

*Notes*  
*on the*  
*Revelation*  
*of*  
*Jesus Christ*

*By Anton Frey*

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## AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

These "NOTES" on the REVELATION are, in a sense, a compilation of all that Bro. C. T. Russell wrote on the subject in *Zion's Watch Tower*, in the six volumes of *Scripture Studies*, and for the *Overland Monthly*. Where Bro Russell has give no specific thought, we have endeavored to fill the gaps with what seemed to us, harmonious with his general presentations elsewhere. Since these latter are, at best, matters of opinion and conjecture, we are not in the least dogmatic about them. Offering them merely by way of suggestion.

Anton C. Frey

## PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

Anton Frey was the compiler of a number of Biblical studies. Possibly the best known of these were his notes on the Tabernacle. However, he also assembled extensive notes on the Passover, Israel's Wildness Wanderings, and the Song of Solomon. All of these reflect his meticulous attention to detail and his gathering all possible references relating to the subject.

These notes on the Revelation were first printed in 1990. The original supply of 1,000 books is now depleted. We are recomposing this work in the original format and pagination to preserve the Scripture index. Only the most basic corrections from the original are made for spelling and typesetting oversights. In that sense, this edition is even more closely aligned with his original notes. The entire book can be viewed and searched in Adobe PDF format.

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# NOTES ON THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

“The Messages of our glorious Lord, sent through the Apostle John and given to us in the symbols of the book of Revelation, are as truly the Savior’s messages as those uttered during his earthly ministry and those subsequently sent us through the apostles.

“The book of Revelation was written at a time when severe persecution was upon the infant church – near the close of the first century, probably A.D. 93-96, in the reign of the Emperor Domitian, though some date it nearly thirty years earlier, in the reign of Nero. No matter – in either case it was written at a time of special peril and severe persecution. For a time the Lord allowed the truth to become well planted and to take root; the gifts of miracles and other gifts in the church at that time assisted in this matter.

“For a time, although there were persecutions of individuals such as are recorded in Acts, the believers as a whole were not subjected to the severest of trials at first. It was when the truth began to spread, and had not only the enmity of the Jews, but also of the Greeks, that emperors and governors found favor with the masses by persecuting the followers of Jesus. And for aught we know, so it will be in the not far distant future. For a long time the pure truth has been hidden from men, and worldliness in the form of godliness has had the upper hand in influential circles; but doubtless, as the troublous times the Scriptures predict for the end of this age draw closer, those who will stand firm for the word of the Lord’s testimony may expect to be made the scapegoats under various pretexts. We shall not be surprised to find a considerable measure of persecution against all the children of the light, who will walk up to the light, developed within the next seven years. John, the beloved disciple, in some measure or degree typified or represented the last living members of the little flock. Doubtless this was the meaning of our Lord’s statement, ‘If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?’ John did not tarry, but a class whom he in some respects illustrated are represented to tarry – a class who see with the eyes of their understanding the visions and revelations which John saw in symbols in a trance.

“John at the time of the trance vision was a prisoner, exiled to the Isle of Patmos, a penal colony of those days – an island almost uninhabitable, rocky, barren. The crime for which he suffered this banishment was his faithfulness as a mouthpiece of the Lord. At the time he must have been between sixty and ninety years of age, supposing that none of our Lord’s

disciples were younger than himself at the beginning of his ministry. If his exile in any degree symbolized ostracism, which the Lord’s followers may expect in the close of this age – a complete isolation from others and a treatment implying that they are prisoners – we may take comfort in the thought that as the Lord’s favor and revelations to John more than offset his persecutions, so the opening of the eyes of our understanding and the granting to us of greater lengths and breadths and heights and depths of knowledge and appreciation of our Lord and his plan will far more than offset the various experiences which in his providence he may permit to come upon us. His assurance is that all things shall work together for good to those who love God, to the called ones according to his purpose. Whoever rests his faith securely upon his promise may indeed with the Apostle Paul count all tribulations as loss and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.” (R3568:3; 3569:1)

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

The Revelation here referred to as “The Revelation of Jesus Christ” is not the revelation of Jesus himself, but the revelation by God of His eternal purposes as given to Jesus after he had proved himself worthy of it; i.e., not until he had fulfilled his consecration in death itself. This revelation is thus represented in “the book” (scroll) of Rev. 5:1, 2, 7-9.

“Jesus had not proven himself worthy of this great honor when he made his consecration, but when he had finished his course in death he was then worthy to receive glory, honor, and power. After his resurrection and ascension the scroll was given into his hands to be opened. **This means that the divine plan as a whole was here made known to him** - for he already had knowledge of much of this - but all things were given him to unloose. There had been some things that our Lord did not know. He had said, ‘Of that day and hour (of his second coming) knoweth no man; no, not the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but my Father only.’ (Mark 13:32) A part of the plan was written on the outside of the scroll, and a part was written on the inside. The things that were sealed were not proper to be understood by our

Redeemer until he had received the all-power, after his resurrection. The execution of God's plan was then given into his hands" (R5943:5)

"And our Lord's revelation, which God gave him after he had passed into glory, he sent and signified (sign-ified – told in signs, symbols, etc.) to his Church, **through his servant John**. (Rev. 1:1) We are also told that the prophecies given aforetime by holy men of old were given, not for themselves, nor for others of their day and age, **but exclusively for the instruction of the Christian Church**. (1 Pet. 1:12)" (B203)

### John the Revelator

John 21:22 – "Jesus said unto him [Peter], If I will that he tarry till I come."

"As we have seen, John, the revelator represented those favored members of the Church who, living in this end of the Gospel age, are granted the privilege of seeing and appreciating more and more the things which he saw in symbol." (R3572:4)

### The Angel of Rev. 1:1

While we do not think it too important – else the Lord would have indicated who the angel was by whom he signified the vision to John – we suggest that it may have been the angel Gabriel, who was sent of the Lord to give similar skill and understanding to Daniel of old (Dan. 8:16; 9:21), as he is here to John on the Isle of Patmos.

Our reason for suggesting this is, that what the Book of Daniel is to the Old Testament, the Book of Revelation is to the New Testament; both are apocalyptic!

### The "Angel of the Lord"

The "angel of the Lord" appeared to Joseph. (Matt. 1:20, 21)

To Zachariah (the priest at the Temple at Jerusalem) the "angel of the Lord," was Gabriel (Luke 1:19), and likewise the "angel of the Lord" that appeared to Mary, at Nazareth, was the same Gabriel! (Luke 1:28)

In the prophecies of Daniel, Gabriel is identified as "the man," (Dan. 8:16; 9:21) for angels thus frequently appeared as men. (Gen. 18:1, 2)

Gabriel means "man of God."

**1:3** – "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."

"...the last book of the Bible – Revelation, written about A.D. 96. The introductory words announce it as a special revelation of things not previously understood. This proves conclusively that up to that time, at least, God's plan had not been fully revealed. Nor has that book ever been, until now, all that its name implies – an unfolding, a REVELATION. So far as

the early church was concerned, probably none understood any part of the book. Even John, who saw the visions, was probably ignorant of the significance of what he saw. He was both a prophet and an apostle; and while as an apostle he understood and taught what was then 'meat in due season,' as a prophet he uttered things which would supply 'meat' in seasons future for the household.

"During the Christian Age, some of the saints sought to understand the Church's future by examining this symbolic book, and doubtless all who read and understood even a part of its teachings were blessed as promised. (Rev. 1:3) The book kept opening up to such, and in the days of the Reformation was an important aid to Luther in deciding that the Papacy, of which he was a conscientious minister, was indeed the 'Antichrist' mentioned by the Apostle, the history of which we now see fills so large a part of that prophecy." (A27-28)

"I do not know myself whence these thoughts arise. In my opinion, the work is not yet begun, so far as the great ones at Rome they are mistaken in looking for the end. I will send you what I have written, in order that you may judge whether I have guessed rightly that the Antichrist of whom St. Paul speaks now reigns in the court of Rome. I think I shall be able to show that he is worse nowadays than the Turks themselves." (Martin Luther)

"I will stir up the bile of this Italian beast,' said Luther. He kept his word. In his reply, he proved by the revelations of Daniel and **St. John**, by the epistles of St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. Jude, that the reign of Antichrist, predicted and described in the Bible, was the Papacy." (Excerpts from *History of the Reformation* by D'Aubigne, p. 153, 215)

"John was instructed to write, to make clear, to make plain to us and to all God's people, the things already brought to his attention, and other things subsequently to be brought to his attention; to the intent that all of God's people might be enabled to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God, which passeth all understanding, and which can only be received through revelation from God. And here let us note the force of John's expression (Rev. 1:3) to the effect that **there is a blessing upon those who read this revelation, even though they do not understand, and a special blessing upon those who hear and understand the words of this prophecy, and keep or conform their lives to the things that are written therein.**" (R2827:5)

**1:4** – "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come: and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne."



John, who had previously written a Gospel, and three Epistles, here merely identifies himself as John, being undoubtedly, well known and recognized in, and by, these congregations whom he is about to address. These congregations, seven in number, were in what was then known as Asia; but which we of today would call Asia Minor – near the southeastern part of Europe, and to the southwest of Asia proper.

“... in harmony ... with the rest of the book, ‘the seven churches which are in Asia’ must be symbolic; and as the book is chiefly history written beforehand, they must symbolize seven successive stages in the history of the Christian church, covering the period between the first advent and the second coming of Christ. The fulfillment, we think, proves the correctness of this position.” (R5992:2)

The meaning of the word “Asia” is “muddy”!<sup>1</sup> Perhaps this was intended to indicate that the Church of Jesus Christ throughout its seven stages of development would be situated where the “waters of truth” would not be very clear and clean; being often mixed with the defiling influences of human philosophies, traditions and the precepts of men. And who is there that will deny that this has been the case?

“The word Asia means muddy or boggy. Anyone doomed to a long journey through a wild bog would, we think, before he got through, have a tolerably correct idea of the pathway of the church during the past 1800 years; especially if the greater part was travelled in comparative darkness – what with pitfalls and treacherous ground, with will o’the wisps and fog, it would prove a hard journey. True, the church has always had a polar star, but the mists of the Babylonian mystery had nearly hidden it.” (R336:2, W. I. Mann)

### “Muddy” ... Contamination!

“... the period of the church’s purity and fervor, before she left her first love. But **as time passed**, and the expected Lord came not, **the love of many waxed cold** and their hopes turned in other directions. Then, as Christianity became formalistic, **Grecian philosophers came into the church**, and **the doctrines of Christ became blended with heathen mythologies**, producing the great apostasy, or falling away from the true faith foretold. (2 Thes. 2:3) Nevertheless, there was always a faithful, though small minority, who clung to the truth; for the Lord has never left his truth without witnesses.” (R1093:4)

“Many things in Christianity commended it to the Greek philosophers of the time.... They were...

teaching a future, eternal life, and were glad to find Christians teaching the same: the difference being that the philosophers (Plato and others) taught that eternal life is a human quality, and inherent power in mankind – deathlessness, immortality, whereas the Christians taught that eternal life was not inherent in man but a gift of God through Christ, intended only for those who accept him. (Rom. 2:7; 5:15, 21; 6:23; 2 Cor. 9:15)” (E285)

The Apostle Paul seems to have anticipated just such a contamination, such a pollution of the “waters of truth” when he declared that after his departing “grievous wolves” would enter in, not sparing the flock (Acts 20:29); yea, even of themselves, would arise men speaking perverse things to draw disciples after them (Acts 20:30); in fact, he even recognized that the “mystery of iniquity” was **then** already at work! (2 Thes. 2:7)

“This Mystery of Iniquity (‘Babylon,’ Confusion, Christendom) the Apostle Paul declares was already beginning to work amongst the Lord’s people in his day; but the working was evidently but slight until after the death of Paul and the other apostles. While the apostles remained with the Church they were able to point out some of the false teachers through whom the Adversary was seeking privily, privately, secretly, to bring in damnable heresies to undermine the faith and to turn the faithful aside from the hopes and promises and simplicities of the Gospel. (2 Pet. 2:1) The Apostle Paul speaks also of some of these in general terms, as beginning the workings of iniquity: but he names some of them personally, Hymenaeus and Philetus, et al., ‘who concerning the truth have erred,’ etc., ‘overthrowing the faith of some.’ (2 Tim. 2:17) Respecting these false teachers and their errors, he again warned the Church through the elders at Ephesus, especially pointing out that these would flourish after his death – grievous wolves, they would not spare the flock. (Acts 20:29) This last is remarkably in accord with our Lord’s prediction in the parable. (Matt. 13:25, 39) Our Lord clearly shows that these false teachers and their false doctrines were the agencies of the Adversary who sowed the tares amongst the wheat that he and the apostles had planted. He says, ‘While men (the special servants, the apostles) slept, an enemy came and sowed tares.’” (F201)

Not long after the Apostles “fell asleep,” about the middle of the second century, attempts were made “to reconcile Christian doctrine with the speculations of Greek and Oriental philosophy,” (*Outline of Christian History* – Allen, p. 19); and as Kurtz says, “at a very early

<sup>1</sup> “Asia. G.773. Medium – Middle; **full of mud**; Orient; the East; aurora: – Asia Minor, (Acts 2:9)” (*Dictionary of Bible Proper Names* – compiled by Cyrus A. Potts)

“Asia, (muddy, boggy)” (*Emphatic Diaglott: Alphabetical Appendix to the New Testament*)

period Greek philosophy got mixed up with Christianity.” (*Church History* Vol. 1, p. 66)

Then too, the so-called Church Councils have done much to defile and pollute the waters of divine truth; but perhaps the most defiling and devastating thrust of all, has come from the “higher critics” who from Christian pulpits, and in Theological Seminaries, are casting grave doubts upon the authenticity of the Scriptures as the revealed Word of God!

### Higher Criticism and the Bible

“Higher criticism has much responsibility in connection with the growing lawlessness of the world. ‘The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul’ – transforming the being. The higher critics in all of our colleges and seminaries are doing a terribly destructive work, in comparison to which the work of Voltaire, Thomas Paine and Robert Ingersoll were as nothing. It is safe to say that three-fourths of all the graduates of all colleges within the last thirty years have been unbelievers in the Bible, and that their influence has been used persistently to undermine the faith of others. The errors which led them to infidelity are liable to influence others. The Bible itself is a study, and only what it teaches should be believed whether favorable to or contrary to our former creeds.” (R4923:5)

Lest there be any mistake as to who it was giving the message to the churches, John gives the greeting of “**Grace be unto you and peace,**” as coming from him: “which **is,** and which **was,** and which **is to come.**” But just who could this be?

### The Father

Exod. 3:14 – “And God said unto Moses, **I AM THAT I AM:** and he said; Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, **I AM** hath sent me unto you.”

Psa. 90:2 – “... even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.”

“**I AM THAT I AM** (*Eheyeth asher Eheyeth*): These words have been variously understood. The Vulgate translates *EGO SUM QUI SUM*, I am who I am. The Septuagint ... I am he who exists. The Syriac, the Persic, and the Chaldee preserve the original words without any gloss. The Arabic paraphrases them, The Eternal, who passes not away; ... It is difficult to put a meaning on the words; they seem intended to point out the eternity and self-existence of God.” (*Adam Clarke’s Commentary*; Exod. 3:14)

“... the meaning of Jehovah is underived existence, **HE IS,** or **I AM BECAUSE I AM,** the God of Abraham, of grace, and truth, and love; self-existence, eternity.” (*Smith’s Bible Dictionary*)

“The sacred name is derived from the verb ‘to be,’ and so implies that God is eternal ... and that he is

the Absolute, i.e., the Uncaused One.” (*Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*)

“The Almighty God has appropriated to himself and declared his name to be Jehovah, which signifies the ‘Self-Existing One’ or ‘The Immortal One.’” (E40)

### The Son

Rev. 3:14 – “These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, **the beginning of the creation of God.**”

Col. 1:15 – “Who is the image of the invisible God, **the first-born of every creature.**”

Rev. 11:17 – “We give thanks, **O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come;** because thou hast taken to thee thy power, and hast reigned.”

Because of the fact that the following verse (Rev. 1:5) begins with the words, “**And** from Jesus Christ ...” some have concluded that it is the Father who is **here** referred to. We do not agree, believing rather that it is Jesus, for the exact same words occur in verse 8, but are there preceded by “I am Alpha and Omega,” which surely designates him who was the very beginning of the creation of God (Rev. 3:14); and also his last direct creation – the one to whom all the rest of God’s creation was committed. (Col. 1:16)

and –

“The Apostle Paul adds his testimony in the same line, saying, He ‘is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for by him were all things created... All things were created by him and for him.’ (Col. 1:15) **The heavenly Father had no beginning,** but is from everlasting to everlasting the same. Our Lord’s great honor is shown in that he was not only the first of God’s creation, but the last.” (R1514:6)

That he is also in this verse 8, called “the Almighty,” seems only to indicate that the prophecy of Isa. 9:6 – to the effect that he was to be “the mighty God” – was fulfilled when the Father gave to him “all-power ... in heaven and in earth.” (Matt. 28:18) The phrase, “and from Jesus Christ” of verse 5 seems here merely to have been used for emphasis: a similar instance occurs in 1 Thes. 3:11, which in the *Diaglott* is rendered, “God himself **even** the Father,” instead of “God himself **and** the Father,” as per the *Authorized Version*.

The Father cannot properly be referred to as, he “**who was,**” or he “**who is to come,**” for he **IS** from “everlasting to everlasting.” With the Father there is no past, and there will be no future, but **only, and ever, an eternal present!** The Psalmist was right when he declared, “Before the mountains were brought forth or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, God, thou art.” (Psa. 90:1)

Accordingly, we believe, that this greeting, this salutation, comes from Jesus –

“**which is**” – now the “express image” of the Father’s person (Heb. 1:3), having been “highly exalted” (Phil. 2:9) and made a partaker of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4), and

“**which was**” – in the beginning, as the WORD with God (John 1:1); and as God’s active agent, he **was** the creator of all things. (John 1:3) He thus **had** a glory with the Father before the world was (John 17:5); which glory he **left**, when he who **was** rich **became** poor (2 Cor. 8:9), when he “**emptied**” himself – **made** himself “of no reputation” (Phil. 2:7) and **became** the man Christ Jesus, in order that he might give himself a “ransom for all.” (Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6) Then, being found in fashion as a man, he “**humbled** himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Phil. 2:8) This merited for him, the Father’s exaltation (Phil. 2:9), and

“**which is to come**” – to establish God’s Kingdom, for which we have long prayed, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on this earth as it is in heaven.” (Matt. 6:10) Yea, he **will come** “with ten thousands of his saints” (Jude 14), as the glorified Kingly Priest “after the order of Melchizedek” (Heb. 5:10; 7:17, 24-27); and as “the Seed of Abraham” to bless all the families of the earth. (Gen. 22:17,18)

John continues, “and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne” – a symbolism, no doubt, of the one holy Spirit of God, variously defined in the Scriptures as:

“The Spirit of God,’ ‘The Spirit of Christ,’ ‘The Spirit of Holiness,’ ‘The Spirit of Truth,’ ‘The Spirit of a Sound Mind,’ ‘The Spirit of Liberty,’ ‘The Spirit of the Father,’ ‘The Holy Spirit of Promise,’ ‘The Spirit of Meekness,’ ‘The Spirit of Understanding,’ ‘The Spirit of Wisdom,’ ‘The Spirit of Glory,’ ‘The Spirit of Counsel,’ ‘The Spirit of Grace,’ ‘The Spirit of Adoption,’ ‘The Spirit of Prophecy.’” (E167)

“Seven” is identified with what is divine in its nature, therefore it is that which is perfect and complete by divine standards. And as the “seven churches” represent but the **one** church in its seven stages, so too, the “seven Spirits” here represent the one holy Spirit of God in its manifold aspects and operations. Thus do these “seven Spirits” represent –

“... the divine will, influence, or power, exercised any and everywhere, and **for any purpose in harmony with the divine will**, which, being a holy will, implies that the steps and operations of the holy Spirit will be in harmony with holiness. God exercises his spirit or energy in many ways, using various agencies in accomplishing various results.” (E182)

We are also to understand –

“... these various expressions as descriptive of the spirit, disposition and power of one God, our Father; and also the spirit, disposition and power of our Lord Jesus Christ, because he is at one with the Father.” (E168)

This Spirit of the Lord, emanating from the throne, is everywhere present:

“**Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?** If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me.” (Psa. 139:7-10)

Thus is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Lord, like an all-seeing eye:

“... **seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God** sent forth into all the earth.” (Rev. 5:6)

“We are to recognize also that the eyes of the Lord are upon all his people and upon all their interests, to note their tears and their joys, their trials and difficulties and their prosperity, to care for all their interests.

“In this symbolical picture **the eye of the Lord is represented as seven or complete all-seeing, everywhere, all-knowing.** This is our confidence, this is our rejoicing.” (R3651:5)

Thus also is this Spirit of God like a lamp whose rays of light, can, and ultimately will dispel all darkness:

“... seven **lamps** burning before the throne, and **they are the seven** Spirits of God.” (Rev. 4:5)

**1:5** – “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.”

As already suggested, we believe this phrase is here used for emphasis to amplify, as it were, the thought expressed in verse 4 concerning him “which is, and which was, and which is to come,” and who by his own sacrifice, made possible **for the Church**, the indwelling of that holy Spirit, and its ultimate access into the very presence of God. (Heb. 10:19, 20) It has reference to him who as our Advocate, has borne a “faithful witness” unto the Father, on our behalf. (Heb. 9:24) Accordingly, he is “the faithful witness.”

However, it is important also to note the witness he bore for the heavenly Father, while he lived here among men; which faithful witness he could not have given without faithfulness and loyalty to that divine will.... Already at the age of twelve, he would be about his Father’s business; i.e., his Father’s house (Luke 2:49); and on reaching the proper age according to the Law, he lost no



time in consecrating and dedicating himself to the doing of his Father's will. (Luke 3:21, 23; Heb. 10:7, 9) Let it be carefully noted that throughout all of his ministry he declared that his words and works were **not** his own, **but the Father's** (John 5:19, 30; 6:38; 7:16, 28; 9:4; 12:4-9); and in, and by his death, he bore witness – a **faithful witness** to the Father's love. (John 3:16) Truly, John was right in declaring him to be “the faithful witness.”

As a reward for his faithful witnessing to the Father's love, he was highly exalted, and given a name that is above every name (Phil. 2:6-11); and this, by way of the resurrection from the dead; yea, he was the **“first-born from the dead.”** (Col. 1:18 *Diaglott*; 1 Cor. 15:20; Acts 26:23) Thus verse five (Rev. 1:5) –

“... clearly teaches what the creeds of Christendom ignore, and what is in direct antagonism to their statements; namely, that the risen Christ was **‘the first-born of the dead.’** That is to say, our Lord was the first to experience a resurrection in the full sense of the word, the first to experience a resurrection to perfection and eternal life. Although some before him were temporarily awakened, they relapsed again into death; for they were only partial illustrations of resurrection, to assure men of the divine power to accomplish it fully in the due time appointed of God.” (R5991:3,6)

### The Name Jesus – “Yahshua!”

“Jesus,” however, is the English equivalent of the Greek *Ἰησοῦς* which in turn is the translation of the Hebrew “Yahshua!” Unfortunately, there is always something lost in the translation.

When the risen Lord Jesus overtook Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road still breathing out threats upon the followers in the “Way” (Acts 22:4), the latter heard a voice from heaven **in the Hebrew tongue**, saying, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” (Acts 26:12-14) To this Saul responded with, “Who art thou, Lord?” to which he received this answer (**in the Hebrew tongue**) “I am Jesus!” (Acts 26:15) However, since this was in the Hebrew tongue, the Lord must have called himself “Yahshua,” which means “Yahweh (Jehovah) **is the Savior.**”

In E33, Bro. Russell had this to say:

**“Jehovah God claims for himself the authorship of the great plan of Atonement...** In harmony with this are numerous statements of the Scriptures, **‘I am Jehovah thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior.’** Again, **‘I am Jehovah, and beside me there is no Savior.’** **‘I Jehovah am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Jacob.’** And again, **‘I am Jehovah thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no God but me; for there is no Savior beside me.’** Again, **‘To the only wise God, our Savior,** be glory and majesty, dominion and power,

both now and ever, amen.’ Again, **‘We trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men,** especially of those that believe.’ (Isa. 43:3, 11; 60:16; Hosea 13:4; Jude 25; 1 Tim. 4:10; Titus 1:3; 2:10)”

And, aside from this, it should be carefully noted, that Jesus while he was here on the earth, **never did claim anything that he said or did to be his own.** Note, if you will, his own words to this effect:

John 7:16–“My **doctrine** is not mine, but his that sent me.”

John 14:24 – “The **word** which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.”

John 9:4 – “I must work **the works** of him that sent me.”

John continues, “and the prince of the kings of the earth.” The term prince, as here used, has the significance of a ruler or sovereign.

“... we have Christ Jesus our Lord ... the one who, through faith and obedience to the Father, has prevailed, has overcome the world and the flesh and the Adversary, and has received the divine blessing as the result of his struggle. He has been highly exalted and is declared now to be **prince or ruler of the kings of the earth.** He has sat down with the Father in his throne. (Rev. 1:5)” (R2866:1)

Thus is Jesus designated the “prince” – but who are the “kings”? Surely not the world of mankind, for the kingdom will not be turned over to them until the end of the Millennial age! This then leaves only the Saints – the Church, and it is in harmony with this thought that we read in Rev. 5:10; 20:6 of those who are to be made **Kings and Priests**, and are to reign with the glorified Jesus for a thousand years. (See also Rev. 1:6)

“... a government is suggested in the Bible, and there it is accurately described and positively promised and waits only for the selection of God's Church – to be its **kings** and priests as joint-heirs with Immanuel. (Rev. 5:10; 20:6)” (D425)

“All are to be awakened from Adamic death as though from sleep, by virtue of the ransom given: this will be the first step in restitution blessings. They will then be under the care, charge, supervision, of the Royal Priesthood, whose experience with sin, and with victory over sin, in this Gospel age, will well fit and prepare them to be patient and helpful toward those **over whom they will reign, as Kings** as well as Priests. (Rev. 5:10)” (E478)

Rev. 5:10 – “... and didst make them to the God of us a kingdom and priests, and they will reign on [over ?] the earth.” (*Marshall's Translation*)

Here John, for himself, and for you and me, bursts into a paean of praise and glory, unto him, Jesus, **“who loved us”** so much, that in a particular sense, he gave his life **for**

**us!** (Gal. 1:4; Titus 2:14; Eph. 5:25) and “**washed us** from our sins in his blood.”

“That it was the death of the man Christ Jesus, his ‘blood,’ that secured our release from sin and death, is most unequivocally stated in many scriptures, and can only be repudiated by denying the inspiration of the Scriptures, or by ‘wresting the Scriptures,’ or by ‘handling the Word of God deceitfully.’ (1 Pet. 1:2; Acts 4:12; 20:28; Rev. 5:9; Heb. 13:12)” (E446)

“... our Lord Jesus, after his resurrection, ascended up on high and appeared in the presence of God **‘for us,’** on our behalf; for he ‘bought us with his own precious blood’ – with the merit of his sacrifice of earthly rights. He could have bought the world just as easily, but he followed the divine plan and bought the Church. ‘Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it.’ (Eph. 5:25)” (R4528:2)

**1:6** – “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

### The Kingdom and Priests!

“made us **kings and priests** unto God and his Father”  
(KJV)

“made us a **kingdom, priests** to his God and Father”  
(RSV)

“made us to be a **kingdom, to be priests** unto his God and Father”  
(ASV)

“made us a **kingdom of priests** for his God and Father”  
(An. Amer. Tr.)

“made us a **kingdom and priests** serving his God and Father”  
(Beck)

“made us into **royalty, into priests** of God, even his Father”  
(Berkeley)

“made us to be a **kingdom of priests** unto his God and Father”  
(Montgomery)

“made us a **kingdom of priests** to his God and Father”  
(Phillips)

“made us a **Kingdom of Priests** in the service of God his Father”  
(20th Century)

“formed us into a **kingdom, to be priests** for his God and Father”  
(Weymouth)

“made us a **kingdom of priests** for his God and Father”  
(Williams)

“and formed us into a **kingdom (a royal race), priests** to His God and Father”  
(Amplified)

“made us a **kingdom of priests** to serve His God and Father”  
(Good News Bible)

“made us a line of **kings, priests** to serve his God and Father”  
(Jerusalem)

“gathered us **into his kingdom and made us priests** of God his Father”  
(Living Bible)

“made us a **spiritual kingdom** to God his Father”  
(Lamsa)

“established us a **Kingdom, priests** to God and his Father”  
(Fenton)

“made us (to be) a **kingdom – priests** unto his God and Father”  
(Rotherham)

“made us to be a **kingdom, priests** to his God and Father”  
(New World Tr.)

