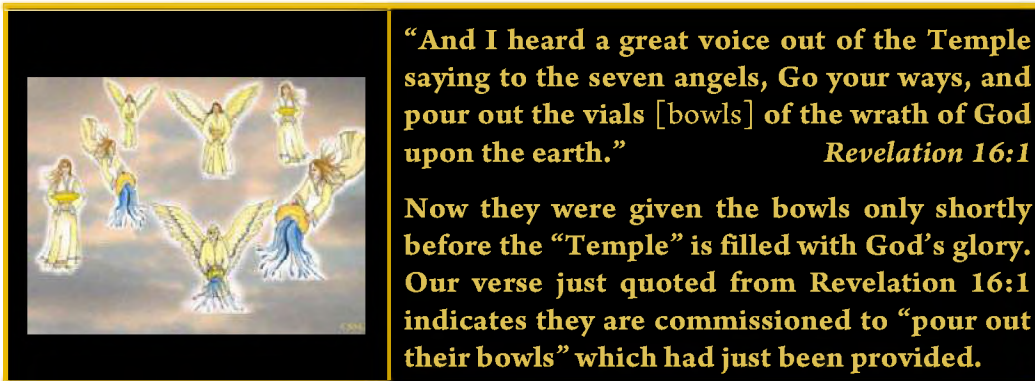
Could anyone become a part of the Church class after the first plague was poured out? No! Those who believe the “plagues” have been poured out simultaneously with the Harvest need to explain how they were able to enter this Temple. No man is supposed to enter the Temple until the plagues are “fulfilled.”

Somehow these three conditions must be factored into the equation in order to give a close fit to the Scripture to make it all harmonize. Only a token delivery of the plagues could be possible in the Harvest.

What Does the Dedication of the True Temple Portend?

The purpose of this study is not to get into the pouring out of the “seven last plagues,” but to deal with all the scriptural prerequisites before this can happen. The scriptures are very plain that the seven last “plagues” are not poured out until after the “Temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God.”

Just as Solomon’s Temple was dedicated before it was completed in the full sense of the word, so the true Temple may be dedicated and “filled with smoke from the glory of God” while some members remain this side of the veil.



In other words, we do not see a long time lapse between the time the “angels” are given their “vials” or bowls and the dedication of the true Temple. Nor do we see a long time lapse after the true Temple is “filled with smoke from the glory of God” until they are commissioned to go forth and deliver God’s judgments primarily upon the Christian world.



Why Is the Dedication of God’s True Temple Important?

Sometimes we read of these great events with only a passive interest, thinking, yes, it is wonderful that God dedicated his Tabernacle and Temples before he allowed them to enter into service. However, we see the Lord has gone through a lot of pages of His Word dwelling on these matters, with a lot of careful detail to convey certain lessons to us.

The Tabernacle was several months in making, but it was put together and dedicated in one day. None of the blessings of that Tabernacle arrangement were available to anyone until the dedication was complete.

God is not remiss about manifesting his glory when the time comes for His edifices to be instruments of blessing. We have spent long hours trying to understand the Tabernacle and its services, but sometimes forget that the Tabernacle would not be the same were it not for the fact that it was filled with God’s glory. When that happened, then we are certain that this was not some imagined structure that Moses made.

God gave Moses instructions in the Mount, and finally when it was made and put together we have absolute proof that this whole arrangement was blessed by God because God’s glory rested upon it. Even more than this, from that day forward all the children of Israel saw the “cloud” over the Tabernacle by day and the “pillar of fire” by night.

This was a phenomenon that could not happen except by God’s power and glory, and the people witnessed this. There is no possible chance of this being a fairy tale.



The City of Babylon represents Christendom

Coals of Fire represent God's Judgments which will destroy Christendom after the Bride of Christ, the Temple Class, is Glorified.

The man with the "writer's inkhorn" marked those who sighed and cried for the abominations done in the city.

The house of the Lord was not "filled with glory" while the marking with the inkhorn progressed.

It was not until that work was completed that he received his second assignment of scattering "coals of fire over the city"—then the house was filled with "glory."

God's true Temple is also "filled with glory," but not until the "seven angels" are given seven "golden vials [bowls]" to pour out the "wrath of God." Before the "plagues" could be poured out they had to wait for the glory of the Lord to "fill the Temple." Then from the Temple "filled" with God's glory the "seven angels" proceed to pour out their "vials [bowls]."

Here in a nutshell is our review of our lesson today. In the world of politics they say, "The Devil is in the details." However, in God's Word we find that the Devil tries to get us to avoid sweating the details.