“made us a **kingdom** every member of which is a priest to his God and Father”  
(Barclay)

“made for us a **Kingdom – Priests** for his God and Father”  
(Emphatic Diaglott)

“made us a **kingdom, priests** to the God and Father”  
(Marshall)

Exod. 19:6 – “And ye shall be unto me a **kingdom of priests.**” (KJV; Leeser; JPS)

John’s song continues, “and hast made us kings and priests unto our God.” Most modern translators have rendered this text with the sense of “hast made us a **kingdom, priests** to his God and Father.” It is true, this rendering is more in accord with its correlative passage in the Old Testament (Exod. 19:6) wherein the promise to Israel was that if they would hear his voice and keep his covenant, they would be unto God, “a kingdom of priests,” “a royal priesthood,” as it were. (1 Pet. 2:9) Nor does this thought of a kingdom of **priests** belittle the thought of the kingship of the saints! Royal means kingly – thus they will be a kingly order of priests, after the order of Melchizedek – **to reign** with Christ their “Prince” (Rev. 1:5) for the thousand years. (Rev. 20:6)

“... the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God’s witness to the world; and to prepare **to be kings and priests** in the next age.” (Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6) (R5822:2, 5)

“It will be the Kingdom of the saints, in that they are ‘a royal priesthood’ (Rev. 5:10) **shall reign** and judge and bless the world **in conjunction with their Lord, Jesus.** (Rom. 8:17, 18)

“The Kingdom class proper will consist only of our Lord and his ‘elect’ of the Gospel age, to whom he said: ‘Fear not, little flock, it is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.’ Of these, also, the Lord said to the Prophet Daniel, ‘The Kingdom and dominion, even the majesty of the Kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all rulers shall serve and obey him.’ (Dan. 7:27)” (D618)

“Aaron, robed and anointed, represented the entire Christ – the complete Seed of Abraham, in which God is about to bless all the families of the earth. But let us not forget that we have been viewing the Great Deliverer from God’s standpoint, and with him looking down to the time of his manifestation – the dawn of the Millennial Day, when all the members shall have come into the Body, and when the ‘holy

oil' shall have run down 'to the skirts of his garments,' anointing every member. (Lev. 10:7) Then he will begin the work of blessing mankind. For the glorious reign of this **Kingly Priest** we constantly pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth'." (T38)

John, through the indwelling of the holy Spirit, had evidently become so like God, that he felt even as God himself did about Jesus' worthiness of **everlasting glory and dominion**; and so he expresses himself: it is on this note – "to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever" that his song ends.

There is a prophecy bearing on our King's glory and dominion in one of the psalms attributed to Solomon. It tells us –

"... of the **glorious reign** of the risen and 'highly exalted Son of God, whose coming presence shall be like rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth' – 'times of restitution,' truly.

"How wide shall be his **dominion**? Oh, says the Psalmist, 'He shall have **dominion** from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.' (Psa. 72:8) Yes, 'as truly as I live,' saith the Lord, 'the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.' (Psa. 72:19)" (R1414:6; 1415:1)

Isa. 9:6, 7 – "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the **government** shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his **government there shall be no end**, upon the throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even **forever**. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."

The "**Amen**" with which John's hymn of praise is actually concluded, is here an "affirmation and approbation; so it shall be, and so it ought to be." (Clarke)

**1:7** – "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

Of course, it is Jesus himself, who is specifically referred to here – "**Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him**," for John adds, "**and they also which pierced him**." This latter clause could apply to **Jesus only**.

However, as Enoch of old prophesied, the saints shall be with him (Jude 14) when he comes; and with him will constitute The Christ – the "Seed of Abraham" (Gal. 3:29), through whom all nations are to be blessed. (Gen. 22:18)

"Christ and the glorified church, made 'partakers of the divine nature,' will be spirit beings, invisible to

men. Our Lord's presence will be manifested to the world by exhibitions of power and great glory. He will not be visible to natural sight, but to the eyes of understanding, as these shall open to an appreciation of the great changes which earth's new Ruler shall effect. His presence and his righteous authority will be recognized in both the punishments and the blessings which will flow to mankind from his reign.

"Our King will reveal himself gradually. Some will discern the new Ruler sooner than others. But ultimately 'every eye shall see [Greek, *horaō*, discern] him.' But '**he cometh with clouds**.' And while the clouds of trouble hang heavy and dark, when the mountains – kingdoms of this world – are trembling and falling, when the earth – organized society – is being shaken and disintegrated, some will begin to realize that Jehovah's Anointed is taking to himself his great power and is beginning his work of laying justice to the line and righteousness to the plummet. For he must reign until he shall have put down all authority and laws on earth which are contrary to those controlling in heaven." (R5992:1,4; B138)

"It is doubtless this same blessing of all the people – salvation from death and its sting, sin – that Paul refers to, saying, 'Unto Them That LOOK For Him Shall He Appear The Second Time Without Sin [not again as a sin-offering, and without contamination from those sins borne for sinners] unto Salvation.' (Heb. 9:28) The world has seen the Priest – Head and Body – suffer as a sin-offering during this age; Jesus was manifested to the Jews in the flesh (as a sin-offering), and as Paul could say, so can all followers in his footsteps say, 'Christ is manifest in our mortal flesh.' (2 Cor. 4:11) As the whole Christ has thus been manifest and has suffered in the flesh, so they shall also be 'glorified together' before the world; 'for the glory [the blessing and salvation] of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.' When he shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory. (Col. 3:4)

"But this great High Priest of the world will be recognized only by 'them that look for him.' If he were to appear a flesh-being, in the sky or elsewhere, it would be an appearance to all, whether looking for him or not; but we have already seen that the Scriptures teach that the Head has been perfected as a spirit being, and that his 'little flock' will be made 'like him,' spirit beings, of the divine nature, which no man hath seen nor can see. (1 Tim. 6:16) We have seen that the way in which the world will see the glorified Church will be by mental perception, in the same sense that a blind person may properly be said to see. In the same sense we now see the prize, the 'crown of life,' while we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen [by physical sight]; for the things which are seen are

temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.' (2 Cor. 4:18) It is in this way that the entire Church of this age has been 'looking unto Jesus'; thus 'we see Jesus.' (Heb. 2:9; 12:2) Thus, with the eyes of their understanding, the 'Watchers' discern the second presence of the Lord in its due time, by the light of the divine Word. And later on the world, every eye, shall see him in similar manner, but by the light of the 'flaming fire' of his judgments. (2 Thes. 1:8)" (T84-85)

### The Clouds

"The 'clouds of heaven' well represent the confusion in general. The world for a time will be in ignorance of his presence. But gradually they will come to know that they are in the time of trouble, the day of wrath, in which this age is to close. Then they will mourn. The whole world will be mourning. If the world has mourned in the past, much more shall we expect it to do so when the trouble will be general. In the midst of that trouble, they will gradually learn of the grace of God. Human selfishness, they will find, has been so overruled as to lead up to the glorious kingdom of Messiah, through which are to come all the blessings which God has promised." (R5269:5)

We are told by John that "**they also which pierced him**" would "see" him. There is much talk today to the effect that it was not the Jews, but the Romans that crucified and "pierced" our Lord. But surely, the Romans would never have done so, had the Jews not turned him over to them, when they themselves cried out "Crucify him." (Mark 15:12-15) Israel then, and ever since, rejected him who "came to his own" but was not received by them. (John 1:11; Isa. 53:1-3) Yes, Israel must assume this responsibility; but how comforting it is to know that the Lord promised: "... I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." (Zech. 12:10)

"... through the Prophet, God has assured us that in due time all the blind eyes will be opened and all the deaf ears will be unstopped. (Isa. 35:5) **To the Jew first**, and also to the Gentile, will eventually come a full knowledge of the grace of God through Christ. It will then be for them to accept or reject intelligently. The rejectors will be wicked in a sense that none of the world are wicked now, because their wrongdoings are largely based upon ignorance and superstition. When brought to the full light, their crisis, or judgment, will be to everlasting life if they accept and obey the Lord, or to everlasting death if they sin against and wilfully reject the light and opportunities of that blessed Millennial day.

"**Respecting the Jews** in that coming time, it is written that they shall look upon him whom they pierced, and mourn because of him; and that the Lord at that time will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and of supplication. (Zech. 12:8-10) But that return of God's favor to natural Israel will not come until spiritual Israel shall first have been completed. Bible Students believe that we are now at the dawning of the new dispensation, that the Church class will soon be completed and glorified with the Savior in his kingdom, and that then, forthwith, God's mercy will begin to operate toward the Jews again. This seems to be the clear teaching of St. Paul in Rom. 11:25-32." (R5832:3, 4)

Zech 12:10 "... and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced."

"Mr. Rabbinowitz says that Jews have kept up great questionings and controversies about the meaning of Zech. 12:10. They will not admit that it is Jesus whom they have pierced, hence the dispute as to who is meant. Mr. Rabbinowitz points out that the word used consists of the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet, Aleph Tay, and adds: 'Do you wonder, then, that I was filled with awe and astonishment when I opened to Rev. 1:7, 8 and read these words of Zechariah quoted by John, 'Behold, he cometh ... and every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him,' and then heard the glorified Lord, saying 'I am the Alpha and Omega.' Jesus seemed to say to me, 'Do you doubt who it is who you have pierced? I am the Aleph Tay, the Alpha Omega'." (R1948:4)

### Messiah's Glorious Kingdom

"The Apostle tells of this, saying, 'Him hath God highly exalted, and given him a name which is above every name' – a title and honor, a distinction, a place above all others. (Phil. 2:9-11) He was received into glory; and all the angels of God worshipped him whom the Father had thus exalted to his own right hand, giving him, additionally to what he had resigned, **glory and immortality – the divine nature**. Well can we understand the acclaim of the heavenly ones: 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing.' (Rev. 5:12)

"But there is more glory yet to come to the great Redeemer. Those **who crucified him**, yea, all the world of mankind, for whom he tasted death, are yet to be made aware of his great sacrifice on their behalf and of **the great honor and high exaltation** which came to him as a result. **He is to be the world's King of Glory and is to reign** for a thousand years. As verse 10 (Phil. 2:10) declares, eventually every knee on the earth will bow, and every tongue will acknowledge him; and all others not willing thus to

recognize and obey him are to be destroyed from amongst the people as ‘natural brute beasts.’ (2 Pet. 2:12; Jude 10) ‘And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people.’ (Acts 3:23) And all this glorifying of the Son will directly be to the Father’s glory; for the entire plan of salvation is of the Father and through the Son, as the Apostle assures us. (1 Cor. 8:6)” (R5847:2, 4)

“And **all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.**” This clearly teaches:

“... that at the time of our Lord’s second advent the world will be far from converted to God; for ‘all kindreds shall wail because of him.’ Some Scriptures taken disconnectedly seem to teach that the world will be converted before his return; but when God’s Word and plan are viewed as a whole, these will be found to favor the opposite view – that Christ comes before the conversion of the world and for the very purpose of converting all mankind; and that the glorified church of the Gospel age shall share with her Lord and Head in his reign, which is God’s appointed means of blessing the world.” (R5991:6; 5992:1)

“... the testimony of the Scriptures ... that at the time of our Lord’s second coming the world will be far from converted to God; that ‘In the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God’ (2 Tim. 3:1-4); that ‘Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.’ (2 Tim. 3:13) ... The Master’s special warning to his little flock: ‘Take heed to yourselves lest that day come upon you unawares, for as a snare shall it come on all them [not taking heed] that dwell on the face of the whole earth.’ (Luke 21:34, 35) Again, we may rest assured that when it is said, ‘**All kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him,**’ when they see him coming (Rev. 1:7), no reference is made to the conversion of sinners. Do all men wail because of the conversion of sinners? On the contrary, if this passage refers, as almost all admit, to Christ’s presence on earth, it teaches that **all on earth will not love his appearing,** as they certainly would do if all were converted.” (A90)

“As the trouble increases, men will seek, but in vain, for protection in the ‘dens’ and caves, the great rocks and fortresses of society (Free Masonry, Odd Fellowship, Trade Unions, Guilds, Trusts, and all societies secular and ecclesiastical), and in the mountains (governments) of earth; saying, ‘Fall over (cover, protect) 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.’ (Rev. 6:15-17)” (B139)

“**Even so, Amen.**” What John has said concerning the “Coming One” is, of course, prophetic: it indicates that the Lord’s presence will in the beginning, not necessarily induce joy! The “clouds” of the time of trouble, the guilt complex of those who “pierced” him, the wailing of the kindreds of the earth, bespeak much to the contrary. But, without these, the very purpose of the Lord’s return would fail. Therefore, these things **must be:** they are the necessary prelude to the blessings to follow. And so, John says, “Even so, Amen” – yes Lord, so let it be!

**1:8** – “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.”

### “The beginning and the ending” “the Almighty”

“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord (God – *Κυριος ὁ Θεος*), which is, and which is to come, the Almighty (*παντοκρατωρ*).”

The words “the beginning and the ending,” according to the *Tischendorf New Testament*, while appearing in the Sinaitic MS., do not appear in the Alexandrine. Most modern translators (*Rotherham, Weymouth, Goodspeed, Wilson, Marshall, and Montgomery*) have eliminated them from the text. Both the *American Standard* and the *Revised Standard* versions have dropped them also. However, *Lamsa*, in his translation from the ancient Syriac “*Peshitta*” and *Knox*, in his translation from the Latin Vulgate, have retained them.

Seemingly, it ought not make any difference one way or the other, since the significance of alpha and omega, is really “the first and the last” – the beginning and the ending of the Greek alphabet. Bro. Russell, perhaps on the basis of the *Tischendorf New Testament*, accepted them as genuine. (R1514:3, 6)

In the Old Testament, JEHOVAH is referred to as “the first and the last” as follows:

Isa. 41:4 – “I the LORD [*Jahweh*], **the first and the last.** I am he.”

Isa. 44:6 – “I am **the first, and I am the last,** and beside me there is no God [*elohim*].”

However, this is not in the same sense in which the term is applied unto Jesus, who in his prehuman existence was “**the beginning of the creation of God [*theos*]**” (Rev. 3:14), “the first-born of every creature,” (Col. 1:15); thus, **the only direct creation of Jehovah-God, and also the last!** (SM491) As concerning Jehovah-God, the term is used in the sense that the great “I AM” (Exod. 3:14) has always been, and there was none before Him, nor ever will be after Him! In other words, HE is the only (such) God, and thus do we read in Isaiah (*Green’s translation*):

Isa. 44:6 – “Thus says Jehovah [*Jahweh*] the King of Israel, and his [*Israel’s*] redeemer, Jehovah [*Jahweh*]; I [*am*] the first and the last; **and no God [*elohim*] exists except me.**”



Only Jesus is referred to in the Scriptures as the Alpha and Omega, and this only in the New Testament. (Rev. 1:8; 21:6; 22:13) However, in the Old Testament, in Zech. 12:10, there is a prophetic reference to **Jesus**, as declaring:

“... and they shall look upon **me** whom they have pierced.”

It just so happens that the word “me” is spelled with but two letters – the Hebrew “*aleph*” and “*tau*” – **the first and the last** letters in the Hebrew alphabet – a very close correspondency to the alpha and omega of the Greek alphabet, also there the first and the last! (See R1948:4) Accordingly, it would seem quite logical to consider the “beginning and the ending,” and “the Lord, which is, and which is to come,” and “the Almighty” of Rev. 1:8, as having reference to Jesus, and not to Jehovah-God, per se. (See R1514:3, 6)

When Jesus was here on the earth, he already was an image of Jehovah-God, the heavenly Father (John 14:9-11); yet, even more so after his resurrection from the dead. (Col. 2:9; but see also T124)

It is true, in the Old Testament, the Hebrew term used in connection with Jehovah (*Jahweh*), though it is not His name, is “*el shaddai*” (Almighty – Exod. 6:3); but the term used in connection with Jesus, though it is not His name either – is “*gibbor*” (mighty – Isa. 9:6). However, one of the names that God did use “I AM” (Exod. 3:14) was used by the Logos (as the honored servant of Jehovah-God) Jesus, in his prehuman state. Concerning this, Bro. Russell said the following:

“... if the name were to be applied to another it would merely indicate that such servant was highly esteemed by Jehovah and really treated for the occasion as a steward or representative – **commissioned to exercise divine power as well**. In Exod. 3:2, we are distinctly informed that the one representing Jehovah and using his most distinguished name ‘**I am**’ was ‘**the angel (messenger) of Jehovah**.’ That this honored messenger was ‘the Word’ of John 1, (John 1:1), our Lord Jesus in his prehuman estate, we do not for a moment question. But the highest and most honored messenger should not be confounded with the one whom he represents and in whose name he speaks and **whose power** he exercised and bestowed upon Moses.” (E43)

The name of Jehovah-God appears nowhere in the New Testament; but the name Jesus does frequently. The term God (*Θεός*) occurs quite often, sometimes having reference to the Father (Matt. 3:9; John 1:1), and sometimes to the Son. (John 1:1; 20:28) Under these circumstances one must be guided by the context to know which is referred to.

The position of the one who once was the Logos, and later the man Christ Jesus, is quite different now since his exaltation. He is now more aptly called “the express image of his [the Father’s] person.” (Heb. 1:3) Shortly before his ascension into heaven, he declared unto his disciples –

(Matt. 28:18) – “**all power is given unto me in heaven and in the earth.**”

Actually, the word (*ἐξουσία*) rendered “power” should more correctly have been rendered “authority” though in the ultimate, the meaning is about the same! Yet the exercise of this power was purposely delayed until the “due time” for its exercise would arrive. (D621-622) The Greek word “*pantokrator*” (*παντοκράτωρ*) occurs ten times in the New Testament; and in nine instances it has been rendered “almighty,” in the *Authorized Version*, and once “omnipotent.” Eight of the nine instances occur in the Revelation. Here, as in the case of the Greek word “*theos*,” (*Θεός*) as to whether it is the Father or the Son that it should be applied to, has to be determined by the context. The meaning of the Greek word is according to *Young’s Analytical Concordance*... “**all powerful**.” Since the “all power” (authority) of the Almighty God (Jehovah) has been committed to Jesus (Matt. 28:18) He very often becomes the Father’s representative in its exercise. The following is a quote from D622:

“We give thee thanks, **O Lord God Almighty, which art to come, because thou hast taken thy great power, and hast reigned.**<sup>1</sup> (**Represented in Christ** – ‘All things are of the Father,’ and ‘all things are by the Son,’ his honored representative) and (as a consequence of the reign begun) the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that reverence thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which corrupt the earth.’ – (Rev. 11:17, 18)” (D622, 623)

<sup>1</sup> “Thy God reigneth”: (Isa. 52:7) “These with their message are clearly pointed out by the prophet as the ‘feet’ or last members of the body of Christ in the flesh, when he says: ‘How beautiful upon the mountains (kingdoms) are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation (deliverance); **that saith unto Zion, Thy God\* reigneth.**’ (**The reign of Christ**, which shall bring **deliverance, first to Zion**, and finally to all the groaning creation, is begun.)” (C236)

\* “Thy God” (Hebrew – *Elohim*) in the *Authorized Version* applied to JEHOVAH (Gen. 1:1); Abraham (Gen. 23:6); Moses (Exod. 7:1); Judges (Exod. 21:6); Angels (Psa. 8:5); Saints (Psa. 82:6); Other gods (Psa. 86:8); JESUS (Isa. 52:7). (See also F67, 68)

The following is an excerpt taken from E78:

**“The Blessed and Only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who only Hath Immortality”**  
– 1Tim. 6:15, 16

“Many consider this passage to signify that at his appearing, at his second advent, our Lord Jesus will exhibit or make known to the world the Heavenly Father’s greatness. But although that view has some reasonable aspects, we incline on the whole to apply the statement to the glory and honor of Christ – dating from the beginning of the Millennial age. True, he will cause all who accept his way to recognize Jehovah God also, but this will not be at his appearing, but at the close of his reign, when he shall ‘deliver the Kingdom to God, even the Father.’ (1 Cor. 15:24-28)

“To apply the passage to the Father would be to deny that our Lord possesses immortality, whereas the Scriptures explicitly teach that he and all who share in the First Resurrection obtain therein immortality and that thus the Father, who hath life-inherent (self-existence – immortality), gave to the Son that he should have life-inherent (self-existence – immortality). (1 Cor. 15:42-44, 53, 54; John 5:26)

“But to apply this Scripture to the Son seems to fit every condition perfectly, and by no means ignores the Father, Jehovah – nor proves that our Lord Jesus is the Father, Jehovah; **for we are in all such cases to remember the invariable rule laid down by the inspired Apostle – namely, that in comparisons, honors, etc., mentioned respecting the Son, the Father is always excepted as being inexpressibly above all comparisons.** His words are, ‘**It is manifest that he (the Father) is excepted, and not to be considered under or subject to our Lord Jesus and the various powers conferred by the Father upon him.** For when the Son shall have subdued sin in the world, ‘then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him (the Father) that did put all things under him (the Son).’ (1 Cor. 15:27)” (E78-79)

It seems to us this application applies also to the passages considered in connection with Rev. 1:8! (R1514:3,6)

**The Alpha and Omega**

The word “me” in the Hebrew text of Zech. 12:10, “... they shall look upon **me** whom they have pierced.” is spelled with but two letters – א ת (*aleph* and *tay*), which are the first and the last letters of the Hebrew alphabet, and correspond to Α and Ω the Greek letters for *alpha* and *omega*. Is this a mere coincidence? (See R1948:4)

“In them John tells the same story that our Lord tells us over and over again (See Rev. 1:8, 11, 17; 2:8; 3:14; 21:6; 22:13), that he is **the beginning and the ending, the first and the last, of the creation of God.**” (R1514:3, 6)

**The “Almighty”**

If Jehovah God is always accepted as being beyond comparison, then such titles as “Kings of Kings,” “Lord of Lords,” and the “Almighty,” may properly be applied to the glorified Christ Jesus. (See 1 Cor. 15:27, 28; R2747:6; 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14; R1514:6; 1515:1)

Once again, John would identify the One who is about to give his last direct message to the Church (the seven churches which are in Asia), but this time he does so with Jesus’ own words, which according to the most ancient manuscripts (the Sinaitic included) are, “I am the Alpha, and the Omega.” The words, “the beginning and the ending,” may well be an interpolation, for they do not appear in either the *Sinaitic* or *Alexandrine MSS.* Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford and Wordsworth all agree, they should be omitted. However, whether or not these words are spurious, the sense of them is retained in the “*Alpha*” and “*Omega*,” which being the first and the last letters respectively – the beginning and the ending of the Greek alphabet, and signify that our Lord Jesus Christ was both the beginning and the ending of God’s direct creation. (Rev. 3:14; John 1:3; Eph. 3:9)

“The Apostle Paul adds his testimony in the same line, saying, He ‘is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation: for by him were all things created... All things were created by him and for him.’ (Col. 1:15) The heavenly Father had no beginning, but is from everlasting to everlasting the same. Our Lord’s great honor is shown in that he was not only the first of God’s creation, but the last. From this we are to understand that the great Jehovah did not directly employ his own power in creating either men or angels; but that he delegated his power to his Only-begotten Son, using him as his honored agent and representative in every case, in every respect giving him the pre-eminence over all others; second only to himself.” (R1514:6)

The words which follow, according to the Sinaitic Mss., are “**saith the Lord the God.**” Many of the modern translations render this, “says the Lord God” – dropping the definite article “the” from before the word God, as being unnecessary. This much, however, is certain, the One speaking is both Lord (*Κυριος*), i.e., Master, and a God (*Θεος*), i.e., a mighty one, especially since his exaltation, he now being a possessor of the divine nature.

**“LORD GOD” and “Lord God”**

In the Old Testament one frequently comes upon the expression “LORD God” (e.g., Gen 2:7). The first part of this term is really the proper name of God – “Jehovah.” In the original Hebrew, this name appears as a tetragrammaton – four letters with no vowels corresponding to *JHVH* (*Jahveh*). This name of God being sacred, no one

dared pronounce it; and on coming upon it would read it “LORD” (Heb. *Adonai*). This latter word, also, often occurs in the Hebrew text, when its significance is **merely lord or master**. At such times it is rendered “Lord,” (in our common version Bibles) with only the first letter capitalized. Thus the expression “LORD God” (Jehovah God) belongs to the Father alone. However, even in Old Testament times, the Logos, as his messenger or angel – coming in his name, might use the Father’s name to identify himself. (Gen. 18:1; Exod. 3:3-15)

“... we are distinctly informed that the one representing Jehovah and using his most distinguished name, ‘I am,’ was ‘the angel [messenger] of Jehovah.’ That this honored messenger was ‘the Word’ of John 1:1, our Lord Jesus in his prehuman estate, we do not for a moment question. But the highest and most honored messenger should not be confounded with the one whom he represents and in whose name he speaks and whose power he exercised.” (E43)

In the New Testament, the name of God never occurs. He is called “Father,” “God,” and “Lord.” But the term Lord God as used in the New Testament does, therefore, not necessarily refer to the Father, but more often to Jesus Christ. One must then be guided solely by the context. In Rev. 1:8 and 22:5, it would seem in the light of the context that this term “Lord God” (*Κυριος ο Θεος*) should be applied to Jesus; for not only is he still the Father’s chief representative, but he has also been highly exalted by him, and made a partaker of his (i.e., God’s) own nature – the divine nature!

“... **which is, and which was, and which is to come.**” We cannot be too sure that these words here, are the words of Jesus himself, for it is possible that they are a gloss given by John. Nor does it really matter, for regardless as to who spoke them, Jesus is the One “which is, and which was, and which is to come” as already suggested in the comments on Revelation 1:4.

### The Almighty

“... although our Redeemer had always occupied the place of honor in the heavenly courts, it was not until his faithful obedience to the Father had been tested to the extent of his changing nature to that of man, and then giving himself as fallen man’s ransom, that he received his present unexcellible glory and honor. It is since his resurrection that the message has gone forth, ‘all power in heaven and in earth is given unto me.’ (Matt. 28:18) Consequently it is only since then that he could be called the Almighty (as in Rev. 1:8). The heavenly Father has always been almighty, and this all-power or all-might was never given to him, but was his eternal possession. But now that he has given the same power to his Only-begotten and well-pleasing Son, our Saviour, both we and angels delight to know it, and delight to honor him whom the Father has so highly honored, and whom he has

instructed us to honor, saying: ‘That all should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.’” (R1514:6; 1515:1)

**1:9** – “I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

“Instead of adding loud and boastful titles to his name, as Reverend, Bishop, Overseer of all the Churches in Asia Minor, we find John introducing himself as ‘Your Brother,’ as the companion of all saints in tribulation and in the kingdom, and in the patient endurance of Jesus Christ. He was sharer with Christ, as a member of his body in his afflictions, in his endurance, and prospectively a joint-heir of the same glory. It is generally understood that John had already been severely persecuted, and that at the time of this vision he was in banishment on the little island in the Mediterranean Sea called Patmos – a penal island where convicts were worked in the quarrying of marble, etc. Yet John himself, with remarkable modesty, passes over not only his previous service for the truth, which had brought him his persecution, but also lightly passes over the persecution itself, merely noting that he was in the island of Patmos because of his fidelity to the word of God and the testimony that Jesus was the Christ.

“This simplicity, this absence of boastfulness so noticeable in the writings of all the apostles, commends them and their words to our attention, and marks them as being in the ministry not for the gratification of vanity, or seeking earthly rewards of any kind; but simply as the servants of God, who delighted to do his will, and to tell the good tidings, to the utter ignoring of themselves, excepting insofar as mention of themselves and their affairs might be necessary and helpful to the church. All the Lord’s followers do well to note this characteristic of the Master, and of those whom he specially chose to be his followers and our exemplars. In proportion as we attain to the Lord’s spirit it will similarly manifest itself in our sentiments and in all our conduct.” (R2826:3, 4)

“For a time, although there were persecutions of individuals such as are recorded in Acts, the believers as a whole were not subjected to the severest of trials at first. It was when the truth began to spread, and had not only the enmity of the Jews, but also of the Greeks, that emperors and governors found favor with the masses by persecuting the followers of Jesus. And for aught we know, so it will be in the not-far-distant future. For a long time the pure truth has been hidden from men and worldliness in the form of godliness has had the upper hand in influential circles; but doubtless, as the

troublesome times the Scriptures predict for the end of this age draw closer, those who will stand firm for the word of the Lord's testimony may expect to be made the scapegoats under various pretexts. We shall not be surprised to find a considerable measure of persecution against all the children of the light, who will walk up to the light, developed within the next seven years. **John**, the beloved disciple, **in some measure or degree typified or represented the last living members of the little flock.** Doubtless this was the meaning of our Lord's statement, 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?' (John 21:22) John did not tarry, but a class whom he in some respects illustrated are represented to tarry – a class who see with the eyes of their understanding the visions and revelations which John saw in symbols in a trance." (R3568:3, 6)

### **John Representing the Church Living in End of Age**

"John the revelator represented those favored members of the Church who, living in this end of the Gospel age, are granted the privilege of seeing and appreciating more and more the things which he saw in symbol." (R3572:3,4)

"John at the time of the trance vision was a prisoner, exiled to the isle of Patmos, a penal colony of those days – an island almost uninhabitable, rocky, barren. The crime for which he suffered this banishment was his faithfulness as a mouthpiece of the Lord. At the time he must have been between sixty and ninety years of age, supposing that none of our Lord's disciples were younger than himself at the beginning of his ministry. If his exile in any degree symbolized ostracism, which the Lord's followers may expect in the close of this age – a complete isolation from others and a treatment implying that they are prisoners – we may take comfort, in the thought that as the Lord's favor and revelations to John more than offset his persecutions, so the opening of the eyes of our understanding and the granting to us of greater lengths and breadths and heights and depths of knowledge and appreciation of our Lord and his plan will far more than offset the various experiences which in his providence he may permit to come upon us. His assurance is that 'all things shall work together for good to those who love God, to the called ones according to his purpose.' Whoever rests his faith securely upon his promise may indeed with the Apostle Paul count all tribulations as loss and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord." (R3568:6; 3569:1)

### **Patmos**

"Because of his faithfulness in believing and teaching the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, John had been banished to the lonely and sterile **Isle**

**of Patmos;** but the place of his exile was made glorious with the presence of the Lord and the manifestation of his grace, not only to his faithful Apostle, but also to all of the church through him." (R1598:3)

"The Roman demand of emperor worship as a token of loyalty to the empire, **in the latter part of the reign of Domitian** threatened the church with destruction and must have tempted many to compromise." (*An Encyclopedia of Religion* – by Ferm, p. 661)

**Domitian was the Roman Emperor from A.D. 81-96!**

**1:10, 11** – "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea."

**"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as a trumpet."** Presumably,

"John referred to the first day of the week, now generally called Sunday. It is peculiarly to us the Lord's day – the day on which our Lord rose from the dead, and on which all the promises of God's Word received life, and our hopes through Christ were quickened. We may see in the expression also a reference to the Millennial age, called in the Scriptures frequently, 'The day of Christ.' We today, according to our understanding of chronology, are living in the early dawn of this day of Christ, and it is here and now properly that we begin to see the wonderful things of the divine character and plan. But to see these things, to understand these things, we must be in the spirit. Only those who have become new creatures in Christ Jesus can be expected to understand and appreciate spiritual things, and this is the class whom John represented. As John heard a voice behind him and looked in that direction, so we who now are having the realities find that message is behind us, and turn and look toward the past to see the fulfillment of the various features of the divine plan and to hear and understand the message given to his people by the risen Lord." (R3569:2)

"John's attention was first attracted by the trumpet-like voice of Christ from behind him. The fact that the location is mentioned at all implies that it has a special symbolic meaning. It signifies that the beginning of this message was not in John's day, nor from some future time, but that the things to be revealed had already commenced, and were already to some extent in the past; the voice from behind going clear back, as some of the features of the book show, to the time of our Lord's earthly ministry.

The trumpet voice directed that its message should be written and sent to the seven churches named.” (R2826:4)

### Living “In The Spirit”

“The expression, ‘I was **in the spirit** on the Lord’s day,’ we understand to mean that on that day (the first day of the week) John was specially filled with the holy Spirit of love and adoration and joy in God as to be mentally lifted above his surroundings and out of the thoughts and feelings of the old nature; so that, forgetting for the time the things of time and sense, there came to his soul an overwhelming sense of the divine presence and favor. To such a condition his circumstances were peculiarly favorable, isolated as he was from all human intercourse, and alone with God. His was not a sickly sentimentalism causing him to shirk the duties and responsibilities of active life and impelling him to that of a recluse. No; far from it. He had been active, faithful and loyal to God and zealous for his cause; and when the enforced seclusion came as a penalty for such faithfulness, he rejoiced also in this ‘tribulation,’ this privilege of enduring hardness as a good soldier; and from his sense of the divine approval, both of his faithfulness in activity and of his patience in this enforced inactivity and seclusion, sprang the joy which only those know who have endured something for Christ’s sake and experienced the fellowship of his suffering.

“In such times of tribulation the Lord’s presence and comfort are most precious to his saints, and they begin to learn what it means to live ‘in the spirit’ – above the world, and hence to a great extent unaffected by its conditions.

“Thus, as the Apostle drew near to the Lord, the Lord drew near to him; and on this occasion, as there was a special message to be conveyed to the Church, this beloved and faithful disciple, being in the proper attitude of mind and heart, ‘a broken and emptied vessel’ fit for the Master’s use, was the chosen and honored instrument. And, therefore, he was permitted to see and hear, in symbolic visions, the wonderful things which God had to reveal to his Church.” (R1598:6; 1599:1)

**“Saying, what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.”** The words, “I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last,” do not appear in the Sinaitic Manuscript.

“The words, ‘I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last,’ are not found in the oldest Greek manu-

scripts and are properly omitted in the *Revised Version*. These words, however, do occur in the Greek MSS. (Rev. 1:8; 21:6)” (R3569:2)

“Ancient MSS. omit the words ... ‘churches which are in Asia.’<sup>1</sup> There were seven churches in Asia Minor corresponding to those mentioned by name in this connection; but while this revelation may have been applicable to them in some manner or degree it was evidently in but a small measure. Those seven churches of Asia Minor, we understand were chosen of the Lord as symbols representing seven different epochs in the history of the one true church of Christ, from Pentecost day until the gathering to the Lord of the last grain of wheat in the end of this Gospel harvest.” (R2827:4)

“There are many reasons for concluding that while the messages were given to the seven churches specified and were applicable to them, they should properly have a still wider application to the whole church of Christ, the number seven representing completeness and the order representing different epochs in the history of the church. Thus the church at Ephesus would represent the condition of the church in the Apostle’s days at the time of the writing of the messages, while the Laodicean church would represent the church in our day – in the end of this Gospel age. The other churches would correspondingly represent different epochs intermediate, between the beginning and now. To think otherwise would be to attach more importance to those seven comparatively small churches of Asia Minor than they would seem to have deserved, and would have implied an ignoring of other churches more numerous and more influential than they; as, for instance, the churches at Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Colosse, Philippi, Thessalonica, etc. Furthermore, the details of the messages given to these seven churches apply to and fit historically the one church of the living God, over every member and branch of which the Lord has a care. This thought, that the seven represented completeness, we find emphasized in the other symbolical representations – in the seven golden candlesticks, the seven stars, etc.” (R3569:2, 3)

Accordingly, it appears that quite definite periods or epochs can be assigned, chronologically, to these “seven churches” as follows:

“**Ephesus** covers the period during the lives of the apostles; **Smyrna**, the time of the Pagan persecution, reaching to about 325 A.D., when Constantine became Emperor of Rome and declared in favor of Christianity. **Pergamos** embraces the transition

<sup>1</sup> While the words “which are in Asia” are missing from Rev. 1:11, according to some ancient Greek MSS., they do appear at Rev. 1:4! “In Asia” = “muddy.” See comments under Rev. 1:4



period during which the Papacy had its rise; **Thyatira**, the space during which the true church was in the wilderness, and the apostate church sat as a queen and lived deliciously with the kings of the earth. **Sardis** includes a short interval just before the Reformation; **Philadelphia**, the period from the Reformation until recent times; and **Laodicea**, the nominal church of today.” (R5992:3)

### Why these Seven Churches in Asia Minor?

“... we are given the names of the cities to which the messages were sent. Seven cities then existing, and which remain (some in ruins) until the present. Whether the condition of these local churches in John’s time was such as would be specially and respectively blessed by these messages, we know not; but it seems evident that these cities were chosen from a peculiarity in their names which fitted God’s purpose.” (R336:1, W. I. Mann)

“The Son of Man is seen ‘**clothed in a garment down to the foot**’ – a long, full-flowing robe such as was worn by kings and priests; not the dress of the common people. And he was **girded about the paps** (not about the loins as one about to toil or run, but about the paps as one in the repose and dignity of sovereignty) with a golden girdle.” (R1599:2, 4)

“**Seven**, as a symbolic number, represents perfection or completeness, and thus the **seven candlesticks**, the seven churches, represent the complete church, and this union of seven as one was most beautifully typified in the golden candlestick (lampstand) of the ‘Holy’ of the Tabernacle and subsequently of the Temple. The candlestick or lampstand was one, but there were seven branches or lights; while in this symbolical picture of the Church in Revelation each is represented separately, and our Lord’s messages are directed to the seven churches of the seven epochs separately; nevertheless, in reality the Church is all one. (1 Cor. 12:12) The union and the separateness are merely as we view the matter from two different standpoints. It is the one high priest who cares for all the lamps, and the one holy oil that in every stage of the Church has given light to all of the consecrated class, the ‘Royal Priesthood,’ who have access to the ‘Holy Place’ and are seated with Christ in heavenly places (conditions). (Eph. 2:6)” (R2827:2)

“In Revelation the same candlestick or lampstand is brought to our attention, but the parts are separated – the union, the relationship between them, being supplied by our Redeemer, the antitypical High Priest. **The lampstand symbolized the Lord’s nominal people of this Gospel age, including his ‘members.’** It holds forth the light of life, the light that shines in darkness and which he directed should be so let shine before men that they might see our

good works and glorify the Father in heaven.... It is to be noted that **the lampstand represents the nominal church of Christ rather than the true. This is shown by the fact that in the Lord’s addressing each of these lampstands or churches he finds fault with the many and approves the few**, especially so in the last, the seventh, the Laodicean church of our day.” (R3569:4)

“**His head and hair** as white as wool and snow tell us of his wisdom, and that he is the ‘Ancient of Days’; they speak also of splendor and purity. His eyes, like a flame of fire, tell us in symbol that our Master is all-seeing, omniscient; that he is not deceived by outward forms or ceremonies, but can and does read every thought and intent of the heart. The contemplation of his glance should of itself purge and purify our hearts to the extent of ability, to put far from us everything which would have his disapproval.” (R3569:5)

“... the Word of the Lord ... the sword of the Spirit, ‘**sharper than any two-edged sword.**’

“How heart-searching is the Word of God when we get to understand it – not merely as a compendium of rules and regulations, but when we come to catch the spirit of it, when we come to see that its requirement is love out of a pure heart, first to the Father, secondly to our Lord and Head, and thirdly to all his brethren, fourthly to the world in general, groaning and travailing in pain, waiting for the glorious blessings of the coming day, and fifthly, sympathetically toward our enemies also, realizing that they are warped and twisted and blinded through the deceitfulness of sin and through the machinations of the great adversary.” (R3570:5)

**1:12-16** – “And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.”

“**And I turned to see the voice that spake with me.**”

We must not forget that what John saw, was not in this instance, Jesus himself; but a vision in which the reality was symbolically represented:

“Visions are not realities, though they symbolically represent them. This is true, whether the vision come, as Daniel describes his, as ‘visions of my head upon my bed,’ or whether they come in broad daylight, as with the transfiguration scene, which our

Lord declared was a vision. (Matt. 17:9) The visions granted to John, recorded in the Book of Revelation, are in no sense and in no part to be understood as realities, and this is the significance of John's statement, 'I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day' – in a trance." (R2826:1)

### The Seven Golden Candlesticks

"Turning and looking, John saw in symbol as we may now see with the eye of faith and understanding. He saw one like a Son of man; (like a man – like a priest, as implied by the clothes described) walking amongst seven golden candlesticks, caring for them, trimming the wicks, seeing to the supply of oil, etc. We see that our Lord Jesus, our glorified Master, although absent from us, has been present with his church throughout the past eighteen centuries and more, protecting the interests of his cause and directing in respect to all of his people's affairs, especially inspecting and caring for the church as a light bearer, a candlestick. Alas, how poor the wicks sometimes have been, how feeble the light that has sometimes shone out into the darkness, how much of trimming has been necessary and how much more may yet be necessary!" (R3569:3, 4)

"The seven churches are distinct in their several characteristics, but one in their blended light." (F. B. Meyer)

"... when in Rev. 1:13, the Savior is seen 'in the midst of the candlesticks,' 'girt about the paps with a golden girdle,' we are to understand by it that our heavenly High Priest is there engaged in actual ministry for us." (Edersheim, *The Temple*, p. 73)

### The Care of the Candlestick!

"The lights were to be trimmed and replenished every morning and evening by the High Priest – Aaron, and his sons who succeeded him in office. (Exod. 27:20, 21; 30:8) So our High Priest is daily filling us more and more with the mind of Christ, and trimming off the dross of the old nature – the wick through which the holy spirit operates." (T116)

Exod. 27:21 – "Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the LORD."

Rev. 1:13 – "And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle."

"We are not to regard the word-picture of verses 13-16 as a portrait of our Lord in glory. It is a symbolical picture merely. He will not look as here described when we see him as he is and behold his glory. This symbolical picture, nevertheless, has precious lessons for us, more useful than an attempt

to describe to our minds the appearance of our Lord as a spirit being, 'dwelling in light which no man can approach unto,' and which we cannot appreciate until we shall be 'changed' and be like him and see him as he is." (R3569:5)

"Turning to see the one who addressed him John beheld seven golden candlesticks (lamp-stands), and standing in the midst of these one having the resemblance to a son of man – not the Son of man ... What John saw in vision was not understood by him to be the Lord's glorious body, nor even a representation of it, except in the sense that it was a symbolical representation.

"For instance, **the head, with its white hair**, corresponding to the Ancient of Days of Daniel's vision (Dan. 7:9), is not to teach us that our Lord in glory has a form of a man, and hairs that are white, but merely suggestive and symbolic of venerableness, of knowledge, experience, wisdom. The fiery or electric glance of **the eyes** should similarly be understood symbolically to represent penetrating intelligence, and ability to see and to know everything pertaining to his people, his church. **The mouth**, from which proceeded the sharp two-edged sword is not to tell us that this is the appearance of our Lord in glory, but merely to symbolize to us that his words in his church are to be as the sword of the Spirit, which the Apostle declares to be sharper than any two-edged sword, discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart, dividing and classifying his people, and separating from his elect every impure thing and every unacceptable element. His voice, as the sound of many waters, might be understood to mean that the Lord could and did speak to his Church sometimes as the voice of musical rippling waters of the brook, and sometimes as the roaring of the sea; or the many waters might be understood as signifying peoples, nations, and languages, as elsewhere explained in this book, and that thus our Lord, present with his church, would speak to her and through her by many tongues, in many languages – the latter view seems to us the more reasonable.

"**The hand**, in which were seven stars, is similarly to be understood as a symbolical part of the vision, representing the Lord's power in his church. **The stars**, as he explains (Rev. 1:20; 2:1, 8, 12, 18), are the angels or messengers or special servants of the church in each epoch. **The intimation is that the Lord would recognize in his church, in each of its seven stages or developments, one representative to whom he would specially address himself, and through whom he would specially instruct the church**, and whom he would specially hold or keep as his instrument by his own power or hand. This would not necessarily mean that one individual of the church

must be used of the Lord, even should he become unfit for service, but would imply that one servant would be recognized in each epoch. If that servant for any cause or in any manner seemed to be an unsuitable one, another might take his place and be the star or messenger of the church of that epoch.

“**The whole body** was covered, hidden from sight, with a robe, only the head, the hand and the feet being exposed to view, thus agreeing with the explanation given us by the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 12:12-31) in which he represents the whole Church as being the body of Christ and members in particular, but pointing out that some of the members of the Church may occupy the position of an eye or an ear or a tongue, and others the position of feet. Thus the Lord would be present with his people by his spirit dwelling in them, using different members of the body to accomplish for his body different services. **The feet**, described as like furnace-refined copper would represent those members of the body who serve, in the sense of carrying forward, financially and otherwise, the Lord’s work. Copper is a symbol of humanity, and this copper being furnace-refined would seem to say that those who belong to the body of Christ, and whom the Lord would use in his service, ‘the feet’ members of the body, must, in their contact and dealings with the world, be refined, purified, clean – ‘be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord’s house.’ The feet would thus represent the living members of the body, all down through this age; and the refining process to each and all will be fiery trials.

“Thus understood, the figure of a son of man (a human figure) in the midst of the seven candlesticks, etc., symbolically represented Christ standing criticizing, judging, directing, in the midst of his Church, upholding his chosen stars or ministers, and represented in the various members by his people, is an impressive picture, full of instruction, leading us to expect the Lord’s guidance in all the affairs of his Church, and to realize that things are not happening to her haphazardly. To so recognize that the Lord’s people in every part of this age have been ‘feet’ members of the body, carrying forward his work, is not to contradict our previous application of Isa. 52:7, which merely represents the ‘feet’ members of the present time, and identifies them as the ones who declare unto Zion, ‘Thy God reigneth’ – in this manner distinguishing these from their predecessors in the pilgrim way.” (R2826:5; 2827:1)

“The **countenance** of the majestic one present amongst the candlesticks is represented as being like lightning. This reminds us of Daniel’s description of the holy one who communicated the message of God to him upon one occasion; it reminds us of Paul’s description of the great light that he saw on his way

to Damascus, which represented to his understanding the glorified Lord shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday.” (R3569:6)

### **The Lord’s “Body”**

“Having described the **head**, John mentions the **hands** and **feet**. The remainder of the **body** was covered with a garment which reached from the head to his feet. This may possibly represent the fact that the glory of Christ was manifested in his own person, in his own ministry and in that of his twelve apostles, his representatives, and that with their death the body of truth was almost completely veiled throughout the eighteen centuries intervening until now, in the end of the age, the feet members will be illuminated by the truth and shine forth – not like the Head, but as polished brass. When we think of the great advantage every way which we of the present age possess, we are inclined to say, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holiness and God-likeness. We have the focused rays of divine inspiration and revelation from the past 6,000 years shining upon us with almost burning brightness, how it should consume in us all the dross of selfishness, how it should purify us, how humble it should make us, how we should be even in our flesh polished, bright, luminous representatives of the glorious Head and members of the Christ!” (R3569:5, 6)

### **The “Ancient of Days”**

(Rev. 1:13, 14; Dan. 7:9, 13, 22)

In Daniel’s prophecy, **Jehovah-God** is spoken of as “the **Ancient of days**.” In the same prophecy, our Savior, **Christ Jesus**, is spoken of as “**the Son of man**,” who comes to, and is brought before the Ancient of days, to receive, as it were, “dominion and glory.” (Dan. 7:13, 14) This thought is most beautifully set forth in the following citation:

“The transfer of the kingdom from the fourth beast, which for its appointed time was ‘ordained of God,’ to the fifth kingdom, under the Messiah, when its appointed season has come, is described by the Prophet in these words: ‘And behold, **one like the Son of man** came with the clouds of heaven, and **came near to the Ancient of days**, and they brought him near before him. And there was given to him (the Christ – Head and body complete) dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.’ This the angel interpreted to mean that ‘the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and all dominions shall serve and obey him.’

“Thus seen, **the dominion of earth is to be placed in the hands of Christ by Jehovah** (‘the **Ancient of days**’), who shall **‘put all things under his feet.’** (1 Cor. 15:27) Thus enthroned over God’s kingdom, he must reign until he shall have put down all authority and power in conflict with the will and law of Jehovah.” (A260, 261)

In the Old Testament times, it frequently happened that the messenger of Jehovah – our Lord Jesus, in his prehuman existence as the Logos, used the name of him, whom he represented. We quote:

“It is suggested that when it is recorded that Jehovah appeared to Abraham (Gen. 18:1), and again to Moses (Exod. 3:3-15), it must have been Christ Jesus in his prehuman condition; and hence that the name would be his. We answer that such reasoning is unwarranted: and **if the name were applied to another it would merely indicate that such servant was highly esteemed of Jehovah and really treated for the occasion as a steward or representative – commissioned to exercise divine power as well.** In Exod. 3:2, we are distinctly informed that the one representing Jehovah and using his most distinguished name, ‘I am,’ was ‘the angel [messenger] of Jehovah!’ That this honored messenger was ‘the Word’ (John 1:1), our Lord Jesus in his prehuman estate, we do not for a moment question, **but the highest and most honored messenger should not be confounded with the one whom he represents** and in whose name he speaks and whose power he exercised and bestowed upon Moses.” (E43)

In the revelation afforded John, the fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy is brought to our attention – the exaltation of Jesus; and his worthiness to receive “power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” (Rev. 5:12) However, our Lord Jesus is himself described much as Jehovah – the Ancient of days, in Dan. 7:9. We read in Rev. 1:13, 14 “... one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot ... his head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were a flame of fire.” Commenting on this, Bro. Russell had this to say:

“We are not to regard the word-picture of Rev. 1:13-16 as a portrait of our Lord in glory. It is a symbolical picture merely. He will not look as here described when we see him as he is and behold his glory. This symbolical picture ...

“His head and hair as white as wool and snow tell us of his wisdom, and, that he is **the ‘Ancient of days’**; they speak also of splendor and purity. His eyes like a flame of fire, tell us in symbol that our Master is all-seeing, omniscient; that he is not deceived by outward forms or ceremonies, but can and does read every thought of the heart.” (R3569:5)

So, Jesus is not really **the “Ancient of days,”** (though in many respects very much like him – Heb. 1:3) for in Dan. 7:13, 14 he, as “one like unto the Son of man is brought near and before **the Ancient of days.**” Perhaps in this connection, it will be well to bear in mind the fact that **now**, as never before, our Lord Jesus “who being the brightness of his [Jehovah’s] glory,” is also the “express image of his [Jehovah’s] person.” And, as the angel of old bore the name of Jehovah, the One whom he represented, so too, this messenger (Christ Jesus) is himself worthy to be identified with **the Ancient of days**, whom he still represents. Surely, by virtue of being the “beginning of the creation of God” (Rev. 3:14), **the “first-born of every creature”** (Col. 1:15), he is more “Ancient of days” than any other **creature**; but Jehovah-God is not a creature; and because of this, as the creator of them all, **HE IS THE “ANCIENT OF DAYS.”**

But, should one still wish to call Jesus, **the “Ancient of days,”** then Jehovah-God must be considered “excepted” as also in 1 Tim. 6:16 (R2747:4-6) since “the Father is **always excepted** as being inexpressibly above all comparisons.” (E79)

Some have noted that Bro. Russell (A260) applies the term “the Ancient of days” to the Christ – head and body, complete. Since the Church could not possibly be as ancient as the angelic hosts, just what could Bro. Russell have meant? Perhaps he had reference to the Church as the Lamb’s Wife, as sharing his name (or title), as set forth in Tabernacle Shadows. (T102) “And this is the name wherewith she shall [then] be called [her Lord’s name], The Righteousness of Jehovah.” (Jer. 33:16; 23:6)

### The Lord and his Messengers

“It is this one whom we thus know, thus recognize as the instructor and caretaker of the candlesticks, the churches; whom we are to recognize also as having **in his right hand**, in his favor as well as in his power, **seven stars** – the angels or messengers of the seven churches. These stars apparently represent special ministers or servants of the church. In Rev. 12:1 the church is pictured as a woman crowned with twelve stars. These stars evidently represent the twelve apostles as the special lights of the church. Similarly, in the picture before us, **the seven stars** which the Lord holds in his right hand seem to represent special light-bearers in the church in each of the seven phases or developments. That they are held in his right hand seems to teach us that these should be considered as in some special sense under the Master’s guidance and protection and care in the interest of the churches which they represented.

“It will be noticed that the messages to the various churches are all addressed to these stars or messengers or angels of the churches, as though **he would have us understand that the appropriate message for each appropriate time or epoch in the church’s**

**experience would be sent by the Lord through a particular star or messenger whom he would particularly commission as his representative.** Our Lord himself is represented by the great light of the sun, and his special messengers in the church throughout the entire period are consistently enough represented as stars.” (R3570:4)

### The “Stars”

“It is this one whom we thus know, thus recognize as the instructor and caretaker of the candlesticks, the churches; whom we are to recognize also as **having in his right hand – in his favor, as well as in his power, seven stars – the angels or messengers of the seven churches. These stars apparently represent special ministers or servants of the church.** In Rev. 12:1 the church is pictured as a woman crowned with twelve stars. **These stars evidently represent the twelve apostles** as the spiritual lights of the church. Similarly, in the picture before us, **the seven stars which the Lord holds in his right hand seem to represent special light-bearers in the church in each of the seven phases or developments.** That they are held in his right hand seems to teach us that these should be considered as in some special sense under the Master’s guidance and protection and care in the interests of the churches which they represented.” (R3570:2, 4)

The twelve stars (Rev. 12:1) would represent the following apostles:

Peter (a k a Simon), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew (a k a Nathanael), Thomas, Matthew, James (a k a the Lord’s brother), Lebbaeus (a k a Thaddaeus), Simon (a k a the zealot), and Paul!

We believe that the seven messengers (“stars”) to the seven churches in “Asia Minor,” to have been as follows:

Ephesus . . . . . Paul  
 Smyrna . . . . . John  
 Pergamos . . . . . Arius  
 Thyatira . . . . . Waldo  
 Sardis . . . . . Wycliffe  
 Philadelphia . . . . . Luther  
 Laodicea . . . . . Russell

Of these, the first two, Paul and John, were of the duly inspired Apostles; the remaining five, Arius, Waldo, Wycliffe, Luther and Russell, though not divinely inspired, were nevertheless divinely appointed, and overruled in the matter of their utterances and writings, in the interests of the true church!

**1:17, 18** – “And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”

“So great was the splendor that John **fell as dead** when he beheld it, just as Daniel fell prostrated and

was like a dead man in the presence of the mighty one whom he saw, and just as Saul of Tarsus fell down before the majesty displayed to him. So symbolically with us, when once we get a glimpse of the glories of the divine character through the divine plan, when once we get a true view with the eyes of our understanding of him with whom we have to do, as the great heart-searcher and caretaker of his church, we fall before him humbled to the dust, realizing that we are imperfect, that we cannot stand before our Master, that we are unworthy of his favor and blessing. But as he touched John gently, raising him up, so he has spoken to us comfort, peace and love, assuring us that we have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but, on the contrary, one who is able to sympathize and mercifully to assist, one who has bought us with his own precious blood, who has accepted us and will number us as his body members, so long as we abide in him, seeking in our hearts to know and to do his will.

“His comforting assurance to us is: (1) ‘Fear not.’ The same message that the Father sent us through the prophet Isaiah, saying, ‘Their fear of me is not of me, but is taught by the precepts of men.’ (Isa. 29:13) This lesson, ‘Fear not,’ is one of the first that we must learn. We cannot come into close sympathy with our Lord and be taught of him respecting other features of his plan until we learn this lesson, ‘Fear not,’ until we learn to have confidence in him as the one who loved us and bought us with his precious blood, and whose purposes toward us continually are for our welfare and, if we submit ourselves to his guidance, to bring us off conquerors and more than conquerors. (2) ‘**I am the First and the Last.**’ We must recognize our Lord as the one who was the beginning of the creation of God and the end of it, the one by whom were all things, the one who is next to the Father, his very representative in everything pertaining to the affairs of the universe. (3) We must recognize him as the one who **was dead**, the one who really died for our sins, but who was really raised out of death by the power of the Father. (4) We must realize that he is **alive forevermore**, that death has no more dominion over him, that the work is finished, that neither sacrifices of the mass nor death in any other sense or form has dominion over him nor ever will have, nor will ever be needed; his work is perfect, and, as he cried on the cross, ‘It is finished.’ (5) We must recognize that he has **the keys**, the authority, the power over the tomb, to deliver from it all who are there imprisoned. We must also realize that he has the ‘key,’ the power over death, so that those whom he liberates from the prison-house of death, the tomb, like those who have not yet gone into it but who are under the sentence of death, may all be ultimately delivered, set free



from the dominion of sin and death, delivered into the full liberty of the sons of God, righteousness and life eternal.” (R3569:6)

### Those “Seeing” Him Falling as Dead!

“Not all, but only those who **fall as dead** before the Lord, who recognize their own nothingness, who, in the language of this symbolical book, are beheaded, or lose their own wills, accepting the will of the Lord instead (Rev. 20:4) – these alone are ever able to fully receive this message from the Lord appreciatively. From these **fear** is cast out; and they alone may know that our Lord was the first-born of all creation, and the last; that he was the beginning of Jehovah’s work, and the end of it, and that all beings and things were made by or through him, and that ‘without him was not one thing made that was made.’ (John 1:3) These also may know, fully appreciate, understand, that the Lord now liveth, and in order to appreciate this they must understand that he was dead for parts of three days – not merely apparently dead, but actually dead – his soul poured out unto death, made an offering for sin. (Isa. 53:10-12)” (R2827:4)

### The Only Direct Creation of God the Father!

“... he was not only the beginning of the creation of God, and the first-born, but additionally his Only Begotten Son, and ... all other creations were by and through him; we find a beautiful corroborative statement in our Lord’s own words, saying: ‘Fear not, I am **the first and the last**; I am he that **liveth and was dead**, and behold I am **alive forevermore**.’ And again, ‘These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive.’ (Rev. 1:17; 2:8) In no other sense or way than as the ‘Only’ direct creation of God, through whom all else was created, could our Lord be the first and the last of God’s creation. Any other view, therefore, would be an incorrect one, and in conflict with... the... Scriptures.” (E93)

**1:19,20** – “Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.”

The Greek text here reads, “Write, **therefore**, the things.”

“There appears to be no excuse whatever for the translators of our Common Version to have omitted the word **therefore** from this text – an omission that no previous translator had made. No question has ever been raised as to the right of this word to a place in the text. ‘With what intention the illative particle is used is perhaps best referred to what immediately goes before: Seeing that I am this mighty One, the first and the last, who was dead and am alive, do

thou, therefore, write; for the things declared by Me are all steadfast and sure’.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Streeter, p. 98)

“**The things which thou hast seen, and the things which are**” perhaps, has reference to what John had already experienced; and which, in a sense, was in the past; but which, nevertheless, still engaged his attention!

“**And the things which shall be hereafter.**” Quite evidently, the things which had thus far engaged his attention, the “seven stars,” and the “seven golden candlesticks,” were to remain, as it were, a part of an ever expanding vision. So, there was now, first to be made known unto him “**the mystery of the seven stars**” which the Lord held in his right hand; and of “**The seven golden candlesticks.**”

“**The seven stars**” the Lord declared “**are the angels [messengers] of the seven churches.**”

“The stars he explains (Rev. 1:20; 2:1, 8, 12, 18) are the angels or messengers or special servants of the Church in each epoch. The intimation is that the Lord would recognize in his Church, in each of its seven stages or developments, **one representative to whom he would specially address himself, and through whom he would instruct the Church**, and whom he would hold or keep as his instrument by his own power or hand.” (R2826:6)

“**In his right hand**,’ signifies ... in his favor as well as in his power ... should be considered as in some special sense under the Master’s guidance and protection and care in the interest of the Churches they represented.” (R3570:4)

But who are these “seven stars”? Since the Scriptures do not definitely name these “angels”; and with exception perhaps, for the Laodicean period, Bro. Russell has given no clues as to whom they may have been; the matter is now one more or less of conjecture, wherein we cannot afford to be dogmatic. However, as we do with other Scriptural prophecies, on finding certain well-attested, historical facts, fully in harmony with these prophecies, we accept them as fulfilled; so we may do here.

A suggestion has been made as to who these seven messengers are; and since history bears out the fact that the particular work each did; the particular truth (dogmas, doctrines, etc.) he declared; and the particular time in which he lived, all coincide with what was prophetically foretold of them (Rev. 2:1-3:22), we accept the list as being correct. (List of seven names on previous page)

### The “Church” Periods

We cannot be absolutely positive with regard to the beginning and ending, or the length of any of these “church” periods, since the Scriptures themselves do not specifically inform us. The dates here suggested, therefore, as to the beginning and the ending of the respective periods, are mere approximations:

|       |   |              |      |      |    |        |
|-------|---|--------------|------|------|----|--------|
| RS992 | { | Ephesus      | A.D. | 33   | to | 73     |
|       |   | Smyrna       | "    | 73   | to | 325    |
|       |   | Pergamos     | "    | 325  | to | 1160   |
|       |   | Thyatira     | "    | 1160 | to | 1378 a |
|       |   | Sardis       | "    | 1378 | to | 1518 b |
|       |   | Philadelphia | "    | 1518 | to | 1874 c |
|       |   | Laodicea     | "    | 1874 | to | ?      |

- a. First translation of Bible into French, about A.D.1160
- b. First translation of Bible into English, about A.D.1380
- c. First translation of Bible into German, about A.D.1534

**The Chronological Periods**

“To give a bird’s-eye view of the arrangement, we would notice their chronological position. Ephesus covers the period during the lives of the apostles; Smyrna, the time of the Pagan persecution, reaching to about 325 A.D., when Constantine became Emperor of Rome and declared in favor of Christianity. Pergamos embraces the transition period during which the Papacy had its rise; Thyatira, the space during which the true church was in the wilderness, and the apostate church sat as a queen, and lived deliciously with the kings of the earth. Sardis includes a short interval just before the Reformation; Philadelphia, the period from the Reformation until recent times; and Laodicea, the nominal church of today.” (RS992:3)

**“We are not to think of the different epochs represented in the messages to the various churches as being exact periods, as though there was a particular instant of beginning and a particular instant of closing.** Rather we are to understand each to be a general period, which laps over the one on the other.” (RS718:1)

While Bro. Russell believed that these messengers to the “seven churches,” were all individuals, to whom God, through Christ Jesus, had given a personal responsibility toward his Church (R2826:6), and that he, himself, was the messenger of the Laodicean period, he was too modest openly so to declare it. Yet, one can find it, if he looks for it, tenderly and graciously hidden away in the following excerpt from his pen:

“The revelation being complete, John fell down before the angel who had given him the revelation to offer him worship. This might signify that in the end of this Gospel age as the whole Church, the John class, comes to see the unfolding of the divine plan there might be a spirit or disposition among them **to do too much honor to the one used of the Lord in communicating to them the divine light now due.**” (R3572:4)

**The Pleiades, “Seven Stars”  
(See Job 38:31 margin)**

In the constellation Taurus, there is a group of stars called the Pleiades. To the ancients they were known as “the seven stars.” In fact, they are referred to in Job 38:31, where Job is asked, “Canst thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades?” In the *Authorized Version*, the margin reads, **“the seven stars.”**

Some have felt that the Pleiades represent the center of God’s universe; that life, energy, power, etc., emanate from there. Hence the query, “Canst thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades?” We believe there is something more that needs to be said about these “seven stars.” Could they in some way represent the seven “angels” or messengers, which are held in the right hand of our Lord (Rev. 1:20) and from whence sweet influences of divine truth and love emanate for the blessing of the Church of God! Nor is there anything that can really thwart this holy influence of these “seven stars” – for they lie, as it were, far beyond the reach of man! “Clouds” – earth-born clouds – may at times have obscured their light, but their benign influences have never ceased to penetrate through them.

In passing, we might say that there are many more than seven stars in this group, which the telescope has revealed; but the ancients saw only seven of them; and to many, the unaided eye revealed only six. We suggest, that while God has placed “seven messengers” in a special place with regards to the guidance and enlightenment of the Church, there have undoubtedly been many other “stars” who have assisted in this direction, but they were not to be as conspicuous as “the seven stars.”

“It is now ascertained that the sun also is in motion, carrying with it its splendid retinue of comets, planets, its satellites and theirs, around some other and vastly mightier center. Astronomers are not yet fully agreed as to what or where that center is. Some, however, believe they have found the direction of it to be **the Pleiades**, and particularly Alcyone, the central one of the renowned Pleiadic stars. To the distinguished German astronomer, Prof. J. H. Maedler, belongs the honor of having made this discovery. Alcyone, then, as far as science has been able to perceive, would seem to be ‘the midnight throne’ in which the whole system of gravitation has its central seat, and from which the Almighty governs his universe...” (C327)<sup>1</sup>

“From the clearer astronomical knowledge of our day, it has been ascertained that while the planets of our solar system revolve around the sun, yet there are vast numbers of other suns each having its own retinue of planets, which with their satellites are revolving around it as a center. Furthermore,

<sup>1</sup> See also *Bible Teachings in Nature*, MacMillan, p. 8

science declares that there is a far mightier center, around which these countless millions of suns revolve, accompanied by their planets and satellites. This great center seems to be associated with the Pleiades, particularly with Alcyone, the central star of this renowned group. **For this reason the suggestion has been made that the Pleiades may represent the residence of Jehovah, the place from which he governs the universe.** This thought gives new force to the question which the Almighty asked the patriarch Job: ‘Canst thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth the constellations of the Zodiac in their season?’ (Job 38:31, 32)” (R5710:2)

“So far as he (Job) was concerned, the question, ‘Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?’ might have referred to what was then the common belief – viz., that the genial weather of spring was somehow caused by the peculiar position of the Pleiades in the sky at that season; as if God had simply said, ‘Canst thou hinder or retard the Spring?’ It remained for modern science to make a grander and wider application of it, and to show in this, as in other instances, that the Bible is so framed as to expand its horizon with the march of discovery – that the requisite stability of a moral rule is, in it, most admirably combined with the capability of movement and progress. If we examine the text in Job 38:31 in the original, we find that the Chaldaic word translated in our version Pleiades is Chimah, meaning literally a hinge, pivot, or axle, which turns round and moves other bodies along with it. Now, strange to say, the group of stars thus characterized has recently been ascertained, by a series of independent calculations – in utter ignorance of the meaning of the text – to be actually the hinge or axle round which the solar system revolves. It was long known as one of the most elementary truths of astronomy, that the earth and the planets revolve around the sun; but the question recently began to be raised among astronomers, ‘Does the sun stand still, or does it move round some other object in space, carrying its train of planets and their satellites along with it in its orbit?’ Attention being thus specially directed to this subject, it was soon found that the sun had an appreciable motion, which tended in the direction of a lily-shaped group of small stars, called the constellation of Hercules. Toward this constellation, the stars seem to be opening out; while at the opposite point of the sky their mutual distances are apparently diminishing – as if they were drifting away, like the foaming wake of a ship from the sun’s course.

“When this great physical truth was established beyond the possibility of doubt, the next subject of investigation was the point, or center round which

the sun performed this marvelous revolution; and after a series of elaborate observations and most ingenious calculations, this intricate problem was also satisfactorily solved – one of the greatest triumphs of human genius. Prof. J. H. Meadler of Dorpat found that Alcyone, the brightest star of the Pleiades, is the center of gravity of our vast solar system – the luminous hinge in the heavens round which our sun and his attendant planets are moving through space.” (*Bible Teachings in Nature*, Hugh Macmillan, p. 7, 8)

“**And the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.**” These seven candlesticks are first brought to our attention in Rev. 1:12, 13, as the symbolism for the “seven churches,” i.e., the seven stages in the development of the one, the Gospel age Church!

“... in his last great message to the Church our Lord pictures seven golden candlesticks or lampstands separated from one another, and explains that these represented the seven stages or epochs of the Church symbolized by the seven congregations in Asia.” (R3650:6)

“In Revelation the same candlestick or lampstand is brought to our attention, but the parts are separated – the union, the relationship between them, being supplied by our Redeemer, the antitypical High Priest. **The lampstand symbolized the Lord’s nominal people of this Gospel age, including his ‘members.’** It holds forth the light of life, the light that shines in darkness and which he directed should be so let shine before men that they might see our good works and glorify the Father in heaven... It is to be noted that **the lampstand represents the nominal church of Christ rather than the true. This is shown by the fact that in the Lord’s addressing each of these lampstands or churches he finds fault with the many and approves the few, especially so in the last, the seventh, the Laodicean church of our day.**” (R3569:4)

Next in John’s account of the vision is the record of the messages to be addressed to the seven churches in Asia Minor, by way of their respective “angels.” With three notable exceptions the messages have seven major divisions, as follows:

- (1) The Salutation
- (2) Identification of the Speaker
- (3) Commendation
- (4) Condemnation
- (5) Admonition
- (6) Entreaty
- (7) Promise to the overcomers.

The exceptions are: Smyrna and Philadelphia, for whom there is no condemnation; and Laodicea, for whom there is **only** condemnation!



# 7 CHURCHES OF ASIA MINOR



**2:1** – “Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.”

The little congregation at Ephesus was representative of all the assemblies of God (at Jerusalem, Antioch, Rome, Corinth, Colosse, Philippi, Thessalonika, etc., so well as the other six churches in Asia Minor), during the first – the initial stage or period of the Christian Church’s development.

But, who was the “angel” or messenger of this “Ephesus” church? We believe it was Paul; for while all the Apostles – Peter, John, etc., were “stars” or light-bearers to the early church, it was Paul, who more than any other, fulfilled the mission of “the angel” or “the star”! This becomes very evident when one examines his life, his epistles, and his work. Surely, he was richer in visions by far, than all the other Apostles combined. “... **the care of all the churches.**” (2 Cor. 11:28)

“St. Paul, the most learned of the twelve ... after his eyes of understanding had been opened, and after he had become a spirit-begotten new creature, St. Paul manifested a wonderful insight into the things divine. Explaining this insight, he declared that he had visions and revelations more than had all the other apostles of the Lord together. (2 Cor. 12:1, 7, 11, 12)

“All this was in harmony with what the Lord said respecting him: ‘He is a chosen vessel unto me.... I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name’s sake.’ (Acts 9:15,16) Naturally, the Lord could use a well-talented man, a well-educated man, who had fully given up his own will, to better advantage than he could use an illiterate man; and of some of the remainder of the apostles it is written that even the multitude perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant. (Acts 4:13) Not so with St. Paul, however. He had education and a wonderful breadth of mind. All the spirit-begotten children of God, able to understand the deep things of the Bible, are surely amazed at the logic, the wisdom and the power of St. Paul’s writings! We know of nothing in the world that will compare with them.

“Pushed to the front as the Lord’s mouthpiece to the Gentiles, St. Paul’s mind grasped more quickly than did the minds of the other apostles, the things pertaining to the new dispensation; and he perceived that the Gentiles were to be fellow-heirs with the Jews in the kingdom privileges. (Eph. 3:12; Col. 1:25-27) Naturally, some thought that St. Paul was going too far; and the argument was raised that he was not one of the twelve, that he was not to be ranked as an apostle, etc.

“However willing St. Paul might have been to be nothing and to let others take their own estimate of

him, nevertheless he felt a duty toward the truth. This led him to tell us in no uncertain terms that he had full proof of his apostleship, and that he was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles in the understanding of the divine program – yea, that to him more than all the others the Lord had revealed more of those things to come which our Lord Jesus had spoken. (John 16:13; 2 Cor. 11:5; Gal. 2:2-10; etc.)” (RS941:6)

Was it not St. Paul, as the “angel” of this Church, who identified for those of “Ephesus” the One who had commissioned him to give the message (Acts 9:15; Rom. 1:1; Eph. 3:7-9); the One “**who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks,**” (Rev. 2:1) – as the high priest of our profession? (Heb. 3:1; 8:1-3; See also Heb. 5:1-3; 7:26, 27; 9:11, 24; 10:11, 12)

Heb. 3:1 – “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, [to be] Christ Jesus.”

Heb. 7:26, 27 – “For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.”

Heb. 8:1, 2 – “... we have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.”

Heb. 9:11 – “Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands.”

Heb. 9:24 – “Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”

### The Priest and the Candlestick

Lev. 24:3, 4 – “... in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: it shall be a statute for ever in your generations. He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually.”

### Ephesus

“The word Ephesus means first, **desirable**. During this period our Lord ‘holdeth the seven stars in his right hand,’ etc. (Chapter 1:20) The messengers of the churches – St. Paul, St. Peter, St. John etc. – were so powerfully led and kept in the grasp of our Lord during this epoch that we accept their teachings



as his, believing that their words were really his words. This stage of the church is commended for its faithful, patient labor and for its discernment of truth and true teachers." (Acts 20:28-30; 1 Cor. 11:19)

"It was characteristic of this period that 'they forsook all and followed him.' They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. They sold what they had and gave to those in want. Though often deprived of the bread of this present life, they not only had the Living Bread, but had the promise of 'the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.' It will be remembered that all the trees in Eden were trees of life, but that the one in the midst of the Garden was then a forbidden tree, the disobedient eating of which brought death upon Adam and all his race. That tree in the midst of Paradise was called 'the tree of the knowledge of good and evil'; and our Lord's promise in today's study is that the overcomers of the Gospel age shall have full liberty to partake of that tree under most blessed and satisfactory conditions when the knowledge will be of benefit to them under divine approval, and will not then bring a curse." (R5992:3)

### Paul and the Church at Ephesus!!!

"Ephesus was in many respects the scene of the Apostle Paul's most successful work. He spent about three years there altogether, accompanied by Timothy, Erastus, Titus, and, possibly others. **The influence of his work, either directly or indirectly, extended to other cities round about. It is supposed that it was during this stay at Ephesus that congregations were started in nearby places, mentioned in Revelation as 'the seven churches of Asia' (Minor).** Our last lesson showed the Apostle beginning his work at Ephesus in the synagogue. He continued to present the truth until opposition to it became quite marked, and certain of the Jewish adherents began to speak evil of the teachings of the believers. Then the apostle and those who believed, unwilling to continue a condition of strife, discontinued their attendance at the synagogue, and began a separate meeting, apparently in a rented public hall, called 'The School of Tyrannus,' because, according to the custom of that time, it was used by him for this purpose in the forenoons." (R3157:3)

### City of Ephesus

"Ephesus: an illustrious city in the district of Ionia, nearly opposite the island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. Of the Roman province of Asia, Ephesus was the capital." (*Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*)

"Ephesus means, first, desirable." (R491:1)

### Paul – First Messenger!

"Besides ... the care of all the churches." (2 Cor. 11:28)

"Upon him devolved the care of all the churches of the Gentiles, and great were the responsibilities of the office. Though the position was a most laborious and trying one, requiring great fortitude, zeal, energy and self-denial to fill it, it was also one of great honor." (R1744:3)

**2:2, 3** – "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."

Again, it was the Apostle Paul, as the "angel" of the Church of "Ephesus," who commended the Church of this period for its "faithful, patient labor and for its discernment of truth and true teachers. (Acts. 20:28-30; 1 Cor. 11:19)

Rev. 2:2, 3 – "**I know thy works ... labor ... patience ... hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted.**"

1 Thes. 1:3 – "Remembering without ceasing **your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Thes. 1:8 – "... in every place **your faith to Godward** is spread abroad."

Rom. 1:8 – "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that **your faith** is spoken of throughout the whole world."

2 Cor. 8:2 – "... in a great **trial of affliction** the abundance of their joy and **their deep poverty** abounded unto the **riches of their liberality.**"

Heb. 10:34 – "... ye had **compassion** of me in my bonds, and **took joyfully the spoiling of your goods**, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance."

"It was characteristic of this period that 'they forsook all and followed him.' They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods. They sold what they had and gave to those in want." (R5992:3)

Not only did the Lord thus, through the "angel" commend them for their work, toil and patience, but also, because they could "... **not bear them which are evil: and ... tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.**"

"... because 'thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.' Why, in apparent opposition to the general command, 'Judge not,' are they commended at this and

only this time for trying these false teachers? Because to the first church (and only to her) was given the supernatural power of discerning of spirits. The case of Ananias and Sapphira, of Simon and Elymas the sorcerers, and others, reveal this power.” (W. I. Mann; R336:4)

There was an evil at Corinth, concerning which Paul was in some way apprised; and it grieved him. He wrote to them about it; and they too were grieved; but they were also moved to correct it. Evidently, they had been unaware of it; at least, did not fully appreciate its evil potentialities! Now he writes to them again:

2 Cor. 2:3-6 – “... lest when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart **I wrote you** with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you. But if I have caused grief, he hath not grieved me – but in part: that I may not overcharge you all. Sufficient to such a man is this punishment which was inflicted of many.”

There were some also, who had come to Corinth, claiming their word to be of equal weight to that of the original Twelve; in other words, that they too were Apostles. They tried these; found them lacking in the spirit of the truth – found them liars, and turned away from them. (Rev. 2:2)

These false teachers, who even during the very life-time of the original Twelve, claimed their words and teachings had equal weight to those of the Apostles, subsequent to the death of the latter, claimed themselves to be their successors; and by this, these “Nicolaitanes” have ever since sought to lord it over God’s heritage – the Church of God! It was Paul who first drew attention to this “mystery of iniquity.” (Acts 20:29, 30; 2 Thes. 2:7) God hates them; and commends those, who having a sufficiency of the Spirit of Truth motivating them, also hate and despise these workers of iniquity. (Rev. 2:6) St. Peter’s admonition to the elders of his day, is worthy of note: “... feed the flock ... taking oversight ... not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; **neither as being lords over God’s heritage**, but being ensamples of the flock, and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” (1 Pet. 5:2-4)

### **The True Church and the False The Sanctuary Class and the Host**

“Thus is shown a division of the church into two marked classes, distinguished in Dan. 8:11-14 as **the sanctuary** and **the host**; one class, corrupted by the flattering honors of the world, violated its covenant

with God, while the other class was really strengthened by the persecutions to which their loyalty to God exposed them.” (C37)

### **Apostles ... are not!**

“... he said, ‘The Word of God is sufficient, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished.’ (Acts 20:32; 2 Tim. 3:15-17) We see, then, that the Church needed no more than the twelve Apostles, nor any further revelation of any kind than those given to her through this inspired Apostleship. But that there would be some who mistakenly would claim to be apostles, the Lord Jesus clearly indicated, declaring that there would be false apostles, ‘who say that they are apostles and are not.’ (Rev. 2:2)” (OV396)

### **Would-Be Apostles (or Apostles’ Successors)**

“About the year 325 A.D. the Bishops of the Church, misled by Satan, proclaimed themselves to be successors of the Apostles in power and Divine authority; whereas the Bible declares that there were only ‘Twelve Apostles of the Lamb.’ (Rev. 21:14)

“When in the Sixteenth Century the light of the Reformation began to break, the people began to look past the Bishops and to enquire what Jesus and the Apostles had said. They wanted the Bible. But for a time the Bishops stood in their way. It was in the year 1526 A.D., exactly twelve centuries after the making of the first creed, that Professor Tyndale, a godly man and a scholar, translated the New Testament into English and sought to give it to the British people. Although printing and paper had been invented, he could not have his work published in Great Britain; for the power of the Bishops was too strong. No printers dared offend them.

“Professor Tyndale finally succeeded in having his work printed on German presses in the city of Hamburg, and then imported these New Testaments into London. They appeared in shop windows, and the people rejoiced. But the masses found themselves unable to read; for education was only amongst the favored few. They started to have Bible readings – to hire scholarly persons to read them. But the Bishops, learning of these things, bought up the entire edition of Tyndale’s New Testament and publicly burned the books in front of St. Paul’s Cathedral, in London – Protestant Bishops of the Church of England! They reasoned that if the people got back to the Bible, they would ignore the creeds and those who had made the creeds; and that thus their own honor and influence be lost. They foresaw also that all the creeds would be challenged by Bible authority, and that their Apostolic claims also would be challenged by the words of Jesus, who declares that those who so claim ‘do lie.’ – (Rev. 2:2)” (SMS49)

### “So Soon Removed ...”

“To the church of Galatia he wrote: ‘I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him [Paul] that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the Gospel of Christ.’ But now let me tell you; ‘Though we [Paul and his associates] or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that we have preached ... and ye have received, let him be accursed.’ (Gal. 1:6-9)

“And let me say further, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me, is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. (vs. 11, 12) I Paul am an Apostle, not of men, neither by man’s appointment, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised him from the dead. (vs.1) You heard of me in times past how I persecuted the Church of God and how I wasted it and how zealous I was for the tradition of my fathers. (vs. 13, 14) (And he verily thought he did God’s service. Acts 26:9) But when it pleased God who from my birth called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood, but went forth at once to preach the faith which once I persecuted. (vs. 15, 16, 23)

“To prove to you that I received my commission and authority direct from the Lord and not from them which were Apostles before me, let me tell you that I did not go up to Jerusalem until three years after my conversion; and then I went to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days; but other of the Apostles saw I none save James, the Lord’s brother.” (R551:1)

**2:4, 5** – “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”

But St. Paul would have been unfaithful as the “angel” to this “Ephesian” Church, had he not also made them mindful of the fact, that some among them had **left their “first love.”** (Gal. 1:6-9)

Though Paul, in this passage – “so soon removed from **him** who called you into the grace of Christ,” may have had particular reference to himself (R551:1), it stands to reason, nevertheless, that by transferring their personal affections from the Apostle Paul, to those who were propounding “another gospel” they also removed themselves from the One, who in, and above all things, ought to be their “first love.”!

This **other “gospel”** makes consecration a far less difficult matter, for it proposes certain compromises,

which will not be quite so offensive to the world, the flesh, and the devil. Thus –

“Some, who started out with an appreciation of God’s gift and their consequent reasonable service of full consecration to God’s service, have been sidetracked and hindered, by ‘the cares of this life or the deceitfulness of riches’ (sought, even if not secured). These do not love sin, nor delight in its practice; they love righteousness in word, thought and deed, and wish that circumstances were favorable to righteousness, and long for the time when Satan and sin shall be bound for the thousand years of Christ’s reign, and pray fervently, ‘Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.’ Yet they are so in bondage to the customs of society, so fond of the approval of fellow creatures, and the spirit of Christ in them is so blended with the spirit of worldliness, that they are hindered from performing the sacrifice of earthly things and interests which they covenanted to do **when flushed with their warm first love** and appreciation of God’s goodness and grace in Christ. **They have lost much of their first love;** and, consequently, self-sacrifices for the King, and his cause are more painful and more difficult. At first they accounted it joy to be permitted to suffer for the truth and for right doing with and like their Lord: now it is a painful duty which they shirk repeatedly, and repeatedly mourn over. They resolve that they will again take up the cross and find the old joy in bearing it; yet they do not do so.

“Their fault and hindrance began in dividing their hearts between heavenly and earthly interests. They listened to the voices of the world, the flesh and the devil (and the nominal church), saying, ‘Be not an extremist in piety; take a moderate course, else you will be considered a religious fanatic...’ They had no thought of abandoning their covenant of suffering and death with Christ, but intended merely to do their suffering and dying in a more moderate way than a full surrender – an out and out sacrifice, once and for ever, of earthly hopes, aims, friendships, etc. Alas! they did not realize that they could not sacrifice themselves, – that only the High Priest of our profession Christ Jesus, can perform the great sacrifice by which we become dead to the world and alive toward God. He must lay his hands (power) upon those who would be joint-sacrificers; he must offer them. And **he offers none except the fully consecrated;** nor would the Father accept upon his altar any others than these. In determining to sacrifice themselves piecemeal when and how they and their friends might please, was the primary mistake.... And the mistake continues: therefore their repeated determinations to ‘suffer joyfully’ are always failures.

**“The only way out of their difficulty is to do their first works** (Rev. 2:5) – to commence over again by a full surrender of themselves to the Lord, that he may sacrifice them and give them grace to endure it joyfully and thus through full obedience restore them ... ‘overcomers’ who shall ‘inherit all things’.” (R2020:2,3)

Perhaps it was the sense of security **in themselves** – an element of spiritual pride – that caused some of this early “Ephesian” church to fall from their original position of grace and favor, and to the loss of their “first love.” But were they not duly warned against this? Had not their “angel” admonished them not to think of themselves more highly than they ought; to think soberly? (Rom. 12:3; Gal. 6:3) He well knew that there was nothing wrong about standing in the grace and favor of God; but he also knew that this required great humility – a thing so delicate that even to think that we have it can damage or destroy it. Accordingly, he wrote to them:

1 Cor. 10:12 – “Let him that [even] thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

Indeed, the Lord does strive with his people: he is patient, long-suffering and kind. Yet there does come a time when his striving must cease. Note carefully, how he bore with Israel of old, from the time when he delivered them – liberated them from the bondage of Egypt, until he had brought them to Kadesh Barnea, the portal of the Promised Land. Time after time he seemed to ignore their unbelief and disobedience! Then there came an end to this, when he said to them that because they had seen his glory and his miracles in Egypt, and in the wilderness, but had tempted him ten times without even hearkening to his words, he would now punish them by not allowing them to enter the land, and by turning them back into the howling wilderness until they should die. (See Num. 14:21-23, 32, 33; also Amos. 3:2)

So also, did our Lord strive with the Spiritual Israel represented in the “Ephesus” church. He would have all of them hearken to his **“Repent ... do thy first works,”** else he would remove them as a candlestick out of its place! (Rev. 2:5) This, seemingly, implies that there was a certain time allotted to those of the early church in which to make their “calling and election” sure; but that this time could and would be cut short if they failed in time, to **“hearken,” “repent,”** and **do their “first works.”**

Is not this the very import of the “angel’s” message to this church when he writes:

Heb. 10:32, 33, 35-39 – **“... call to remembrance the former days,** in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. **Cast not away therefore your confidence,** which hath

great recompence of reward. For **ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.** For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but **if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”**

### **Peter ... his Fall!**

**“Notwithstanding all that Jesus had said to forewarn him of the sifting experiences that were just before him,** St. Peter realized no dread, no fear. Hence he did little watching and praying in comparison with what he should have done, and **self-confidence led to his undoing for a time.**

“It was the same St. Peter who, when told he would deny our Lord before the time for the cock to crow the next morning, declared that it surely was a mistake, for he was ready to die with his Master. It was the same St. Peter who drew the sword and cut off the ear of the high priest’s servant, afterward healed by Jesus. It was the same impulsive St. Peter who was the first to acknowledge the Messiahship of Jesus....

“Temptations will come in an insidious form. We cannot imagine that at the time when he cut off the ear of the high priest’s servant St. Peter had any sympathy with the thoughts of denying our Lord. But circumstances and conditions changed. The Master was taken prisoner. Whatever power he had previously exercised whereby he walked away from his enemies, and they could not take him because his ‘hour had not yet come,’ that power he evidently was not exercising now – his hour had come. To see his Master apparently without friends in heaven, delivered over to his enemies and led from one tribunal to the other, had a paralyzing effect upon St. Peter....

**“Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.’ When we are weak in our own estimation and, full of faith, cling tenaciously to the Arm of the Lord, then we are really strong in the might which God supplies through His Eternal Son.”** (R5563:1,3,5)

### **God’s Forbearance (patience)**

Num. 23:21 – “He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them.”

**2:6** – “But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.”

“The ‘doctrine of the Nicolaitanes’ seems to be the theory of lordship or headship in the church. The

strife as to who should be the greatest of the patriarchs – fathers – of the prominent churches. At their councils there was a bitter fight for supremacy. The tendency was toward an earthly head, and of course many coveted the honor. The patriarchs of Jerusalem, Antioch, Constantinople and Rome were the most prominent. The first two dropped out of the conflict, but the strife continued for several hundred years between Constantinople and Rome. It was settled only by a division of the church: the Eastern, or Greek Church, accepting the Patriarch of Constantinople for its head; and the Western, or Papal Church, acknowledging the bishop – pope or father – of Rome.”(R5993:1)

In support of the foregoing suggestion that the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes seemed to be the theory of lordship or headship in the church, we will here quote the following excerpt from a lengthy article in *McClintock & Strong's Cyclopaedia*:

“The ingenious conjecture of Michaelis is worthy of consideration, who supposes that by Nicolaitanes, (Rev. 2:6, 15) the same class of persons is intended whom Peter (2 Pet. 2:15) describes as followers of the way of Balaam; and that their name, Nicolaitanes, is merely a Greek translation of their Hebrew designation, the noun *Νικολαοσ* (from *νικαω* and *λαοσ* being a literal version ... the master of the people; or, according to another derivation, the devourer of the people ...”

“The name, like other names, Egypt, Babylon, Sodom, is symbolic. Cf. v. 14, 15, which shows the true sense of Nicolaitanes; they are not a sect, but prophesying Christians who, like Balaam of old, tried to introduce into the Church a false freedom, i.e., licentiousness; this was a reaction in the opposite direction from Judaism, the first danger to the Church combated in the council of Jerusalem, and by Paul in the Epistle to Galatians. These symbolical Nicolaitanes, or followers of Balaam, abused Paul's doctrine of the grace of God into a plea for lasciviousness (2 Pet. 2:15, 16, 19; Jude 4, 11; who both describe the same sort of seducers as followers of Balaam).” (*Critical & Explanatory Commentary* – Jamieson, Fausset and Brown – comment on Rev. 2:6)

### **Anent the Nicolaitanes**

“How ready is Christ to commend his people for whatever good qualities they may possess! If there is anything of which he approves, he mentions that first. And in this message to the church of Ephesus, having first mentioned their commendable traits and then their failures, as if unwilling to pass by any good qualities he mentions this, that they hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which he also hated. In verse 15 the doctrines of the same characters are condemned.

It appears that they were a class of persons whose deeds and doctrines were alike abominable in the sight of Heaven. Their origin is involved in some doubt. Some say that they sprang from Nicolas of Antioch, one of the seven deacons (Acts 6:5); some, that they only attribute their origin to him to gain the prestige of his name; and others, that the sect took its name from one Nicolas of a later date, which is probably the nearest correct. Concerning their doctrines and practices, there seems to be a general agreement that they held to a community of wives, regarded adultery and fornication as things indifferent, and permitted the eating of things offered to idols. (See *Religious Encyclopedia*, Clarke, Kitto, and other authorities.)” (*Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation* – Uriah Smith)

**2:7** – “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

This entreaty, **to him** “who hath an ear, **let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches,**” being the same for all the churches (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 21), indicates that while the messages were to specific churches, by way of specific messengers, and in specific periods, they were really intended for all of them; for, in the final analysis these seven churches represented the seven stages in the development of the **one** true church!

### **Messages To Churches, Applicable to All**

“There are many reasons for concluding that, while the various messages in the second and third chapters of Revelation were given to the seven churches specified and were applicable to them, they should properly **have a wider application to the whole church of Christ**, the number seven representing completeness, and the order representing different epochs in the history of the church. Thus the church at Ephesus would represent the condition of the church in the Apostle's day, at the time of the writing of the messages, while the Laodicean church would represent the church in our day, in the end of this Gospel age. The other churches would correspondingly represent different epochs intermediate, between the beginning and now.

“To think otherwise would be to attach more importance to those seven comparatively small churches of Asia Minor than would seem to have been appropriate, and would imply an ignoring of other churches larger and more influential than they, as, for instance, the churches at Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Colosse, Philippi, Thessalonica, etc.” (R4870:1)

“The first three chapters of Revelation contain particular specifications and general admonitions, not only for the local church therein mentioned, but

for all **'overcomers.'** They apply not only to the different epochs in the history of the church as a whole, but to different classes in any one epoch in the history of the church." (R4870:2)

Many, of course, have ears with which to hear; but there are also many voices that are calling to be heard. Which voice shall it be? The Lord answers this question for us: "hear what the Spirit saith." (Rev. 2:7)

Just who, or what, is this Spirit that speaks to the churches? It is the holy Spirit, concerning which Jesus spoke to his disciples before he left them, saying,

John 16:13, 14 – "... when he, **the Spirit of truth**, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you."

"Only by the Holy Spirit are we guided beyond the mere letter of the divine testimony, into a true appreciation of 'the deep things of God,' and all those things which God hath in reservation for them that love him, which the human eye hath not seen, the human ear hath not heard, neither hath entered into the human heart to understand and appreciate. (1 Cor. 2:9, 10)" (E164)

But there was a particular message to the "Ephesus" church: **"to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."** Yet, this message applied not only to those of "Ephesus" but also to the whole Gospel age church – to all who would be "overcomers."

"Though often deprived of the bread of this present life, they not only had the Living Bread, but had the promise of 'the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.' It will be remembered that all the trees in Eden were trees of life, but that the one in the midst of the Garden was then a forbidden tree, the disobedient eating of which brought death upon Adam and all his race. That tree in the midst of Paradise was called 'the tree of the knowledge of good and evil'; and our Lord's promise ... is that **the overcomers of the Gospel age** shall have full liberty to partake of that tree under most blessed and satisfactory conditions, when the knowledge will be of benefit to them under divine approval, and will not then bring a curse." (R5992:5)

**2:8** – "And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive."

The "Ephesus" period ended after all the Apostles, save John, had "fallen asleep"; perhaps about A. D. 70 or A. D. 73. Paul, the "angel" or messenger of that period, accord-

ing to tradition, was beheaded during the reign of Nero, about A. D. 68.

"Nero's death occurred in June A.D. 68. Accepting, therefore, as we do, the Universal tradition that St. Paul was executed in the reign of Nero, his execution must have taken place not later than the beginning of June." (*The Life And Epistles of St. Paul* – Conybeare & Howson, footnote, p. 781)

John, the beloved, who "tarried" (John 21:22), and who probably lived to the very end of the first Century, we believe, was the "angel" or messenger to the next succeeding period – the "Smyrna" period of the church, which period seems to have continued right into the reign of Constantine, i.e., to about A.D. 325.

### The Apostle John's Death

"... it may be concluded from the almost constant precedence given to James in the Gospels that he was the elder brother, for the greater historical importance of John was well known by the time the gospels were written. According to an old and wide-spread tradition, John was the youngest of all the apostles. If this is accepted, it adds to the probability of the assertion that he died a very old man after the accession of Trajan, 98 A.D." (*The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. 6, p. 202)

As the "angel" of this church, John identified the author of the message as **"the first and the last."** (Rev. 2:8) This he did when he wrote in his Gospel:

John 1:1, 3, 10 – "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God ... All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made ... the world was made by him."

"In his message to the church of this epoch our Lord styles himself 'the First and the Last, which was dead and is alive.' In no other sense or way could he be the First and the Last than as the only direct creation of the Father, through whom all else was created. Any other view would be in conflict with the Scriptures. – (Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:15; 1 Cor. 8:6; John 1:1-3, *Diaglott*)" (R5992:5)

### The First and the Last

"In no other sense or way than as the 'Only' direct creation of God, through whom all else was created, could our Lord be the first and the last of God's creation. Any other view, therefore, would be an incorrect one, and in conflict with all ... Scriptures." (E93)

Yet, not only did John thus identify Jesus for the "Smyrna" church, as "the first and the last" but also, as the One **"which was dead and is alive."** (Rev. 2:8)

Now it must be admitted that John's Gospel is unique; it is not a Synoptic! However, it does record certain

events in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, that the Synoptic Gospels do not give; but which in a very special way reveal the glory of him, whose earthly ministry was cruelly terminated on Calvary's cross.

Thus, the glory of Jesus was manifested at the marriage feast of Cana of Galilee (John 2:1-11); in the cleansing of the Temple (John 2:13-23); in his discourse with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21); in his visit to Samaria (John 4:1-42); in his healing of the nobleman's son (John 4:46-54); in the miracle at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-47); in the Synagogue discourse on the "Bread of Life" (John 6:26-65); in the healing of the blind man (John 9:1-41); in the reawakening of Lazarus (John 11:17-46); in the coming of the Greeks (John 12:20-33); in the washing of the disciples' feet (John 13:1-17); in his prayer for his disciples (John 17); in his testimony before Pilate (John 18:29-37). But seemingly, this all terminated, as it were, in Jesus' death on Calvary's cross, whereon he cried, "It is finished." (John 19:30)

Let it be carefully noted, however, that despite the fact that the death of Jesus is recorded by Matt. (27:50); Mark (15:37); and Luke (23:46); **not any of these was actually an eye witness to it; for it is clearly stated that his disciples "forsook and fled" from the scene.** (Matt. 26:56; Mark 14:20) Only the beloved John, the "angel" of the "Smyrna" church remained to be the **eye-witness of the event**; and he recorded it in these graphic words: "one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." (John 19:34) Note also, the words which follow this: "... **he that saw it bare record**, and his record is true, that ye might believe." (John 19:35)

Not only did John bear witness of Jesus' death on the cross, but together with the other evangelists, he recorded the burial of Jesus in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. (John 19:38-42) In addition to this, John was among the earliest of the Apostles to become convinced in his own mind of the fact that **he "which was dead ... is alive."** (See John 20:19-23, 25, 29; 21:1-24) John's three Epistles, even aside from the Revelation, bear evidence to the fact that he not only **believed**, but that he **also knew**, the resurrection of Jesus to be a truly accomplished, and not a mere fancied event! John, for the "Smyrna" church, identified Jesus of Nazareth, as the author of his particular message – the One who died, but was now alive; and he further declared that he was writing this to them concerning "the Christ, the Son of God ... that, believing, ye might have life through his name." (John 20:31)

### Smyrna

"Smyrna means bitter. Myrrh and Marah are kindred words. This stage of the Christian church was the period of most bitter persecution, under the Roman Emperors from Nero to Diocletian. In his message to the church of this epoch our Lord styles himself 'the First and the Last, which was dead and is alive.' In no

other sense or way could he be the First and the Last than as the only direct creation of the Father, through whom all else was created. Any other view would be in conflict with the Scriptures. (Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:15; 1 Cor. 8:6; John 1:1-3, *Diaglott*)

"The devil shall cast some of you into prison that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days.' Thus the Lord informed his faithful servants of this period that theirs would be a time of great persecution. Pagan Rome, here symbolized as the devil, has been the most devilish of all earthly governments, when viewed in the light of its bloody persecutions. The ten symbolic days refer to the last and most severe persecution under the Roman Emperors – that of the reign of Diocletian, A.D. 303-313. Those who have read the history of this period can understand the depths of the words, 'that ye may be tried.' Some of the most sublime pictures of Christian endurance that the world has ever seen were enacted during the Smyrna period of the church. The call was for faithfulness unto death; the promise was that the overcomers should 'not be hurt of the second death,' but should receive the crown of life – immortality." (RS992:6)

**2:9, 10** – "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

In the days of the "Smyrna" church, it really meant something to be a Christian – to live the Christ-life of full and complete consecration and dedication to the Will of God. (Heb. 10:7, 9) And the Lord, both recognized and appreciated this, and commended those saints, many of whom were quite poor, and even destitute. Addressing them through their "angel" he said, "**I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty,**" and then, **sweetly, and comfortingly added, "but thou art rich."** (Rev. 2:9) Surely, they had the blessing and favor of God; what more could they need! (Prov. 22:10; Luke 12:16-21)

Christianity had not yet become the religion of the State, nor of the populace; and therefore, there was much of persecution from both.

Some persecutions, however, came from their Jewish brethren, who by this time had learned to hate and despise them bitterly. Even as in Jesus' day there were those who prided themselves on being "the chosen people of God" – the "children of Abraham." (John 8:39) Having rejected the prophet of Nazareth, they, of course, took no heed to his word to the effect that: "Your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23:38); nor had they recognized the "baptism of fire" that in A. D. 70, came



upon them as a nation, when the Roman Titus, on capturing the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and desecrated its vessels. (See Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16; 19:43, 44; 21:20, 24) The fleshly “seed” of Abraham had been displaced by the spiritual; and as Ishmael of old, persecuted Isaac (Gal. 3:7, 9, 29), so did the fleshly Israel persecute that which was of the Spirit. (Gen. 21:9)

“Israel, like Ishmael, mocked at the spiritual Israel, the true heir of the divine favors, and persecuted those that were born (begotten) after the spirit.” (R2777:6)

These persecutors, now constituted the “synagogue of Satan”! No wonder then, that the Lord commended his faithful ones of the “Smyrna” period, saying, **“I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and which are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.”** (Rev. 2:9)

“‘They are not all Israel which are of Israel.’ (Rom. 9:6, 7) And again, ‘He is not a Jew which is a Jew outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but **he is a Jew which is one inwardly**, and circumcision is that of the heart.’ (Rom. 2:28, 29) And again, the words of our Lord in addressing his church: ‘I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan.’ (Rev. 2:9; 3:9)” (R2443:1)

It is interesting to note that there was not a word of condemnation for this “Smyrna” church; only commendation! Knowing the severity of the trials that were yet to come upon them, the Lord warned them, so that they might not be taken unawares; but might find comfort and encouragement in the knowledge, that in all of their trials, he would be with them, suffering their afflictions with them.

“The Scriptures point out the fact that the Lord’s consecrated people belong so completely to him that in all their afflictions he is afflicted. (Isa. 63:9)” (R5173:3)

“A great conflict between Christianity and the Graeco-Roman world was inevitable. Christianity challenged almost everything for which the Roman world stood, and condemned or excluded many phases of the life of antiquity ...

“In the Graeco-Roman world the State was conceived of as the Highest Good. The State included all the possible good that could come to man, even religion, which was subordinated to the State. Hence supreme loyalty to the State was the great Roman ideal. Service to the State was the purpose of life. But **Christians were citizens of a kingdom that was not of this world.** (John 18:36) They recognized an authority that was higher than the State, and if the law of the Empire came in conflict with the law of God, they would obey God rather than man. (Acts 5:29) It was this supreme loyalty to a law outside the

Roman law that irritated and worried the Roman authorities more than all other accusations against Christianity combined ...

“The Christians refused to live like other people. The Roman world advocated pleasure, happiness, and the satisfaction of the senses as personal ends. The Christian preached and practiced self-denial, and emphasized the joy of a future life ...

“The Roman Religion was purely external; consequently it was very impressive. The Romans could not conceive of religious services without temples and images, altars and sacrifices. The early Christians had no impressive temples or images. They had no sacrifices and no altars. They prayed to an unseen God. The Romans could not understand such worship. They reasoned that the Christians had no God and that they therefore were atheists. But atheism was a very serious offence in the Roman Empire. Hence, away with the atheists! Charges of atheism and superstition were common during the reign of Domitian, A.D. 81-96.

“The Christians consistently refused to worship the Emperor because such worship would involve a denial of their Lord. The government considered such refusal an act of high treason and punished the offenders accordingly.” (*A History Of The Christian Church – Qualben*, p. 57-59)

It is no wonder, then, that the Emperors of Rome were so cruel in their persecution of the early church: they really feared their righteousness and holiness. In his message to the “Smyrna” church, the Lord admonished it to **“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.”** (Rev. 2:10)

The devil who would cast some of them into prison, that they might be tried, was the Roman State.

“John the Revelator, seeing in vision the same symbolic beast (government), was also at a loss for a name by which to describe it, and finally gives it several. Among others, he called it ‘the Devil.’ (Rev. 12:19) He certainly chose an appropriate name; for **Rome, when viewed in the light of its bloody persecutions, certainly has been the most devilish of all earthly governments.** Even in its change from Rome Pagan to Rome Papal it illustrated one of Satan’s chief characteristics; for he also transforms himself to appear as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14), as Rome transformed itself from heathenism and claimed to be Christian – the Kingdom of Christ.” (A258)

“**that ye may be tried**” does not have reference to the trial by the State, but rather to the trial of their faith, which Peter had declared was more precious than that of gold, even though it be tried with fire. (See 1 Pet. 4:12, 13) For

some, this involved the “**tribulation ten days**” which the Lord specifically mentioned in his message.

“It was the period of most bitter persecution, under the Roman Emperors from Nero to Diocletian. ‘The devil (Pagan Rome) shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days’ (last and most severe persecution, A.D. 303-313).

“Those who have read the history of this period can understand the depth of the words, ‘that ye may be tried.’ Some of the most sublime pictures of Christian endurance that the world has ever seen were enacted during the Smyrna period.” (R491:2, W. I. Mann; S992:6)

### Paganism and the Early Church

“Many pagan philosophers find that it would be policy to join the ranks of the rising religion, set about paving an easy way to it by trying to discover correspondencies between Christianity and Paganism, and so to blend the two together. They succeeded only too well. Many sought ‘to form to themselves a middle kind of religion, between the ancient theology and the new doctrine that was now propagated in the empire; and they persuaded themselves that the same truths which Christ taught had been for a long time concealed by the priests of the gods under the veil of ceremonies, fables, and allegorical representations.’ (Mosheim) As the old theology had a number of chief gods, with many demi-gods of both sexes, the Pagan-christians (if we may coin a word) set themselves to construct a list for the new theology. At this time, therefore, the doctrine of three Gods was invented – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Also, the Goddess Mary. To make the list respectable in numbers as the long line of pagan deities, they canonized the dead apostles and an unlimited number of martyrs, angels, etc., real or imaginary.

“Mosheim says of this period: ‘The public processions and supplications by which the Pagans endeavored to appease their gods, were now adopted into Christian worship, and celebrated in many places with great pomp and magnificence. The virtue which had formerly been ascribed to the heathen temples, to their lustrations (ceremonial cleansings by water, etc.) to the status of their gods and heroes, were now attributed to Christian churches – to water consecrated by certain forms of prayers, and to images of holy men.’

“‘The propensity of rude and uneducated converts (?) from Paganism to cling to the festal rites of their forefathers proved to be invincible, so that it seemed to be necessary to adopt the old usages to the new worship, rather than to abolish them altogether.’ (Encycl. Brit.)” (R359:2, W. I. Mann)

“Christians thought it would be fine if all the Gentiles could be united in religion. Thus the majority gradually worked in with the Greek philosophers and fraternized with them. Numbers of the adherents of paganism made a profession of Christianity, being reinforced later by many others from the more northern tribes of Europe, these all joining some of their heathen philosophies and theories with Christianity.” (R5910:6)

### An Historian’s Account of the Times

“At the death of Paul, some thirty years after the death of Christ, there were Christian congregations, we know from the Book of Acts, in all the large cities of the eastern part of the empire and in Rome. **These congregations were made up almost solely, as yet, from the humblest classes of society – slaves and poor laborers.** Women were particularly numerous and influential among them. The religion of mercy and gentleness and hope appealed especially to the weak and downtrodden. So far, it got no hearing from the rich and powerful and happy. To the Roman historians of the age, Christianity was known not at all, or only by vague rumors, as a vicious sect of the despised Jews. The moralist Tacitus was a boy in Rome during the great fire in Nero’s time. Fifty years later (115 A.D.), he wrote an account of it. Even then he knew of the Christians, it is plain, only by misleading scandal, though he is the first pagan writer to give any important mention of them.

“Nero had himself been accused of setting the conflagration, explains Tacitus: ‘Therefore, to stop the rumor, he (Nero) falsely charged with guilt and punished with fearful tortures, the persons whom the vulgar call Christians, and who were already branded with deserved infamy. Christus, from whom the name was derived, was executed as a criminal, when Tiberius was emperor, by Pontius Pilate, the procurator in Judea. But the pernicious superstition, checked for the time, again broke out, not only in Judea, where the mischief began, but even in Rome, the meeting place of all horrible and immoral practices from all parts of the world’.” (Ancient World – West, p. 535, Sect. 654)

### The Tribulation, Ten Days!

“The **ten** symbolic **days** refer to the last and most severe persecution under the Roman Emperors – that of the reign of Diocletian, A.D. 303-313.” (R5992:6)

The historian says that Diocletian reigned from A.D. 284-305. However, he does agree, that

“Toward the close of his reign he was induced to carry on the most terrible and thorough of all the persecutions of the Christians.” (Ancient World – West, p. 542, Sect. 662)

In section 672, West says:

“In 303, after long hesitation, Diocletian began the most terrible of all the persecutions of the Christian church.”

Thus, regardless as to who the emperor was after him, the persecution started with Diocletian in A.D. 303 and ended in 313.

These persecutions represented for those of the “Smyrna” period, the permissive will of God; in which, they could, if they but would be rightly exercised, prove their worthiness of identification with Jesus in the glory of his Kingdom. It might cost them their earthly lives; but had they not consecrated to lay these down in obedience to that Will of God? And would they not, as a reward for their faithfulness, receive the life more abundant? Thus –

“The call was for **faithfulness unto death**; the promise was that the overcomers should ‘not be hurt of the second death,’ but should receive **the crown of life**, immortality.” (R5992:6)

### “Faithful Unto Death”

“What a lesson ... for those who have covenanted with the Lord to serve him first and chiefly ... These the Lord urges, saying, ‘Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.’ ‘He that overcometh (who conquers in himself the spirit of the world), the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his holy servants.’ ‘Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.’ (Rev. 2:10; 3:5, 11)” (C225)

### The Death of Jesus

“It is ... claimed that our Lord’s death on the cross, so much sooner than was usual, was occasioned by a literal breaking of his heart, the rupture of its muscles, and that this is indicated by the flow of both blood and water from the spear wound in his side **after death**.” (E123)

### The Crown of Life

“The Apostles James and John speak of the same crown and call it the crown of life. (Jas. 1:12; Rev. 2:10), and the Apostle Peter speaking of the same calls it the crown of glory. (1 Pet. 5:4) The thought at the bottom of each of these expressions is evidently the same; namely, the custom in olden times of running races and the giving of a crown to the successful runner at the end of the course. As it was not sufficient to enter a race, or start to run, but it was required that the race be run faithfully and perseveringly to a conclusion, so with this race which we are running as followers of Jesus, it is essential not only that we shall make consecration to the Lord, but that we persevere to the end, and our reward will be the

crown of life in the sense that we will get life on the highest plane, inherent life, immortality.... The crown of glory is another name for the same grand reward – the glory of the kingdom, the glory of immortality, the glory of the Father’s favor, the glory of being joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom.” (R3211:6)

**2:11** – “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”

Here again, we are reminded that while the messages were to specific churches, by way of their specific messengers, in specific periods, they were really intended for **all** of them: for in the final analysis the seven churches represented seven stages in the development of the one true church! And what is it that the Spirit says to this Church of God? Is it not this, “**be thou faithful unto death**” for then, you “**shall not be hurt of the second death**”?

“It is required by the consecration that this perseverance in sacrificing and well-doing shall be continued patiently and faithfully, and that the end, with us as with our Lord and Head, shall be literal death.... This faithfulness, this daily dying, is requisite to our making our calling and election sure; and it is to such as faithfully walk in the footsteps of the Lord that he promises the glory, honor and immortality reserved for the **faithful overcomers** who shall constitute the ‘Very Elect’ members of the New Creation. Our Lord’s words are, ‘Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.’ (Rev. 2:10)” (F444)

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

The “Pergamos” period of the church began about A.D. 325 and we believe, continued until about A.D. 1160. During it, the nominal church was gradually elevated; its kind of “Christianity” becoming popular with both the State and the people.

### Pergamos

“Pergamos means an earthly elevation. The Speaker is ‘He who hath the sharp Sword with two edges’ (Greek, two-mouthed) – the Word of God. During this period, while the nominal church was growing popular, the true Christians were tested and proved by the introduction and development of Pagan and Papal ideas. The Pagan priests, unwilling to lose their position of honor and influence amongst the people, sought to bend their ideas to fit the new religion. Thus while nominally professing Christianity, they brought many of their former ideas with them into the Christian church. These were eventually grafted upon the true stock – ‘the faith once delivered to the saints.’ – Jude 3

“Thus gradually the church was led into error, evil practices, and away from God. This is what is meant in Verse 14 by the allusion to Balaam and Balak. It will be remembered that Balaam, who had been a prophet of God, instructed King Balak how to tempt Israel to sin, and thus brought about what he could not accomplish by his own powers. (Num. 23; 24; 31:16) So these Pagan priests taught the church to indulge in spiritual fornication, and thus brought upon her the withering blight of the wrath of God.

“The ‘doctrine of the Nicolaitanes’ seems to be the theory of lordship or headship in the church. The strife as to who should be greatest existed amongst many of the patriarchs – fathers – of the prominent churches. At their councils there was a bitter fight for supremacy. The tendency was toward an earthly head and, of course, many coveted the honor. The patriarchs of Jerusalem, Antioch, Constantinople and Rome were the most prominent. The first two dropped out of the conflict, but the strife continued for several hundred years between Constantinople and Rome. It was settled only by a division of the church; the Eastern, or Greek Church, accepting the Patriarch of Constantinople for its head; and the western, or Papal Church, acknowledging the bishop – pope or father – of Rome.

“Many of the true followers of the Master in the churches denounced this attempt to disobey the direct command of Jesus, ‘Call no man father.’ (Matt. 23:9) Of course, they received the promised persecution (2 Tim. 1:12) This class in Pergamos is commended by our Lord under the symbol of ‘Anti-pas, my faithful martyr.’ In the Greek, *anti* means against, and *Papas* signifies father. In this stage of development of the church those who sought to be popular received the emoluments of the church; but the promise to the overcomers is that pleasure and honor that shall be eternal.” (RS992:6)

### The Two-Edged Sword of Truth

“It is not surprising, either, that when the **two-edged sword** of truth enters, it creates division. This is one evidence that we are now in the harvest, and that this truth is the harvest sickle. So it was at the first advent. Wherever our Lord and the apostles and their message went, there was a division of the people concerning him; so much so, that in one place ‘they entreated him that he would depart out of their coasts.’ (Matt. 8:34; Mark 1:24; Acts 13:50) What did our Lord do – change his gospel to suit them? No: he continued his work, until the whole city was in an uproar and the order-loving scribes and Pharisees had him executed, saying that it was expedient that one die for the (good of the) people, that all might not perish. (John 11:49-53)

“Wherever the truth goes it has such an effect. The heathen nations all claim that it disturbs the spirit of their devotions and distracts the reverence formerly paid to Brahm and Buddha. The effect was the same in the days of the apostles. (Acts. 13:50) Paul and Barnabas were arrested for disturbing the peace and unsettling the minds of those who worshipped the goddess Diana; and ‘the whole city was in an uproar.’ (Acts 19:40; 20:1; 21:31) But the apostles, instead of wavering and stopping, went right along and preached the same Gospel which made a disturbance everywhere. It became so notorious, that the knowledge of it spread from city to city, in times when they had neither mail routes nor telegraph lines; so that it was declared at Thessalonica, ‘These who have turned the world upside down are come hither also.’ (Acts 17:5, 6)” (R1633:3)

“The only sword which the Lord’s people now may use is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and it is to cleave its way by its own sharpness and penetrating power rather than force of language and invective, or any manifestation of anger on the part of those who use it. On the contrary, they are directed to speak the truth in love, that thus the truth may do its work in its own way.” (R3888:1)

### Constantine and the Nicean Creed

“To Constantine’s influence the Adoption of the Nicean definition was due. That he ever understood its shades of meaning is more than doubtful; but he wanted a united expression of the faith of the church on the question in dispute, and believed that he had found it. Under his supervision, all but two of the bishops present signed it. These, and Arius, Constantine sent into banishment. **The imperial politics had apparently secured the unity of the church, and had given it what it had never before possessed, a statement which might be assumed to be a universally recognized creed.**” (*A History of the Christian Church* – Walker, p. 117)

... under Constantine’s reign, the opposition of the empire to Christianity gave way to favor, and the Imperial Pontifex Maximus became the patron of the professed but really apostate Church of Christ; and, taking her by the hand, he assisted her to a place of popularity and splendor from which she was able afterward, as the imperial power grew weak, to put her own representatives upon the religious throne of the world as Chief Religious Ruler – Pontifex Maximus” (B290)

It was in this period too, that the great controversy arose with regard to the nature of Christ Jesus: was he “God of very God,” or was he the Son of God? Was he one in substance with the Father, or actually a created being – “the beginning of the creation of God,” the “first born of every creature”? (See Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:15) It will

be recalled that Jesus had identified himself to the “Smyrna” church, as “the first and the last, which was dead and is alive.” (Rev. 2:8) As already suggested, the implication here is, that he was not one in substance with the Father; and that he was at the time of his death, at least, not a God – an immortal being, who for that very reason could not have died! He was rather, **the only direct creation of God**, through whom God’s power was exercised in the rest of the work of creation (John 1:3): and he had come into the World to “reveal” the Father, who, of course, was, is and ever will be, invisible for natural human eyes to see.

But the “mystery of iniquity” which Paul had already recognized as being at work during the “Ephesus” period (2 Thes. 2:7), had by this time grown to such proportions as to constitute a veritable threat to the life of the saints of the “Pergamos” period. Men, indeed had arisen, from amongst them, speaking perverse things (Acts 20:30), deceiving; and had it been possible, the very elect! But praise God, it was not possible to deceive these; though there were many others who followed. No wonder, then, that Jesus, to this “Pergamos” church, identified himself as “he which has the sharp sword with two edges” (Rev. 2:12) separating, as it were, by way of the Truth, the true saints, from the false!

“The philosophy of Plato was ingrafted, a parasite upon the Scriptural stock. This vile fungus, planted by Satan in Eden (Gen. 3:4), watered by the Egyptians, and brought to an increase by a pseudo-christianity, has borne an abundant harvest of errors, and exhaled an influence more deadly than the Upas tree. Purgatory, Eternal Sin, Eternal Torment, Mariolatry, Saint Worship, Transmigration, Mohammedanism, Swedenborgianism, and Mormonism are some of its legitimate fruits, which could not have existed without it.” (W. I. Mann – R359:3)

The messenger to this “Pergamos” church, we believe, was Arius, who believed, and bore record of the fact that:

“... there was a time when the Son was not, since the Father who begot must be before the Son who was begotten, and the latter, therefore, was not eternal.” (McClintock & Strong’s *Cyclopedia*, Vol. 1, Article: “Arianism”)

Arius thus believed “that the Son had a beginning, and that God has no beginning.” However, the opposition to this truth was very strong: and waxed hot and hotter until the Emperor, Constantine, took a hand in the matter.

“The Roman Emperor Constantine saw a vision – probably when wide awake a vision of greater prosperity for himself and his Empire, by a recognition of Christianity as the religion of his Empire instead of paganism, which had previously been recognized ...

“Constantine’s influence in Church affairs became great. He proposed the calling of a council of all the

bishops, numbering about one thousand. He wanted to know why these apostolic bishops, all inspired with the same Spirit of God, taught so differently. He offered to pay the expenses of all the bishops to the Council at Nice; but the majority, fearing that the Emperor would be under the control of the Roman bishop (not yet claiming to be pope), declined to attend.

“Only 384 came. But even they were unable to agree... Many held to the Bible teaching that Jehovah is the One, Supreme God; that the Lord Jesus Christ was His Son and honored Agent in all His creative work; and that He, having manifested faith and loyalty to the Father to the extent of leaving the Heavenly glory becoming a man and dying, the Just for the unjust, has been exalted by the Father to His own right hand of majesty and power.

“But the mystification thought of trinity had gained a hold on some of the bishops, amongst others the Bishop of Rome. The questions at issue were argued for months. With all his powerful influence, the Bishop of Rome could not bring the majority of the Council to acknowledge the doctrine of the trinity. Thereupon Constantine decided the matter; and the Nicene Creed backed by the Emperor’s authority and power, was declared to be the Christian faith, and anything contrary to it, heresy.

“Yet be it remembered that only about one-third of the bishops were present at the Council: and that they could not be coerced into substituting ‘mystery’ for the Word of God, until the Emperor lent his influence. His decree was that Christian doctrine as thus defined in the Nicene Creed should have the prestige of the support of the Emperor and of all his subordinate officers throughout the Roman Empire. All believing contrary to this would be heretics, and be considered in opposition to the Emperor, and such had the privilege of leaving the Empire. Thus was the mystery of trinity enshrined by a heathen emperor, not baptized – not even sprinkled.” (*The Bible Students Monthly*, Vol. 6, Issue #4)

### The Rise of the Papacy

“The first ecumenical Council of Nice (325), in its sixth canon, makes only an incidental mention of the Roman bishop.... **The bishops of Rome, however, with great consistency and prudence, knew how to enlarge the precedence which had been accorded to the Church of the Imperial City**, and the honors which for personal merits had been conferred upon individual occupants of the See into a permanent ascendancy, for which a divine origin was claimed, in order to make it an organic part of the doctrinal system of the Church ...

“The first pope, in the real sense of the word, was Leo (440-461). Being endowed by nature with the old Roman spirit of dominion, and being looked upon by his contemporaries, in consequence both of his character and his position, as the most eminent man of the age, he developed in his mind the ideal of **an ecclesiastical monarchy, with the pope at the head**, and endeavored with great energy to transform the constitution of the Church in conformity with his ideal. ... As bishop of Rome, he carried through his claims to **supreme power over the whole Church** with a greater energy than any of his predecessors. The bishops of the African and Spanish churches submitted to his demands ...

“Gregory I (590-604) was, next to Leo I, the greatest of the Roman bishops during this first period of their history... Gregory marks the transition of the patriarchal position of the Roman bishops into the strict papacy of the Middle ages. He saw that the bishop of Rome could not enjoy the ecclesiastical supremacy at which they aimed until they threw off their political dependency, and he skilfully used the settlement of the *Lombards* in Italy to prepare the way for their independence. The triumph of the Catholic Church over Arianism in Spain, and the success of the Roman mission in England, greatly promoted the plans of Gregory ...

“In the 7th and 8th centuries a series of important events added to the ecclesiastical ascendancy of the popes a high and influential position among the secular government of the world. **In proportion as the Byzantine emperors lost their hold of Italy, and especially the city of Rome, the actual power in the latter passed over into the hands of the pope as the head of an aristocratic municipal government ...**

“In 1073 Hildebrand, after being for about twenty-five (25) years the guide of the papal policy, ascended himself the papal chair under the name of Gregory VII. He is commonly regarded as the greatest pope of all times. He clearly and **boldly set forth the theory of a theocratic rule of the pope over all nations of the world**. The priesthood was regarded by him as the only power directly instituted by God, the power of secular rulers as the product of human agencies. The pope, as vicar of God, was to stand in times of violence between princes and their people enforcing the law of divine right by his spiritual power, and able either to humble the people or to depose princes.” (*McClintock & Strong’s Encyclopedia* – Article: Papacy)

“In 534 A.D. the emperor of Rome, Justinian, recognized the Bishop of Rome as chief bishop, or POPE – the head of the religious affairs of the Roman empire, which for centuries had ruled the world.

“... The beginning of this temporal power was gradual, from A.D. 539, but it was fully established in A.D. 800, when Charlemagne, king of France, was crowned by Pope Leo III, and accepted from him, and by his supposed divine authority, the title of Emperor of the West. There, really, what was afterward known as the ‘Holy Roman Empire’ had its beginning.” (R1093:6)

See also “**Establishment of the Papacy**” page 101, and “**The Exaltation of the Papacy**” page 140.

**2:13** – “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.”

The Apostolic writings were fraught with timely words, which the “angels” of all periods might draw upon. Had not Jesus declared unto his Apostles, that, “whatever things ye bind on earth, **shall be having been bound in heaven**, and whatever things ye loose on earth, **shall be having been loosed in heaven**.” (*A. Marshall’s translation*) And since we are not told just how Arius, the “angel” of the church of “Pergamos” ministered the Lord’s message to them, we can only assume that he drew heavily, yea, mightily, upon those inspired writings. From the fact that the Lord declared, “I know thy works,” (Rev. 2:13), we conjecture that Arius comforted those saints with the thought that the Lord had promised to be with his saints, even unto the consummation of the age (Matt. 28:20); and that the Comforter (John 14:16-20; 15:26) – the holy Spirit, as an indwelling, would bear witness unto them of their sonship unto God, even in the midst of their trials and temptations. (Rom. 8:16-18) Concerning this holy Spirit, we read:

“It was to be in God’s people according to the degree of their consecration and zeal toward God and his righteousness, and by reason of the prevalence and power of the spirit of evil in the world about them **was to prove a test** of their characters, present conditions demanding that whosoever would live godly in this present time must suffer persecution – must be willing to have ‘all manner of evil’ falsely spoken against them and yet take it patiently, as did their Master, continuing, nevertheless, **faithful to the Lord and his cause at any cost** – counting not their earthly lives dear unto them. (2 Tim. 3:12; Matt. 5:11; 1 Pet. 2:23; Acts 20:24)” (E191)

“The Spirit of God, **through the Word** ... testifies or **witnesses to us the rule of our heavenly Father’s dealing with his sons** – chastisements, pruning, taking away of the dross, and a development of the fruit-bearing qualities.” (E231)

“... as with our Lord, so also with his faithful followers, divine providence leads the faithful and obedient

into the path of suffering and self-denial, not as chastisement of a contrary will, but as **tests, by self-sacrifice, of the measure of love and devotion to the Father's will, and to the cause of righteousness.** As our Lord was chastened for our transgressions, not his own, when he bore the sins of many, so his followers in many respects suffer, not for their own wrong-doings, but by reason of the wrong-doings of others, for they are called as the Apostle declares, to 'fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for his body's sake, which is the church.' (Col. 1:24)" (E234)

Such, were the "works" – "before ordained" of God (Eph. 2:10), the "works" which the Lord recognized, and for which he commended the "Pergamos" saints!

The Lord continues the thought: not only do "I know thy works," but also "**where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is.**" (Rev. 2:13) From this, it is quite evident that the Lord was cognizant of the unfavorable situation in which the saints of the "Pergamos" period found themselves. And, while Satan is ever to be found busily engaged wherever God's people dwell, there seem to be times and seasons wherein he seems to work with special power; and the period covered by this church was one of these. During this period Satan was laying the very foundation of the most stupendous system of wickedness, the papacy. Yes, indeed, "**I know where Satan's seat is.**" And O, how, comforting the words which follow: but "**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.**" (Rev. 2:13)

"Their fidelity is more particularly noted because of their adverse surroundings. At this time there were many teachers, and more controversy than ever before. Light was darkened by words, and truth with sophistry. During this period also arose the old dispute of 'who should be the greatest.' The bishops, or Patriarchs, as they preferred to be called, of Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople, had acquired a degree of preeminence over the others, and there was a long-continued rivalry between them; the supremacy being finally divided between Rome and Constantinople. The nominal church was split in two, chiefly over the question of image-worship; the idolaters ranging under the bishop of Rome, who received the name of Pope (Latin, *papa* – the father), while the image-breakers, as they were called, formed the Greek Church under the Patriarch (chief father) of Constantinople...

"*Anti*, in Greek, means opposite or against; *papas* is father. In the usual manner of forming words, *Antipas* would evidently mean against the father, or opposed to the Pope or Patriarch; as we use the name anti-christ, the opponent of Christ. It is clear,

then, that our Lord here commends the faithful band who, 'holding fast' the endearing name of our 'Father,' in obedience to the command, 'Call no man Father,' opposed the development and establishment of the Papacy, with its attendant heresies of a class of holy (?) and Rev. (?) fathers (Psa. 3:9), who, being called by the church – or the almighty dollar – or love of honor and ease, as the case may be, profess a superior sanctity; privilege and authority for the exposition of God's Word." (R359:5, W. I. Mann)

### "Antipas"

"It is supposed that Antipas was not an individual, but a class of men who opposed the power of the bishops, or popes, in that day, being a combination of two words, *anti*, opposed, and *papas*, father, or pope; and at that time many of them suffered martyrdom in Constantinople and Rome, where the bishops and popes began to exercise the power which soon after brought into subjection the kings of the earth, and trampled on the rights of the church of Christ. And for myself, I see no reason to reject this explanation of this word Antipas in this text, as the history of those times is perfectly silent respecting such an individual as is here named." (William Miller's Lectures, pages 138, 139, as quoted in *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation* by Uriah Smith)

"Many of the true followers of the Master in the churches, denounced this attempt to disobey the direct command of Jesus, 'Call no man father.' (Matt. 23:9) Of course, they received the promised persecution. (2 Tim. 1:12) This class in Pergamos is commended by our Lord under the symbol of 'Anti-pas, my faithful martyr.' In the Greek, *anti* means against, and *Papas* signifies father. In this stage of the church those who sought to be popular received the emoluments of the church; but the promise to the overcomers is that of pleasure and honor that shall be eternal." (R5993:2)

**2:14, 15** – "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak 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."

### The Doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitanes

"From what has been said, the spiritual meaning of the Balaam teaching should be easily seen. The blasphemous doctrines of eternal torment, and the endless existence of sin and sinners; also the fiction of the short line from the death-bed to heaven, and kindred fancies, have always been a 'stumblingblock' to the church. The homage given to pagan rites,



ceremonies, festivals, etc., Christianized (?) such as prayers to the dead, sacred places, days, and persons; union with earthly powers and with those who do such things, would in our opinion be Balaam service.

“The doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, noticed in the Ephesus message, found its development in this age; and has been a burden to the church ever since. Nicholas means a conqueror of the people. In the church of Rome the laity or people are as much the subjects of the Pope, both in spiritual and temporal things, as any of earth’s conquerors ever dreamed of demanding. This, in the face of Christ’s plain statement that there is but one Lord, one Father, ‘and all ye are brethren.’ (Matt 23:8-12) The command ‘Search the Scriptures,’ was intended for every one; the commission to ‘preach the good news’ to all who have received the Spirit; and if any one has not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His, and can only be a blind leader of the blind.” (R359:6, W. I. Mann)

“Guided by Balaam, King Balak communicated with the leading people of the Midianites, and urged that their wives and daughters should apparently fall in love with the Israelites, and introduce them to the sensuous religious rites practiced by Midian. The scheme was successful. Some of the leading wives and daughters of the Midianites attracted some of the leading men of Israel to adultery, and to idol worship and orgies. Forthwith a plague started amongst the Israelites, according to their covenant with God at Sinai, Ebal and Gerizim.” (R5323:3)

“Disadvantages in the situation are no excuse for wrongs in the church. Although this church lived at a time when Satan was especially at work, it was their duty to keep themselves pure from the leaven of his evil doctrines. Hence they were censured for harboring among them those who held the doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitanes. What the doctrine of Balaam was, is here partially revealed. He taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel. (See a full account of his work and its results in Numbers, chapters 22-25 and 31:13-16.) It appears that Balaam desired to curse Israel for the sake of the rich reward which Balak offered him for so doing. But not being permitted by the Lord to curse them, he resolved to accomplish essentially the same thing, though in a different way. He therefore counseled Balak to seduce them, by means of the females of Moab, to participate in the celebration of the rites of idolatry, and all its licentious accompaniments. The plan succeeded. The abominations of idolatry spread through the camp of Israel, the curse of God was called down upon them by their sins, and there fell by the plague twenty-four thousand persons.

“The doctrines complained of in the church of Pergamos were of course similar in their tendency, leading to spiritual idolatry, and an unlawful connection between the church and the world. Out of this spirit was finally produced the union of the civil and ecclesiastical powers, which culminated in the formation of the papacy.” (*Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation* – Uriah Smith [1897])

The expression “**to eat things sacrificed unto idols**” is a very apt one since it signified how these “Nicolaitanes” and “Balaamites” were causing Spiritual Israel to appropriate unto themselves such mutilated, twisted and distorted doctrines as would satisfy their creed-idols; and –

“... gradually the church was led into error, evil practices, and away from God. This is what is meant in Verse 14 by the allusion to Balaam and Balak. It will be remembered that Balaam, who had been a prophet of God, instructed King Balak how to tempt Israel to sin, and thus brought about what he could not accomplish by his own powers. (Num. 23; 24; 31:16) So these Pagan priests taught the church to indulge in **spiritual fornication**, and thus brought upon her the withering blight of the wrath of God.” (R5993:1)

It is no wonder then that the Lord hated both the doctrines and the deeds of the “Nicolaitanes” and commended those among his people who likewise hated them.

“When the Lord’s people hate the idea of a class that seeks to be ‘lords over God’s heritage’ (1 Pet. 5:2, 3), they hate something that the Lord hates.” (*The Finished Mystery*, p. 26)

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

“Repent; or else ...” was a very urgent admonition to certain ones of the “Pergamos” period, who, evidently were not making the most of their opportunities to develop the requisite character, i.e., to make their “election” sure. (2 Pet. 1:10) Some, undoubtedly, under the stress and strain of the times, had allowed themselves to be beguiled through “enticing words” or otherwise, and were now in grave danger of losing their eternal reward of “glory and honor and immortality.” (Col. 2:4, 18; Rom. 2:7) The Lord was reminding these in this way, that the time in which it was possible for repentance to work, was for them, growing short. (Matt. 27:3-5; Heb. 12:17) Their failure to be rightly exercised by this admonition, would soon cause him to cease being their Advocate with the Father, thus becoming their opponent, fighting against them **with the sword of his mouth**. (Rev. 2:16)

**2:17** – “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; 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 saving he that receiveth it.”

Here, again, we are reminded of the fact that while there were specific messages, to specific churches, by specific messengers, in specific times, what the Spirit had to say to one, it had to say to them all. And what was it that the Spirit had to say to those of “Pergamos”; yet was intended for all – the one and only, the complete church of God? It was this: **“to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna.”**

### The Original Pot of Manna

Exod. 16:32-34 – “And Moses said, This is the thing which the LORD commandeth, Fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations; that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt. And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations. As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept.”

“The manna recalls the story of Israel in the wilderness. Hidden would point as an index finger to the golden bowl of manna laid away in the Ark of the Covenant as a memorial of the faithfulness of Jehovah, who led and ‘nourished’ his people in the wilderness. It is a pledge to the Pergamos church that he who watched over literal Israel in their journeyings would care for them in the weary march that was about to begin.

“The manna, of course, typifies spiritual food, the Word of God. Perhaps some were enabled to see a deeper meaning, that it referred not only to the written word, but to the living Word; the true Bread of Life who came down from heaven to give life to the world. (John 6:47-51)

“It was a promise in the face of desolation and death, of a life that should be hid – from all the power of persecution – with Christ in God.” (R360:1)

“The Golden Pot of Manna represented immortality as being one of the possessions of the Christ of God. Our Lord Jesus doubtless refers to this when he says: ‘To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna.’ (Rev. 2:17)

“Manna was the bread which came down from heaven as a life-sustainer for Israel. It represented the living bread, supplied to the world by God through Christ. But as the Israelites needed to gather this supply of manna daily or else starve, so it will be necessary for the world ever to seek supplies of life and grace if they would live everlastingly.

“But to those who become Christ’s joint-heirs, members of the Anointed Body, God makes a special offer of a peculiar sort of manna, the same and yet different from that given to others – **‘the hidden manna.’** One peculiarity of this pot of manna was that it was incorruptible; hence it well illustrates the immortal, incorruptible condition promised to all members of the ‘Seed’ – which is the church. The manna or life-support fed to Israel was not incorruptible and must, therefore, be gathered daily. So all the obedient of mankind who shall by and by be recognized as Israelites indeed, will be provided with life everlasting, but conditional, supplied and renewed life; while the ‘little flock,’ who under present unfavorable conditions are faithful ‘over-comers,’ will be given an incorruptible portion – immortality. (Rev. 2:17)” (T122)

Also, to him that overcometh, I **“will give ... a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”**

“In ancient times the Greeks and the Romans had a custom of noting and perpetuating friendship by means of a white stone. This stone was divided into halves, and each person inscribed his name on the flat surface, after which the parts of the stone were exchanged. The production of either half was sufficient to insure friendly aid, even from the descendants of those who first divided the stone. A similar custom was sometimes observed by a king, who would break a white stone into two parts, one of which he would retain and the other part give to a special ambassador. That part could be sent to the king at any time and would insure aid. Thus the divided stone became a mark of identification.

“Rev. 2:17 seems to refer to this ancient custom. The white stone signifies a precious token of the Lord’s love, and the new name written in the stone suggests the Bridegroom’s name. The statement indicates a special acquaintance with the great King of Kings’ secret between himself and the individual. The overcomers are not to be recognized merely as a class – the bride class – but each will have the personal favor of the Lord. Of this no one will know save himself and the King. There is an individual and personal friendship between the Lord and the overcomers, who may be said to receive the mark of identification – the antitypical white stone – now, in this life.

“This mark is the sealing of the holy Spirit by which the Lord identifies the overcomers. While this is said to be a part of the final reward of the church, yet, from the very beginning of our experience we have this personal acquaintance with the Lord. The full

seal of the holy Spirit will be given in the resurrection, when we receive the new body. Then we shall have the complete knowledge of the name by which we shall be known to the Lord and he to us forever.” (R5113:1)

### The Church’s New Name

“God proposes a new name for his people, his church – the bride, the Lamb’s wife. As Jesus was our Lord’s name and he became the Christ, the Messiah, so all who become members of his body come under his new name, and are recognized of the Lord and may be recognized of each other as members of the Christ (Rev. 3:12); and again, the Lord prophetically speaking of Christ, says, ‘This is the name whereby he shall be called, The Righteousness of Jehovah’ (Jer. 23:6); and again, speaking of the bride of Christ, we read, ‘This is the name by which she shall be called, The Righteousness of Jehovah.’ (Jer. 33:16) The name of the bridegroom is given to his bride – ‘They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels.’ (Mal. 3:17) And those who will get this new name, we may be sure, will all be called upon to demonstrate that they will be overcomers. They must all pass approval before the Lord for their faith and their persistency in holding him and his gracious promise – the Oath-bound Covenant.” (R3970:2,3)

**2:18** – “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.”

“Thyatira seems to mean ‘the sweet perfume of sacrifice.’ It was the period of Papal persecution. The virgin church was enduring the hardships of the wilderness; while the apostate church sat on the throne of her royal paramour! The message is sent by him ‘**who hath eyes like a flame of fire,**’ to watch over his faithful ones as they wandered through the dark valleys or hid in the darker caves of earth; and ‘**feet of hard brass,**’ to walk by their side as they sealed the rugged mountains or wandered footsore and weary, seeking a place to plant the seeds of truth.

“The message contains an allusion to a faithful old prophet who fled for his life into the wilderness from the wrath of the idolatrous wife of a king. The picture is from the history of the Prophet Elijah. (1 Kings 18:19) Jezebel was the protector of the priests of Baal. Her husband was king, and she wielded his power for her own ends. The drought of three and a half years was evidently a type of the ‘time, times and a half’ – 1260 years – of the spiritual famine, ‘not of bread nor of water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.’ (Amos 8:11)” (R5992:2)

We believe the messenger or “angel” of this church was Peter Waldo, a rich merchant of Lyons, who, on learning from a translation of the Gospels into the French language, of the great divergences between the Roman Catholic church and its teachings, and the early, or primitive church, determined to become a true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. He accordingly, sold all he had; gave to the poor, so that he might become rich in the treasures of heaven.

“... the four gospels in French ... the first appearance of the Scriptures in any modern language. The possession of these books soon discovered to Waldo and his people that the Church was never designed to be dependent on a priesthood, even for the administration of the sacraments; and his instruction, boldly followed by practice, became so obnoxious to the Church that he was first persecuted by the archbishop of Lyons, and at length anathematized by the pope. No longer safe in Lyons, Waldo and his friends took refuge in the mountains of Dauphny and Piedmont, and there formed those communities which grew in peace and flourished in rustic simplicity.... From these mountains and valleys the simple doctrines of Christianity flowed out in multiplied rivulets all over Europe. Provence, Languedoc, Flanders, Germany, one after another tasted of the refreshing waters, until, in the course of ages, they swelled into a flood which swept over all lands. Waldo is understood to have traveled in Picardy, teaching his Reformation doctrines hundreds of years before Luther was born. He finally settled in Bohemia, where he died in 1179, the same year in which his tenets were denounced by an ecumenical council. The Waldensian Church was a light on the mountains during the Dark Ages, and amid all the corruptions of the Church, it held its open Bible and pure doctrines; and the same Church still survives, the basis of all reformatory movements in Italy.” (McClintock & Strong’s Encyclopedia, Vol. 10, p. 857 – “Waldo (or Valdo), Peter.”)

### The Waldenses

“These were so called after their founder, Peter Waldo, or Valdez, a rich merchant of Lyons on the Rhone river. In 1167 he became concerned about his salvation and was told by a clergyman: ‘If thou wouldest be perfect, go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have a treasure in heaven; and come follow Christ.’ Waldo obeyed this instruction to the letter. He resolved to dress and live as the apostles had done when Jesus sent them on preaching missions. He acquired a New Testament in translation in order to know better what he ought to do. Soon his friends began to join him and to follow his example. By 1177 the little group living in apostolic poverty was preaching repentance to others. For this work they needed license to preach

and they sought it from the Church at the Third Lateran Council in 1179. But the council realized, that the 'Poor in Spirit,' as the Waldenses called themselves, had no training for preaching, and pope Alexander 3rd refused them preaching license. But the Waldenses thought God ought to be obeyed rather than men, they went on preaching, and for this disobedience pope Lucius 3rd excommunicated them in 1184." (*A History of the Christian Church – Kromminga*, p. 131)

"The early characteristics of the Waldenses ... rapidly developed. **Chief of all was the principle that the Bible**, and especially the New Testament, **is the sole rule of belief and life...** As **unbiblical**, they rejected **masses and prayers for the dead**, and denied **purgatory** ...

"Waldenses were to be found in northern Spain, in Austria and Germany, as well as in their original homes. They were gradually repressed, till their chief seat came to be the Alpine valleys southwest of Turin, where they are still found. At the Reformation they readily accepted its principles, and became fully Protestant. Under modern religious freedom they are laboring with success in many parts of Italy. Their story is one of heroic endurance of persecution – a most honorable history – and they are the only medieval sect which survives, though with wide modification of their original ideals and methods." (*A History of the Christian Church – Walker*, p. 253)

**2:19** – "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."

"**I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience.**" It seems almost as if the Lord was here addressing his message to the messenger, rather than to the church of "Thyatira." Surely, for Waldo, the "**works**" were those "before ordained" that he should walk in them (Eph. 2:10); and which called for the selling of all he had (Luke 18:22); and this he did! His "**charity**" was evidenced in the gifts he gave to the poor; his "**service**" in the preaching of the Word of truth unto others; and in the example he set before them! These all, were the works of **faith** (Jas. 2:17, 22), and involved much of **patience!** However, there were other saints in this period who were inspired by Waldo's example, and they too, brought forth in their lives, "works," "charity," "service," "faith," and "patience" which the Lord here commended. It should also be noted that "works" are mentioned twice, by the Lord, but he adds that **the last were more than the first.** (Rev. 2:19) Perhaps this signified that the "first works" of self-denial, self-sacrifice, etc., though very commendable, were surpassed in His estimation, by the "last" – the suffering which they endured for righteousness' sake!

"So general and widespread became the so-called heresy that Innocent 3rd, one of the proudest and most bigoted of the Roman pontiffs, determined to crush it out – 'exterminate the whole pestilential race,' was the language of which he made use. The commission he gave to the authorities, who knew no law above that which went forth from St. Peter's, was to burn the chiefs of the Vaudois, to scatter the heretics themselves, confiscating their property, and consigning to perdition every soul who dared to oppose the haughty mandate of the pope. How these commands of his holiness were carried out history is a faithful witness. Joined with him in his relentless persecution of the Waldenses was Dominic, the father of the Inquisition, the prime article in whose creed came to be that it was a crime against God and the Church to keep faith with heretics." (*McClintock & Strong's Encyclopedia – Article: "Waldenses" Vol. 10*, p. 855)

### "I Know Thy Works ..."

"Concerning the little, despised, humble, local assemblies, the Waldenses, etc., and their pastors of this period, we should keep in mind that as a remnant, they are distinctly singled out in the Thyatira message, and that neither the Jezebel system nor her children are included among them. By so doing we will be better able to appreciate this testimony on the Lord's part as to what He saw commendable in them. How little do we know of the hidden lives of those who, amid the days of Roman pride and tyranny, **walked humbly and in secret with their God.** It is very comforting and encouraging to realize how fully Christ could appreciate their stand for Him, even though in a measure defective, and how openly He will in the day of His manifestation acknowledge them as His own.... Here is the record, that they are not forgotten, those nameless ones, or of dishonored names: '**works and love and faith,**' how tested! '**and service,**' amid what discouragement! '**and thy patience,**' marked and emphasized in the language used – that long endurance!" (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Streeter*, Vol. 1, p.169)

"But even in an assembly where gross corruption was permitted there was that which the Lord could commend. '**Love, and faith, and service, and thine endurance, and thy last works to be more than the first.**' One delights to think of the personal devotedness found in many saints during what are called 'the dark ages.' Many whose writings, or portions of them, have been preserved to us evidently loved the Lord and labored for Him; and probably the vast majority of devoted ones left nothing to perpetuate their names, and never got a place in church history. The Lord could recognize even in such an assembly as Thyatira a remnant who were not Jezebel's children, nor personally corrupted by her teaching; and

His consideration for them is very touching... He takes account of them as having that which was of divine value, and which was to be held fast till He should come. Their **love, faith, service, endurance**, and increasing activity in **works** were the evidence of what was in their 'reins and hearts.' (*An Outline of the Revelation* – Coates, p. 34)

**2:20** – “Notwithstanding I have this<sup>1</sup> against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.”

Since the candlesticks of Revelation 1:20 represent “the Lord’s nominal people of this Gospel age, **including his ‘members’**,” we ought not be surprised to find that the messages of the Lord are addressed to the respective “churches” as units: the commendation being for the Lord’s true saints in the periods involved, and the condemnation unto those who are merely nominally his. (R3659:4) Accordingly, we read: “**Notwithstanding** [the fact that there are those among you, whom I have commended] **I have this against thee** [those of you who profess my name, but do not heed my words] **because thou sufferest that woman, Jezebel** [the Roman Catholic Church], **which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach, and to seduce my servants, to commit fornication** [i.e., to foster an illicit relationship between church and state] **and to eat** [appropriate unto themselves as truth] **things** [doctrines twisted, distorted, and mutilated] **sacrificed unto idols** [the creed-idols set up by the various ecumenical councils].” See also Rev. 2:14.

“The Book of Revelation (2:20-25; 18:7) pictures to us Queen Jezebel as representing a great religious system of this Gospel age which did great violence to the truth. Ahab represents the worldly governments. His wife represented a false Christian church system married to earthly governments. As Ahab represented the worldly governments claiming to be Christ’s kingdoms, so Queen Jezebel pictured, or typified, a false church system, which, instead of maintaining its purity as a virgin church of Christ, became married or united to these earthly systems. Contrary to this, the virgin church of Christ was to remain faithful to her heavenly Lord, awaiting his second coming; and her marriage to Him was then to be accomplished.

“As the Prophets of Baal were under the care of Queen Jezebel and under the patronage of King Ahab, so the priests and religious representatives of a great church system have been the obedient servants of the great institutions pictured by Ahab and Jezebel.” (R5751:2)

### The Allusion to Israel’s History

“An allusion is made to a faithful prophet who had to flee for his life into the wilderness from the idolatrous wife of a king. This picture is from the history of Elijah, **Jezebel** and Ahab. **Jezebel** was the protector of the priests of Baal. Her husband was king, and she wielded his power for her own ends. The drouth of three and a half years was evidently a type of the ‘time, times and a half’ – 1260 years – of the spiritual famine, ‘not of bread nor of water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.’ (Amos 8:11)” (R491:4, W. I. Mann)

### Jezebel

“**Jezebel**, as the nourisher and protector of the prophets of Baal, is a type of the Papal Church, the mother of abominations. (1 Kings 18:19; 2 Kings 9:22) Ahab, her husband, the king of Israel, represents the kings or kingdoms of Europe who committed spiritual fornication with the ‘mother church’.” (R389:2, W. I. Mann)

### Spiritual Fornication

“The temptation before Spiritual Israel, which was illustrated by fornication in fleshly Israel, is a more insidious kind, and we are frequently warned against it, in the book of Revelation. (See Rev. 2:21; 14:8; 17:2, 4, 5; 18:3; 19:2) The use of the word in these cases cited seems to imply as its higher meaning or symbolical significance any illicit fellowship with the world, on the part of those who have betrothed themselves to be God’s consecrated people: in other words, fellowship in spirit with those who have not the spirit of the Lord, but the spirit of the world. To how large an extent is this improper course, this sinful fellowship, indulged in by the professed church of Christ! Are not the worldly not only invited but almost pressed into foremost positions in the nominal church, while those who are faithful to the Lord and who stand aloof from and rebuke worldly aims and methods, are disesteemed as being fanatical and peculiar people?” (R2300:1)

**2:21** – “And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.”

The word here rendered “space” is the Greek word, *χρονοσ*, otherwise translated “time.” While it is possible that the time here referred to, is one of an indefinite period; it is also possible, and even very probable that a symbolic “time” of 360 years is meant. If the latter, we would naturally be much interested to know just where the period began. Bro. W. I. Mann (in 1883) conjectured that it began at about the time of Luther’s reformation,

<sup>1</sup> The words “a few things” do not appear in the ancient MSS. They are not found in the Sinaitic MS., and do not appear in the recensions of Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford and Wordsworth.

extending from 1517 A.D. to 1878 A.D. – when, according to the parallel dispensations, it was declared to the nominal church, “Your house is left unto you desolate.” (R491:5) This, however, would place the “time” beyond the period of the “Thyatira” church, and its messenger, Peter Waldo. To meet this objection, it has been suggested that this “space” commenced at least, within the period, at about 1160 A.D., and thus extended to 1520 A.D., by which time Luther’s reformation had been fully launched. But, this much is certain, “Jezebel” did not, and has not since, repented; and today seems even more involved in political intrigue than ever before!

### Luther’s Original Endeavors

“Luther ... forwarded his theses to the archbishop, and added a postscript inviting him to read them, in order to convince himself on how slight a foundation the doctrine of indulgences was based.

“Thus, **Luther’s whole desire was for the sentinels of the Church to awaken and resolve to put an end to the evils that were laying it waste.** Nothing could be more noble and more respectful than this letter from a monk to one of the greatest princes of the Church and of the Empire. Never did man act more in accordance with this precept of Christ; ‘Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God, the things that are God’s.’ This is not the course of those fiery revolutionists who ‘despise dominion and speak evil of dignities.’ It is the cry of a Christian conscience – of a priest who gives honor to all, but who fears God above everything.” (*History of the Reformation* – D’Aubigne, p. 100)

**2:22** – “Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.”

Even as the rewards to the overcomers of the respective church periods, did not come within those periods, but awaited fulfillment at a later time, so likewise is it with the punishment to be meted out to **Jezebel and her paramours** (who would not repent of her deeds) it would come later – in an appointed time! The “bed” referred to was not to be one of ease and comfort for her, but rather, one of affliction. (See Rev.2:22 – *Diaglott*) Already, since 1799 A.D., (see C122, 129) she has suffered “afflictions,” but the most severe are still to come, when in the great time of trouble with which this age is to end, the rejected church system (also known as Babylon – Rev. 17:5, 6) will be called upon to suffer her greatest humiliation and tribulation.

### Some Afflictions Still to Come to Babylon (Jezebel)

“**The tribulations upon Babylon will constitute a part of the great tribulation with which this Age will terminate** and the New Dispensation of Messiah’s Kingdom be ushered in – ‘a Time of Trouble

such as was not since there was a nation.’ Let God’s people remember that loyalty includes action and faithfulness even unto death. – (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21)” (SM411)

“The Papal dominion ... was broken down at the beginning of the Time of the End – 1799; and, though the subsequent process of consumption has been slow, and there have been occasional signs of apparent recovery, which never seemed more flattering than at present, **assurance of Papacy’s final destruction is positive, and its death struggle will be violent.** First, however, she must attain more of her old-time prestige, which will be shared with a confederated association of **her daughters.** Together they will be lifted up, that together they may be violently thrown down.

“That the punishment of Babylon will be great is assured.... While the broadest application of this language is, of course, to Papacy, it also involves all who are in any degree in confederation or sympathy with her. All such will be sharers in her plagues. (Rev. 18:4)” (D37)

“The harlot’s bed of ease and a sick bed which usually follows, are thus contrasted. ‘One cannot be indulged in without leading on, sooner or later, to the horrid sufferings of the other.’ The same contrast is brought out in the vision of the final destruction of the Jezebel system, called there, ‘Babylon the Great.’ (Rev. 17:5) ‘How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her.’ (Rev.18:7) ‘Those committing adultery with her’ – those who imbibe her spirit of selfish ambition and worldliness, those who advance the claim of being the divinely appointed channel, etc., – will meet the same punishment, suffering the bitter disappointment and distress of the great tribulation coming, in which **Babylon will eventually be destroyed.**” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, p. 176)

**2:23** – “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.”

Undoubtedly, the “children” here referred to, are those otherwise known as her “daughters.” But who are her daughters?

“Protestantism, as it exists today, is not the result of the Great Reformation, but of its decline; and it now partakes to a large degree of the disposition and character of the Church of Rome, from which its various branches sprang. **The various Protestant sects ... are the true daughters of that degenerate system of nominal Christianity, the Papacy,** to which the Revelator makes reference in applying to her the name ‘Mother of harlots.’ (Rev. 17:5)



“... Since **Papacy, the mother** is ... a great religious system, in keeping with the symbol we should expect to see other religious systems answering to the illustration of **daughters** of similar character – not, of course, so old, nor necessarily so depraved, as Papacy – but, nevertheless, ‘Harlots’ in the same sense; i.e., religious systems claiming to be either the espoused virgin or the bride of Christ, and yet courting the favor and receiving the support of the world, at the price of disloyalty to Christ.

“To this description the various Protestant organizations fully correspond.” (D28)

As “Jezebel’s children” these sects and denominations of Protestantism, will also be destroyed **“with death”** in the tribulations of the great Time of Trouble!

**“And all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and the hearts.”** This reminds us of the words of the Psalmist who said, “Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and the reins.” (Psa. 7:9) This **“all the churches shall know.”**

“Applying these words as addressed to the Church as a whole throughout the entire Age, we understand the meaning to be that the time would come in the end of the Age when all who were members professedly or truly of the Church of Christ would see the wisdom and justice displayed in the judgments that would fall on apostate Christianity.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, p. 176)

And there can be no doubt about the matter, the Lord will judge his people – the Church (nominal and true) righteously! **“I will give to every one of you according to your works.”** He says also: “Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 7:21)

“The point of this lesson is specially for those who have named the name of Christ, and who are professing to be his disciples. It is not enough that we profess discipleship; unless the matter goes deeper than this we will be rejected. Our professions of discipleship must be sincere, and the Lord knoweth the heart and will. Although he will judge us leniently so far as unwilling and unintentional weaknesses and imperfections are concerned, **he will judge us most strictly in respect to our purposes, the intentions of our hearts ...**

“While the Lord’s people of the present age are not to be judged by their works but by their faith, as the Apostle Paul distinctly points out, saying, ‘By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in God’s sight,’ but we are justified by faith, **nevertheless works will be required. By our works we must demonstrate to him the loyalty of our intentions, our wills.... If our works demonstrate to the Lord the sincerity of our faith, that faith will be accept-**

**able to him and we will be counted perfect and be granted a share in the kingdom – great and precious things which the Lord has in reservation for those who love him** – not merely in word, but also in deeds – for those who strive by deeds of life to show forth, to demonstrate, their love.

“The Lord ... does not merely refer to people who are nominally called Christian en masse. From the Lord’s standpoint the great majority of these would be classed as Gentiles; because they have never entered into any covenant relationship with God. The reference in this passage is evidently to those who have made a consecration of themselves to the Lord – to those who have outwardly professed a change of heart and vital relationship to the Lord. More than this, he includes not only a few, but ‘many,’ who in their outward course in life have in some measure acknowledged the Lord publicly and as here expressed.” (R3317:6)

**2:24, 25** – “But unto you I say [and unto – omitted in oldest MSS], the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths [deep things – S.R.V.] of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.”

Then once again, the Lord directs his remarks to the faithful little “remnant” – **those, who had not accepted “Jezebel’s” doctrine to the effect that the Kingdom was already established, and “she” was sitting as its Queen** (Rev. 18:7); **nor had they known (learned) the so-called “deep things” of Satan i.e., they had not been seduced into appropriating unto themselves, “things” “Jezebel” had decreed in ecumenical councils, should be offered to her creed-idols.** (Rev. 2:14, 20) The Apostle Paul had earlier, in writing to Timothy, told him of how the holy Spirit had expressly foretold that in “subsequent seasons” (*Diaglott*), there would be some who would depart from the faith, giving way to seducing spirits and the doctrines of devils. (1 Tim. 4:1) The time had now come, and our Lord commended the faith of the few in “Thyatira,” comforting them, and promising that he would add no further burden. However, he also admonished them, **“that which ye have already hold fast till I come.”** (Rev. 2:25)

**2:26, 27** – “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.”

We are not told as to just how Peter Waldo, the “angel” or messenger to the “Thyatira” church, conveyed this message of the Lord to them; but, we believe, he did endeavor to comfort the saints of this period with the comfort of the Scriptures (Rom. 15:4), reminding them, that even though they were hated and despised because of their loyalty to the Lord and his truth, if they would

endure to the end, they would be privileged to experience and enjoy the fulness of their salvation. (Matt. 10:22)

As already suggested, their first works of self-denial and self-sacrifice were very commendable, but their last works, the works of suffering for righteousness' sake were even greater. (Rev. 2:19) The Lord would remind them that if they continued as **overcomers**, they would one day **be given power over the nations, to rule them with a rod of iron**, to break them in pieces as a potter's vessel! This promise, of course, had reference to a time then still in the future, when he (the Lord) would again be present, not merely to reward his saints, but also to humble those who had been so cruel and heartless toward his saints. This time would be ushered in by the great tribulation of the Time of Trouble foretold of in Dan. 12:1, and reiterated by our Lord in Matt. 24:21.

"Our Lord and his church will not be absent from the earth during the period of the world's tribulation; but on the contrary, will continue present, but invisible, bringing upon the world the tribulation foretold in the Scriptures, which will result in the humbling of the hearts of mankind, that they may say, eventually, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain (kingdom) of the house of the Lord, that he may teach us his ways, that we may walk in his paths.' – (Isa. 2:3)

"This fact is abundantly proved by the Lord's statement of what shall be the reward to the overcomers, a part of which is 'He that overcometh, and keepeth my words to 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 in pieces; even as I have received of my Father.' (Rev. 2:26, 27) Again, the same matter is mentioned by the Prophet David, saying, 'This honor have all his saints – to execute the judgments written.' (R2975:4)

### Reward of Overcomers

"... the Redeemer assured His faithful Apostles that, after being tested, the worthy ones would be associated with Himself in His Heavenly Kingdom – His Millennial Kingdom ... they would sit on twelve thrones judging or ruling. No doubt some special glory and honor is provided in God's great Plan for the twelve faithful Apostles – St. Paul taking the place of Judas. Nevertheless the Lord afterward declared that all of His faithful followers would be granted a share with Him in His glory and power. Mark His words: 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne' – 'I will give Him power over the nations' – the Gentiles. (Rev. 3:21; 2:26)" (OV379)

### The Adversary – a Potter – and his Vessels

"While the Lord as the great Divine Potter has been molding and fashioning the vessels of mercy and of glory to be the Kings and Priests of the world during

the coming age, **the Adversary has undertaken to be a potter**, and, cooperating with human tendencies and ambitions **has created some wonderful vessels**. These are found in high positions in Babylon, in the seats of popes, cardinals, bishops, kings, princes, financial magnates, etc., etc. The work of the Adversary seems to be much greater, much more glorious, much more honorable, than the work of God, who, describing His vessels of mercy, declares that amongst them are not many wise, not many learned, not many great, not many noble, not many rich, according to the course or judgment of this world. – (1 Cor. 1:26-29)

"... the power shall be exercised in the hands of the great Redeemer, which will utterly dash in pieces all the existing institutions, that seem so great and so wonderful, **those vessels of the Adversary potter**. They shall be broken to shivers." (SM716)

Jesus says, "**even as I received of my Father**." Oh how sweet and precious is this! Jesus had received from the Father, the right, authority and power, to judge the world of mankind in equity and justice (Matt. 28:18), and this, Jesus is willing to share with those who had suffered with him. (2 Tim. 2:12) Ultimately, these, as the promised "Seed of Abraham" will be the blessers of all the families of the earth. (Gen. 22:18; Gal. 3:29)

"Those who will constitute the spiritual phase of the kingdom are the **overcoming saints of the Gospel age – the Christ, head and body** – glorified. Their resurrection and **exaltation to power** precedes that of all others, because through this class all others are to be blessed. (Heb. 11:39, 40) Theirs is the first resurrection. (Rev. 20:5) The great work before this glorious anointed company – the Christ – necessitates their exaltation to the divine nature; no other than divine power could accomplish it. Theirs is a work pertaining not only to this world, but to all things in heaven and in earth – among spiritual as well as among human beings. (Matt. 28:18; Col. 1:20; Eph. 1:10; Phil. 2:10; 1 Cor. 6:3)" (A288)

## 2:28 – "And I will give him the morning star."

Christ says in Rev. 22:16, that he, himself, is the "bright and morning star." Could this, "I will give him the morning star" mean that he would give himself to the overcomer? If so, it would be no more than the bridegroom does on his wedding day: he gives himself to his bride! And she, thus, not only accepts him, but also takes his name, and so, becomes identified with him forever after; for shall not the twain be one! What a blessed thought!

However, there is also significance to the fact that He is here called "the **morning star**." The morning star is the herald or harbinger of a new day. This suggests that the overcomer will be granted the right to share in the First Resurrection in the dawning of the new, the Millennial,

day, before becoming identified with the “sun of righteousness” which will arise with healing in its wings. (Mal. 4:2)

**2:29** – “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches.”

Instead of this entreaty – “to him that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches,” preceding the promise to the overcomers, it now for “Thyatira” and the remaining church periods, follows it. This may, or may not, be significant. But this we do know, that while the entreaty is addressed to each of the “churches” respectively, it is intended for all collectively: for it is ever and always one and the self-same Spirit addressing itself to those who would be overcomers – members of the ‘body’ of the Christ. For these, as they suffer for righteousness’ sake, he speaks encouragement and comfort, regardless of the time (period) in which they may live. This is exactly what Jesus meant when speaking to his disciples, he said,

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.... But the Comforter, which is the holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” (John 14:16, 26, 27)

“... The correct thought is that of help, encouragement, assistance, strengthening. Thus our Lord’s promise implied that the holy Spirit which the Father would send in Jesus’ name and as Jesus’ representative would be near his followers, a **present help in every time of need** – the holy power by which he would guide and direct his people and enable them to ‘walk by faith and not by sight.’ Indeed, our Lord gives us to understand that all the ministrations of the Spirit are his own ministrations saying, ‘I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you’ (John 14:18); he thus identifies the holy Spirit with himself. ‘If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is not of his’ – and has not the *parakletos*, the divine aid.

“This power of God is with the whole Church.” (E202)

This holy Spirit of God was what Jesus referred to when he entreated those who had ears, to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. For them it was to be the Spirit which would guide them in matters of truth, and encourage and sustain them, yea, comfort them in times of trials and persecution.

**3:1** – “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; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.”

“Sardis” was the short period which yet remained before the great Reformation of Luther’s day.

“Sardis is said to mean **that which remains**, as if it signified a useless remnant, something out of which life or virtue had gone. The nominal church during this period had the appearance of being what it was not, having a form of godliness without its power. Sardis was the remains of the true church, which had been driven into the wilderness; but when the persecution began to subside, her zeal also abated. Persecution has always developed the vigor of the church.

“Many today have the Sardis characteristics. To such there is a fatal warning in Rev. 3:3. Seven times our Lord’s second coming is described as being thief-like, stealthy. Only to those who are watching is the approach of a thief known. Those who are asleep will be awakened only after he has taken full possession, after his work of destruction has progressed. Although they may then arouse themselves, it is too late. They have been overtaken. Thus our Lord will be present, but invisible and unknown – except to the watchers – for some years after his arrival; and his presence will be recognized by the sleepers only as the noise of spoiling the strong man’s house gradually increases. Then slowly will they realize what it is and what the outcome will be.

“The reason why many Christians cannot recognize our Lord’s *Parousia* – presence – is that they are looking for a fleshly Christ, visible to the fleshly eye, and making an imposing demonstration which they cannot mistake. Failing to realize the fact that spiritual bodies cannot be seen by human eyes without a miracle, they cannot understand how he can be present while ‘all things continue as they were since the beginning of creation.’ (2 Pet. 3:3, 4) Thus they are unable to understand ‘the signs of the times,’ revealing his return.” (RS992:3)

### Anent the Sardis Church

“Thyatira was specially commended for her works. (Rev. 2:19) Sardis for the opposite – ‘I have found no works of thine fulfilled before my God’ (R.V.)” (R491:6, W. I. Mann)

“I now thy works,’ said the Savior, addressing this Church of Sardis and its star or messenger. No particular evil is mentioned as existing in her midst, but if we are correct in applying the message prophetically to the period just prior to the great Reformation epoch, we may be sure that there was existing in this Church a combination of all those evils that we have found recorded in the other messages. The unequal yoking up with the world, the purely worldly

spirit, so prevalent in the age represented by the Church of Pergamos, controlling in her councils; the wicked, corrupt teaching of that ‘woman Jezebel,’ together with her persecuting spirit, pictured by Thyatira, had reached the condition called by the Savior ‘the depths of Satan.’ The professing Church on earth had become wholly corrupt – indeed, ‘dead’, and this was the state of the visible Church in the period just prior to the great Reformation.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 1, p. 188)

The “angel” to the “Sardis” church we believe, was John Wycliffe, concerning whom we read:

“It was in 1378 A.D., the year of the ‘Great Schism of the West,’ when two popes were elected, one in Rome and the other in Avignon, that Wycliffe came out as the great Doctrinal Reformer. Workman, in *Dawn of the Reformation*, p.172, writes: ‘Wycliffe’s spiritual earnestness was shocked, his theory destroyed by the spectacle of two popes each claiming to be the sole head of the Church, each labelling the other as Antichrist. To Wycliffe, the year of the schism, 1378, was the critical year of his life. He first urged both popes should be set aside as having little in common with the Church of the Holy God. From this position of neutrality he quickly passed into one of antagonism to the Papacy itself.’

“In his Medieval Church History, Archbishop Trench says: ‘Gregory XI died on 27th March, 1378, and the Papal Schism broke out. The year 1378 marked the turning-point in Wycliffe’s career. Hitherto he had concerned himself with matters of mixed ecclesiastical and political import, but henceforth he devoted himself exclusively to doctrinal matters and came out as the Reformer. He began in earnest the translation of the Bible into English, and took the next decisive step by **an open attack, forced upon him by his studies of the Bible, against Transubstantiation.** The effect was immediate. The University itself turned against him. He was forbidden to teach. Ever afterwards he did, in nearly all his writings introduce in some way a statement of his view upon Transubstantiation.’

“Wycliffe thus attached the very bulwark of Antichrist’s stronghold, for the gross and blasphemous doctrine of Transubstantiation, or the sacrifice of the Mass, annuls the true sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Because of this setting aside of Christ’s ‘continual sacrifice’ by its substitution of the false sacrifice of the Mass, the Papal system became in God’s sight the ‘Desolating Abomination.’ (Dan. 11:31 – See C99-104)” (*Great Pyramid Passages* – Edgar, Vol. II, p. 187)

### John Wycliffe

“John Wycliffe (1320-1384) became the leader of a strong reform movement that spread over England

and certain parts of the Continent. This movement contended that the reform must aim, not merely at correction of outward corruptions of the Church, but also at the removal of the hidden causes. The movement addressed itself to the people rather than to the learned, the reformers, Wycliffe and Hus, proclaiming the Biblical doctrine of justification by faith in the crucified Savior. The Bible was acknowledged as the only source of truth. Emphasis was placed on the invisible Church at the expense of the visible Christian community. The pope was not believed infallible, and his bulls and decrees had no authority except as they were based on Scripture. The clergy were not to rule but to serve and help their people. Wycliffe declared the pope to be Antichrist. He declared that the bread and wine in the Lord’s Supper were not changed into the body and blood of Christ. He gave England the first complete version of the Bible in the English language ... He also sent out lay evangelists to instruct the people. Wycliffe was condemned by Pope Gregory XI in 1377, but the English Parliament protected him. He retired to his parish at Lutterworth where he died ... in 1401 heresy was made a capital offence in England, and the mere possession of Wycliffe’s writings was punishable by death. Wyclifism was suppressed by force.” (*A History of the Christian Church* – Qualben, p. 193)

“The Council of Constance (May 5, 1415) condemned his doctrines, and in 1428 his remains were dug up and burned; the ashes were cast into the adjoining river Swift, which as Fuller prosaically, and Wordsworth poetically, remark, conveyed them through the Avon and the Severn into the sea, and thus disseminated them over the world.” (*McClintock & Strong’s Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10, p. 1043)

“**These things saith he that hath the seven spirits of God.**” Thus, does the Lord identify himself to the “Sardis” church.

“The epistle being sent to a languishing ministry and church, they are very fitly put in mind that Christ has the seven spirits, the Spirit without measure and in perfection, to whom they may apply themselves for the reviving of his work among them.” (*Matthew Henry’s Commentary*)

“**and the seven stars**” (which he holds in his right hand (Rev. 1:20), are, of course, the seven special messengers or “angels” whose life and work he controls and supervises in the interests of his Church. (R3570:2)

He continues, “**I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead.**” Of course this is not commendatory; and evidently, the “works” here spoken of, are the same as those referred to in verse 2, which for this portion, is in the *Rotherham Translation*, rendered, “I have not found thy works fulfilled before my God,” for “thou

hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.” Surely, those of “Sardis” to whom this part of the message of the Lord was addressed, were no better than their counterpart, the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ day, whom he called, “whited sepulchers,” appearing quite **beautiful without**, but **inwardly filled with dead men’s bones, and all manner of uncleanness!** (Matt. 23:37)

“The chief sect of the Jews **called themselves God’s holy people** (the meaning of the word Pharisee), and the whole nation stood on a plane of outward **morality** which the Lord declared was in his sight a farce. He called the leaders **whited sepulchers, inwardly full of corruption**. He told them that while they washed the outside of the cup they left it filthy within; that while they made broad their phylacteries and prayed in public, in their heart they were far from a condition of holiness or love – so far that they would be willing to wrongfully take a home from a poor widow if the outward forms of the law permitted and if the transaction would not bring too much reproach. (Matt. 23:14, 23-28) It is much the same today; there is an outward gloss or veneer that in many cases is **hypocritical, an outward form of worship**, a drawing near with the lips while the heart is far from him, busy with fashion and dress and pleasure and money-making idolatries, if not with grosser sins.

“Our Lord prayed that **his true followers might be kept by heavenly power free from such conditions – out of sympathy with them, not of them**. And we believe this has been true all down throughout the Gospel age. We believe that the Lord’s prayer has been fulfilled, and that his scattered little flock, the branches of the true vine, have flourished in heart, spiritually, keeping up a separate life entirely, from the nominal system, which is only a part of the world.” (R3552:2)

**3:2** – “Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.”

The “Sardis” church had fallen so extremely low, spiritually, that there wasn’t much of real life remaining in it. There were those among them who had commenced nobly, the good “works” of faith and consecration unto the Lord, but who had because of a measure of carelessness and indifference, fallen asleep by the wayside – their “works” still unfinished, **incomplete before God**. There were others also, a very small remnant of true saints of the Lord; and these it was for whom the “angel” was admonished to **watch over and strengthen**. And so we find, that though John Wycliffe’s message may in some senses have been a very general one for all of “Sardis” – “awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead ... walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise ... understanding what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. 5:14-17); there must also have

been a very special one for the faithful, aside from which, his own life and faithfulness, must have been a strengthening portion too!

**3:3** – “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.”

Again the Lord directs his remarks to those of the period who were disregarding his Word of Truth; and heeding rather, the creeds formulated by Councils – the sophistries of mere men. It should be carefully noted that one of the preachments of John Wycliffe was that the Bible should be recognized as **the only** source of the Truth. Some of “Sardis” once believed this, but had been beguiled by “Jezebel’s priests of Baal!”

“Their love and understanding of the Scriptures had evidently decreased. They were warned to ‘**Remember how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent.**’ God’s Word is spiritual food. He who continually feasts upon it will grow vigorous, healthy and powerful. He who neglects to eat, or fails to digest this living bread must be weak and sickly; remaining at best, only a spiritual dwarf, powerless to discern ‘the signs of the times,’ ignorant of what the Lord is doing, or what his plans are.” (R492:1, W. I. Mann)

Our Lord continues, “**If therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.**” This was not yet the time for the church to know more particularly about the time of our Lord’s second advent. However, the consecrated, regardless of the period in which they may be living, should so live as if that coming was imminent. This, we believe, is the import of the Lord’s message, warning, that if they failed to watch, he would come, yea he would even be present, and they would be unaware of it. The **thief** enters, while the inmates of the house are asleep.

“Many today have the Sardis characteristics. To such there is a fatal warning in Rev. 3:3. Seven times our Lord’s second coming is described as being thief-like, stealthy. Only to those who are watching is the approach of a thief known. Those who are asleep will be wakened only after he has taken full possession, after his work of destruction has progressed. Although they may then arouse themselves, it is too late. They have been overtaken. Thus our Lord will be present, but invisible and unknown – except to the watchers – for some years after his arrival; and his presence will be recognized by the sleepers only as the noise of spoiling the strong man’s house gradually increases. Then slowly will they realize what is and what the outcome will be.” (RS993:3)

**3:4** – “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.”

Once more, the Lord calls to mind the faithfulness of the few – “**a few names even in Sardis,**” who “**have not defiled their garments.**” For the time being, these “garments” were the property of their Redeemer, and represented his righteousness imputed to them, thus covering, as it were, their “filthy rags.” We are not told just how the “angel” of this “Sardis” period delivered the Lord’s message to this church, but we consider it very likely that he reminded them of the words of the Apostle, “Pure religion and undefiled before God is this ... to keep himself unspotted from the world.” (Jas. 1:27) The keeping of these “garments” unspotted from the world, would reflect their sincere desire to ever remain worthy of the grace and favor of God, thus bestowed upon them. Without these “garments” they could never appear at the “marriage of the King’s Son.”

“... we are, by reason of obedient faith in the sacrifice, reckoned as covered before the divine eyes with the merit of him who ‘bought us with his own precious blood,’ which merit is symbolically represented as a linen garment, Christ’s righteousness, instead of the filthy rags of our own righteousness. While covered by this robe, we may by faith exercise all the privileges and opportunities, which could be ours if the robe were actually our own – instead of merely a loaned or imputed robe, the property of our Redeemer. So long as by faith we are trusting in the great sacrifice for sin, and seeking to walk worthy of the Lord, this robe is ours, to have and to enjoy; but to lose this faith would be to lose all the advantages which come with the robe and which continue only to the wearers.

“The object of the granting of these robes at the present time (not to the whole world, but only to the true believers) is that they may constitute, for those who accept them ‘wedding garments,’ giving the wearers a right to a place at the ‘marriage of the King’s Son.’ ...

“**This ‘wedding garment’ when presented to us is clean and white,** representing the absolute purity and spotlessness of our Lord’s holiness; and the instructions to each one who receives the robe is ‘**to keep his garments unspotted from the world.**’ This command is equivalent to our Lord’s injunction, ‘Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect’ a standard to which we are seeking to attain, but whose absolute attainment in an imperfect body, and surrounded by the world, the flesh and the devil, is admitted in the Scriptures and proved by experience to be impossible. But as the robe covers all the repented-of blemishes of the past, so it likewise covers the unintentional imperfections of the present; so that only those things to which we give more

or less mental consent are reckoned as ours – either good or evil. Thus seen, under this arrangement it is possible for the Lord’s people to walk so carefully, so circumspectly (looking all around) at every step, as to **keep his garments unspotted from the world.**” (R2160:2)

#### **Additional Thoughts on the “Garments” to be kept “Undefiled”**

“This garment, if it would be a wedding garment, must be spotless, clean and white – ‘without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.’ (Eph. 5:27) In James 1:27 the Apostle urges us to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, which implies a **possibility of having our robe of Christ’s righteousness spotted.** This does not signify that anything we could do could destroy the work of Christ, or make of none effect his sacrifice for sins, nor blemish it. The robe signifies that share of Christ’s merit which has been freely appropriated to us by him with the Father’s consent. If, through receiving of the spirit of the world, we blemish or sully this wedding garment we shall be unfit to be of the bride class, and be rejected; and yet we might say that in our present imperfect condition and many unfavorable surroundings and besetments it would be a miracle if we should never come so closely in contact with evil as to spot our garment or wrinkle it. (Compare Jude 23; Rev. 3:4; 16:15)

“However, we find that God’s gracious provision in Christ is not only that our Lord Jesus’ sacrifice was a sufficient one for all of our imperfections of the past, prior to our acceptance with the Lord, but that it is a sufficient one also for any unintentional blemish or weakness or misstep that may come to us through our own imperfections or the weaknesses of others, after we become the Lord’s children. In other words, we are not only provided with the robe covering all the past, but provided also in the same sacrifice of Christ with a spot-remover, and any who through weakness or temptation stumble by the way and soil their garments are to be restored by their brethren ‘in a spirit of meekness, remembering themselves also, lest they should be tempted.’ ... All who are in the right attitude of heart, appreciating the purity of the robe, appreciating the Bridegroom and his favor, appreciating the great King and appreciating the honor of being called to the marriage, will be very careful indeed to guard against spots and wrinkles, and very careful also that if any should get upon their robes they should be as quickly as possible removed. This work of mutual helpfulness on the part of the Lord’s consecrated people is represented as ‘the bride making herself ready.’” (R2782:6)

And the Lord adds, “**they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.**” Not only would these faithful saints



of the “Sardis” period, **then** be privileged to **walk with Him in white** (i.e., in the imputed righteousness of Jesus), but if they continued faithfully, they would as overcomers be privileged to so **walk with Him in the glory of the Kingdom**; the “white raiment” then representing their own righteousness (Rev. 19:8); for, having crystallized the character-likeness unto Jesus, they would indeed **“be worthy!”**

“... it is not sufficient that we have the imputation of our Savior’s righteousness. This imputation is only a temporary arrangement. We need to come to the place where we shall have a righteousness of our own. Our flesh is imperfect; as St. Paul says, we cannot do the things which we would. In spite of our best endeavors things are bound to go more or less wrong. But we are to prove ourselves overcomers – ‘more than conquerors.’ The Lord has arranged that **at the conclusion of our trial**, at the end of the present life, all the overcomers shall receive **the new body of actual purity**. Thus, the Apostle says, we shall ‘be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.’ So our raiment will be changed from a garment of imputed perfection, our justification by faith, to that which represents actual perfection. At the resurrection we shall receive that body of inherent purity, without blemish, without spot, which is here pictured as ‘white raiment’.” (R5669:2)

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

Here the Lord reiterates the promise to the effect that the overcomer will be clothed in white raiment; but he adds this, that **his name will not be blotted out of the book of life**.

“... the Lord ‘will not blot out his name out of the book of life,’ in which are written the names of all those who become truly the Lord’s people, those who have made with the Lord ‘a covenant by sacrifice,’ all who renounce their wills, who present their bodies a living sacrifice. The name of each of these is recorded, entered in the Lamb’s book of life, when he starts to live the new life, and to demonstrate his loyalty. Just as these are clothed with the robe of Christ’s righteousness in advance of being actually tested, so their names are written in that book in advance of being actually tested. If they do not remain faithful, their names will be blotted out of that book of life. But if they are faithful their names will not be blotted out of the book of life; and they will attain all those glorious things which are promised to those who love him supremely. (Rev. 21:7)

“More than this, the Lord says, **‘I will confess their names before my father and before his angels.’** The intimation here is that the overcomers will have

such characters that the Lord will not be ashamed of them, but will be pleased to own them in the presence of the Father and the holy angels. We are to be ‘changed from glory to glory,’ into the likeness of our Lord. (2 Cor. 3:18) In the end, these overcomers will each be so grandly developed that the Lord will not be ashamed to confess any of them and to say, Here is one of my followers. Here is another. They have walked in my footsteps and have overcome. But he will be ashamed of any who are ashamed of him. Of such he says, ‘Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory and in his Father’s, and of the holy angels.’ (Luke 9:26)

“It is not a matter of favoritism, but of character development. If they will not endure to the end, if they do not prove overcomers, they will not be fit for the kingdom and association with their Lord.” (R5669:4)

#### **Anent the Eventual White Raiment**

“Under the symbol of white raiment the Lord throughout his Word represents the righteousness of those whom he accepts as his people. **Their righteousness in the future state will be personal righteousness or holiness**; and the guarantee of this is the promises that all who are accounted worthy, as ‘overcomers’ of the world to be jointheirs with Christ in the heavenly kingdom, will in the resurrection be granted new, perfect, spiritual bodies, free from sin and impurity of every kind, and fully in harmony with their new wills or characters developed during the trial-time of this present life. That will be the time of which the Apostle speaks, saying, ‘When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.’ Those who attain to that glorious condition are symbolically represented as being clothed in white linen, representing their personal purity, completeness and perfection at that time: as it is written, ‘to her [the bride, the victorious church] was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.’ (Rev. 19:8)” (R2159:3)

#### **The overcomers being The ‘Elect’ or ‘Very Elect’**

“The Scriptures abound with references to the ‘elect’ and the ‘very elect’: the latter expression implying that the word ‘elect’ may be understood as applying to all those who come into a certain condition of relationship with God, in which they have the hope, or prospect, of immortality, being members of the glorified Church, though they have also the possibility of falling away, and thus of ceasing to be of the elect class. In other words, all of the consecrated class accepting the high calling of God to the New

Creation are counted as of the elect when their names are registered in the Lamb's book of life and when a crown is apportioned to them; but as unfaithfulness may lead to the blotting out of these names and the giving of their crowns to others (Rev. 3:5, 11) so they would then cease to be of the elect Church. The 'very elect,' on the contrary, would mean those who would ultimately attain to the blessings to which God has called the faithful in this Gospel Age – those who 'make their calling and election sure' by faithfulness to the terms and conditions thereof, even unto death." (F165)

### The Book of Life

"The special book of life that is open at this present time is the one in which the names of **all the overcomers** of this Gospel age are written. When we take the step of consecration and are begotten of the holy Spirit, it is appropriate that we should be reckoned as belonging to the family of God ...

"This recording has been going on throughout this present age. This means that those whose names are therein written are not only members of the family of God, but also members of the bride class. In order to maintain this position, **they must be overcomers.**" (RS377:5)

**3:6** – "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

This admonition is the same for all "seven churches in Asia" – and though it was directed separately and independently to each of the "churches" in the ultimate it is but the one church in its seven stages of development. What is it that the Spirit saith unto the churches? Is it not this: Be thou faithful in your sufferings for me, for the truth, for righteousness sake, even should this mean your death; be an overcomer, and you shall share my glory with me? (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12; 1 Pet. 4:16)

**3:7, 8** – "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."

These words of Jesus: "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." were originally spoken by Isaiah in his prophecy of Isa. 22:22, where the application is made to Eliakim (God establishes) who in due time replaced Shebna, the then incumbent of a position of authority. It seems to me, that Eliakim, was here intended by Jahweh (Jehovah) to typify Christ Jesus in due time to be given the position of authority over God's Kingdom. (See Phil. 2:5-11; Rev. 3:7)

Yea, the "heathen" kingdoms over which Lucifer once exercised a usurped authority, and which he once offered to Jesus, if he (Jesus) would just bow down and worship him (Lucifer) (Luke 4:5-7) Jahweh (Jehovah) has already promised unto Jesus, upon his request. (Psa. 2:8)

"Philadelphia means brotherly love, as is well known. This stage of the church's history evidently began at the Reformation; and there are many still living who possess the characteristics described." (RS993:4)

There is for this "church" no word of condemnation. Perhaps this is because "Jezebel's" time to repent (Rev. 2:21) – 360 years from about 1160 A.D., to 1520 A.D., – had run out: and save for the allusion to those who call themselves "Jews" and are not, this part of the "Philadelphia" church is completely ignored in deference to the little remnant of faithful saints who were called to be "body members" of the great High Priest – a holy brotherhood, partakers all of one anointing. (Psa. 133:1, 2) We believe, the "angel" or messenger to this "church" was Martin Luther. Concerning him we read:

"Frequently, in after years, as he contemplated the immense and unexpected consequences of this courageous attack, Luther was astonished at himself, and could not understand how he had ventured to make it. An invisible and mightier hand than his held the clue, and led the herald of truth along a path that was still hidden from him, and from the difficulties of which he would perhaps have shrunk, if he had foreseen them, and if he had advanced alone and of his own accord. **'I entered into this controversy,'** said he, **'without any definite plan, without knowledge or inclination; I was taken quite unawares, and I call God, the searcher of hearts, to witness.'**" (D'Aubigne's *History of the Reformation*, p. 99)

### Biographical Sketch on Martin Luther

"1483-1546. German religious reformer, born in Eisleben; father of the Reformation in Germany. M.A., Erfurt (1505). Became an Augustinian friar; ordained priest (1507); lectured in Wittenberg on dialectics, physics, and the Scriptures (1508). On mission to Rome (1510-1511), where he was unfavorably impressed by conditions. Professor of Biblical exegesis, Wittenberg (1511-1546). **Began to preach the doctrine of salvation by faith rather than works; attacked the church's sale of indulgences; nailed to the church door at Wittenberg (Oct. 31, 1517) his 95 theses questioning the value of the indulgences and condemning the means used by the agents in selling them.** Publicly defended his position in appearances before a chapter of his own Augustinian order (May, 1518) and before Cardinal Legate Cajetan (October, 1518); appealed from the pope to a general council of the church. Publicly debated the issue in Leipzig with the theolo-

gian Johann Eck (July, 1519), and **went further than the mere indulgence issue by denying the supremacy of the pope, by asserting that the act of the church council in condemning John Huss had been wrong.** Publicized his arguments by pamphlets: *An Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation, The Babylonian Captivity of the Church, The Liberty of a Christian Man.* **Excommunicated by Pope Leo X** (bull issued June 15, 1520); **publicly burned the bull. Appeared before Diet of Worms** (April 17 and 18, 1521); **Diet passed the Edict of Worms, putting Luther under the ban of the Empire.** Luther's friend, Frederick of Saxony, concealed him for safety in a castle at Wartburg (1521-1522); there he wrote his pamphlet *On Monastic Vows* and translated the New Testament from Greek into German. Returned to Wittenberg (1522) and devoted himself to organization of the church he had inaugurated. Married Katherina von Bora (1525), a former nun. Translated the Old Testament, and wrote many commentaries, catechisms, etc." (*Webster's Biographical Dictionary*)

"We may understand the message better if we recall the condition of Rome when the Reformation began. She claimed to be the only holy and true. She claimed to have the sure mercies of David, the throne of the kingdom of the Lord; with power to bind or loose; to open or shut the gates of heaven; to be the only true synagogue; the only true recipient of the favor and love of God; to be the city of God; the only one having a right to bear his name.

**"These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shall shut; and shutteth, and no man shall open.'**

"He who speaks has not given his prerogatives to fallible men. He lent the keys to Peter to open the doors to both Jews and Gentiles. Peter preached the opening sermon to the Jews on Pentecost, and to the Gentiles in Caesarea probably three-and-a-half years after. (Acts 2:10) But Peter fell asleep and the Master holds the keys. He it is who shall unlock the gates of hades and of death and shall free the long bound captives. No 'successor of St. Peter' ever has or ever can. If they had the power, they would have tried it long ago." (RS04:2, W. I. Mann)

"There is considerable similarity between the work begun on Pentecost and that of Luther and his friends. The Reformation was, in a sense, the beginning of a new era, a dawning of light where all had been darkness, the separation of the true from the false, and a new start in the way of truth. No doubt all the powers of Satan were exerted to close the door then opened; but '**he that is true**' had said, '**which no man can shut.**' Compared with the mighty hosts

of their enemies, the little band of Reformers had but '**a little strength**'; but they knew that they had the truth, and they fully trusted the Giver. Thus the Master could say, '**Thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.**'

"During the Philadelphia period, especially during the first and last phases of it, the faithful have either been obliged to come out of the nominal temple or have been cast out for their straight testimony. The reward promised them is that they will be, not simply an unimportant part, but a vital one – a pillar in the true and eternal Temple – a part of which cannot be removed while the structure exists. During their trial state their names were cast out as evil. They were branded as infidels and heretics. They were not recognized as children of God, as citizens of the heavenly country, as Christians. All this is to be reversed. 'The Lord knoweth them that are his,' and in due time will fully and eternally acknowledge them." (RS993:5)

#### **Anent Luther and other Reformers**

"Luther, Knox, Melancthon, Zwingli, Calvin and others of their time, though still befogged by the errors of Antichrist, which for many centuries held the world as under a mesmeric power, made remarkable progress out of the darkness toward the full, clear light. When all the circumstances of their time are realized, it cannot be denied that they were remarkable men, and that they not only took a courageous step, but a long one in the right direction. The trouble is that those who since have followed these leaders, have taken their names as sects, without having their spirit of reform. So far from continuing the reform movement, each party or sect set itself against all light, truth, and reformation in advance of what its leader had seen and advocated. Hence reform almost ceased with the reformers of the sixteenth century. What progress has since been made, has been in opposition, not only to Papacy, but to professed Protestants as well.

"This, indeed, was the basis of conflict between the early reformers. Zwingli in Switzerland, was a representative of some who took their stand for full liberty; but he not only denied the authority of the pope to rule the church, but denied also his authority to appoint civil rulers in the name of God. He claimed for the people the right to elect their rulers, as we do in this great Republic. Here Luther wavered for a time as to what course to pursue, when he saw that the reform, fully carried out, would not only take away the authority of the pope, but also the authority of all princes and kings of earth appointed by him. While retired for ten months in Wartburg Castle under the hiding and protection of Elector Frederick, Luther reflected on the situation care-

fully; then he came forth to oppose Zwingli, Carlstadt and others under whose preaching the images in the churches were being dashed to pieces and the Mass abolished. His plea was moderation. He cooled the rising ardor of the Germans, and with Melancthon turned the German Reformation into the channel which it finally took. The German princes on the one hand glad to be freed from their abject bondage to Papacy, and on the other hand glad to escape the growing tendency of teachings such as Zwingli's, recognized in the teachings of Luther and Melancthon a way of escape from both, which would still preserve their powers, and even increase them. From policy, therefore, many of the German princes embraced the Lutheran cause, which prospered, while the yet more thorough reformers and their works went down.

"Why did not God forward the greater and purer views? it may be asked. Because it was not then due time, we answer. But slowly, after three centuries, thinking people will admit that Zwingli and Carlstadt were much nearer the truth, much more thorough teachers of reform than Luther. D'Aubigne's *History* (Vol. 3, p. 243) upon this subject, cautiously, but forcibly remarks: 'Notwithstanding his opposition to Papacy, Luther had a strong conservative instinct. Zwingli, on the contrary, was predisposed to radical reforms. Both these divergent tendencies were needed. If Luther and his followers had been alone in the work, it would have stopped short in its progress; and the principle of reformation would not have wrought its desired effect.'" (R1094:2-4)

"Martin Luther visited Rome during the reign of Leo X, and the profligacy, corruption and licentiousness that he witnessed at the Papal court destroyed forever his former reverence for the sacred authority of Popes and Councils. For the decree of the Lateran Council he seems to have entertained a special contempt. In his *Defense*, prop. 27, '*Adversus Execrabilem Antichrist Bullam*,' (Luther's Works, Vol. 2, folio 107, Wittenberg 1562) published in 1520, he said:

"I permit the Pope to make articles of faith for himself and his faithful – such as 'the soul is the substantial form of the human body,' 'that the soul is immortal,' with all those monstrous opinions to be found in the Roman dunghill of decretals." (R3602:5)

So much for the Reformation and the Reformers. Now, here is what one of Papacy's sincere, but utterly deceived dupes has to say about the Reformation:

"The day will come when Faith will remember the Reformation as a youthful rebellion of boys in the early experience of Catholicism in the world; and scholars will study the sects as they now study the vagaries of the Semi-Pelagians, and the Cathari, and

the Arians. The Communists will come to look very much like the old Goths and the Vandals. We then, we Catholics of the Post World War II will be remembered as the early Fathers of Christianity when we shall have joined with the bones of the Faithful buried in the catacombs." (*The Hour Glass* – by Father John W. Lynch, p. 71)

### "I Know Thy Works"

"Thus the Master could say, Thou 'hast kept my Word, and hast not denied my name.' Luther's declaration at the Diet at Worms, as he stood alone before the princes of Germany, and the stern emperor Charles V., are worthy of a Paul, and illustrative of the text. 'Unless,' said he, 'I shall be convinced by Scriptures, (for I can put no faith in popes and councils, as it is evident they have frequently erred and even contradicted each other); unless my conscience shall be convinced by the Word of God, I neither will, or can recant, since it is unworthy of an honest man to act contrary to his own conviction. Here I stand; it is impossible for me to act otherwise – so help me God.'" (R504:3, 5)

**3:9** – "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."

### "Jews" who are Not Jews

"He is not a Jew which is a Jew outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart.' (Rom. 8:28, 29) And again, the words of our Lord in addressing his church: 'I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan.' (Rev. 2:9; 3:9)" (R2443:1)

"No doubt there are those occupying pulpits who may esteem themselves as really the ministers of God, and be thus esteemed by others, who do not honor his Word. We are told that some of the ministers of Satan are thought to be ministers of God. (2 Cor. 11:13-15; Rev. 2:2; 3:9) ... Some of them say that God is simply the God of nature. And others, again, say that they believe in God, but do not believe in the Scriptures." (R5259:1)

**3:10** – "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."

With the close of the Gospel age, comes the 'hour of temptation,' which is to come upon all the world of mankind, to try them. It will, of course, not exclude the Church; and it will reveal who in the Church, have been the faithful followers of the Lord – the saints; and will, even, cause those of the "**synagogue of Satan**" – those

who have claimed to be “**Jews**” **but are not**, and who have long persecuted the saints, and made war on them (Rev. 13:7) to **worship**, yea, to pay homage and obeisance **at their feet**. (Rev. 3:9) The Lord will thus show forth, whom it is that **he has loved**, throughout all of the Gospel age. (Rev. 3:10) However, this trial, the “hour of temptation” is not to come upon those of the “Philadelphia” period, because of the severity of the trials already endured, and in which they kept the word of his patience (endurance – *Moffatt*).

“... persistent, patient faith of the true saints of God is what we think is referred to here by keeping ‘the word of my patience.’ The general hour of temptation, therefore, would not come upon them, but upon those who came after them – the Laodicean church. The Philadelphia church, which had patiently passed through so severe a trial of their faith, would not be subjected to the later test.” (R5718:2)

### The Teachings of the Higher Criticism

“Evolution theory of science comes properly under the criticism of the Apostle when he speaks of ‘science falsely so-called,’ which contradicts the divine Word, and sets it at naught, preferring the traditions of men and the light of human intelligence rather than the light of divine revelation. Yet ... we must not be surprised at this great trial and testing of faith, which is to prove all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. (Rev. 3:10)” (R2835:6)

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

“The text ... is a prophecy by Jesus himself. Picturing the seven stages of his church, **the Master used these words in addressing one of them**. There is, nevertheless, an appropriateness in all of the Lord’s counsel at any time. So we now, as well as those who were particularly addressed, may find instruction in our text.

“Our text addresses not the world, **not the nominal church – but the true church**. The true church, having turned away from sin, having accepted Christ, having given their hearts to God, through Christ having been accepted of the Father and begotten of the holy Spirit, are children of God: and as the apostle says, ‘If children, then heirs, heirs of God and jointheirs with Christ’ our Lord. (Rom. 8:17) **A crown of glory is set apart** for each son thus received of the Father, and the name of each is recorded in the Lamb’s book of life.” (R5532:2, 3)

### “Let No Man Take Thy Crown”

“Our Lord’s exhortation, ‘Hold fast ... that no man take thy crown,’ seems to imply not only the limited number of crowns, but that ultimately, in the end of this age, there would come a time when those who

had not faithfully lived up to their covenant would be rejected, and that others at that time would be in waiting for their crowns.” (Rev. 3:11)” (F95)

“So far as God is concerned, the whole matter is settled. But so far as the church is concerned, it still remains for them to fulfill their covenant. Having presented their bodies a living sacrifice to God, acceptable through Christ, they are to continue in that attitude – day by day gladly presenting their bodies, willing to endure, to suffer, to be anything and everything that God would be pleased to have them be. All who do this continue to grow in character-likeness to the Lord Jesus; and all such will thereby make their calling and election sure.” (R5532:3)

As is quite evident, the retaining of this crown was contingent upon those of the “Philadelphia” period, **holding fast what they already had** – the Truth, and the comfort of the Scriptures; and the Lord sweetly added the comforting thought, that it would not be too much longer for them to wait, for “Behold, I come quickly (speedily – *Emphatic Diaglott*)” i.e., soon. (Rev. 3:11)

**3:12** – “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God; and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God; and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.”

“God proposes a **new name** for his people – his church – the bride, the Lamb’s wife. As Jesus was our Lord’s name and he became the Christ, the Messiah, so all who become members of his body come under his new name, and are recognized of the Lord and may be recognized of each other as members of the Christ (Rev. 3:12); and again, the Lord, prophetically speaking of Christ, says, ‘**This is the name whereby he shall be called, The Righteousness of Jehovah**’ (Jer. 23:6); and again, speaking of the bride of Christ, we read, ‘**This is the name by which she shall be called, The Righteousness of Jehovah**.’ (Jer. 33:16) **The name of the bridegroom is given to his bride** – ‘They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels.’ (Mal. 3:17) And those who will get this new name, we may be sure, will all be called upon to demonstrate that they will be overcomers. They must all pass approval before the Lord for their faith and their persistency in holding to him and his gracious promise – the Oath-Bound Covenant.” (R3970:5)

“A city is a symbol of a kingdom or dominion, and so **God’s Kingdom** is symbolized by **the New Jerusalem**, the new dominion coming from heaven to earth. At first it will consist of only **the spiritual class**, the Bride of Christ, which, as seen by John, will gradually come down to earth; that is, it will gradu-

ally come into power as the present empires break in pieces, during the Day of the Lord...

“Glorious City of Peace! whose walls signify salvation, protection and blessing to all who enter it, whose foundations laid in justice can never be moved, and whose builder and designer is God! It is in the light which will shine from this glorious city (kingdom) of God that the nations (people) will walk on the highway of holiness, up to perfection and to full harmony with God. (Rev.21:24)” (A295)

Rev. 14:1 – “And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, **having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.**”

Rev. 22:4 – “And they shall see his face; and **his name shall be in their foreheads.**”

### The New Name

“... after the Church is glorified ... ‘We shall be like him’ – members of his Body. **‘And this is the name wherewith she shall [then] be called [her Lord’s name], The Righteousness of Jehovah.’** (Jer. 33:16; 23:6)” (T102)

### The New Jerusalem

“The Apostle here (Gal. 4:26) uses a figure of speech which is common in the Scriptures, and in which a city is referred to as the mother of its inhabitants ... The citizenship of the saints is in heaven – in **the heavenly Jerusalem**, which will not be built until the first resurrection. By faith we look forward and speak of that promised condition and of our citizenship therein.

“The church is developed under the same covenant-mother as was Christ; for we are his members. His was a covenant of sacrifice. ‘Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.’ (Psa. 50:5) The man Christ Jesus entered into a covenant with the Father, which meant the sacrifice of his flesh, his earthly nature. As a reward for this sacrifice, the Father made him a new creature of the divine nature – ‘far above angels,’ constituting him the great Messiah who shall bless the world.

“Carrying out the Father’s plan, our Lord imputes his merit to such as now follow his example, and walk in his footsteps, performing the same covenant of sacrifice. If these are faithful, they will share in the great work of Messiah in blessing the world, and **will constitute the New Jerusalem**, the Millennial kingdom. By faith we are its children. Even now, our citizenship is in heaven.” (RS246:1, 4)

“... **the New Jerusalem** ... ‘coming down from heaven as a bride prepared for her husband’ – beautiful, pure, gorgeous, resplendent. The City represents the Church in glory, this being indicated by the

declaration that it was like unto a bride prepared for her husband, and the further demonstration is in the fact that the angel who called to John, saying, ‘Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife,’ showed him **the New Jerusalem** descending, etc. (Rev. 21:9, 10)” (R3570:6)

**3:13** – “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

There have always been identified with the Church, those with ears to hear, but who were not always willing to “hear,” that is, to do the Spirit’s bidding. Thus, the admonition to each of the churches separately, and to all of them collectively, has been to pay **earnest heed** to the things heard – **holding them fast**, lest at any time they should slip away; for how could they escape the second death, if they neglected the so-great salvation! (Heb. 2:1, 3)

**3:14** – “And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.”

The “Laodicean” church was the last of the “seven churches which are in Asia” to be addressed by the Lord. It represented the period which began about A.D. 1874, and will continue until the last member of the Christ has attained his glorification. It, therefore, represents the church of today. It should be noted that whereas the “Philadelphia” church’s message ignored almost completely the nominal portion thereof; in the “Laodicean” church’s message, it is not ignored, yet there is nothing but condemnation and rejection meted out unto it.

“Laodicea is interpreted to mean ‘a tried, or judged people.’ The description shows us that they were tried and found wanting. If we understand Christ’s meaning in this message, it is sent particularly to those who profess his name, but deny the truth which he himself here represents. Let those who read this special message do so with special care.” (RS993:5)

“We should not look for light where little remains but the fading reflection of a former glory. The sickly hue which now appears is only the smoke illuminated by the piercing rays from the Hand which, high upon the wall, is writing, ‘MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.’ (Dan. 5:25-29) Unknown to the Laodicean church, our Lord has returned. He has stood at the door and knocked. Had they been awake, they would have heard. Our Lord clearly foretold that he would come as a thief; but he did not tell at what hour.

“While the nominal church is still seemingly in power, while the old glory still hangs about her, while it is still respectable and honorable to be a church member, the Little Flock of truth-seekers are despised and rejected. They are covered with reproach because they dare to point out the faults of a worldly church. They are looked down upon by her



who sits as a proud queen, lifted up in order that she may have the greater fall. (Rev. 18:7,21)” (R5992:6)  
 “The servant at the end of the age, at the time of the Master’s coming, if found faithful, would be especially blessed, and be given a general charge respecting the spiritual food to the Lord’s family, the ‘meat in due season’.” (R5400:2)

We believe C. T. Russell to have been the “angel” or messenger to this church. Let it be noted how faithfully he carried the message of the Lord to this nominal church:

“In 1877 **Pastor Russell called a meeting of all the ministers of Allegheny and Pittsburgh, showed them the Scriptures which indicated our Lord’s presence and urged them to investigate and proclaim the message.** All of the ministers of the two cities were present; all of the ministers of the two cities refused to believe. In the same year he determined to give up secular work and devote his entire time and fortune to the work indicated in the Scriptures as incident to the close of the Gospel Age and change of dispensation ... In 1881, **1,400,000 copies of *Food For Thinking Christians* were distributed free at the doors of the Protestant churches in the United States, Canada and Great Britain on three consecutive Sundays,** by A.D.T. messenger boys.” – Obituary.

### Pastor Russell’s Teachings

“He clearly taught and proved his teachings by the citation of Scripture authority – that man does not possess an immortal soul, that he is a soul and is mortal; that the wages of sin is death – not eternal torment; that death came upon man as the just penalty for the violation of God’s law; that death means the destruction of man; that God, in his goodness, has provided the great ransom price whereby man may be delivered from the bondage of sin and death; that God’s beloved Son, Jesus, became a man and grew to manhood’s estate, was put to death as a man and raised again from the dead a spirit-being, possessing the divine nature; that by his death and resurrection Christ Jesus provided and produced the ransom-price for man’s deliverance and restoration; that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man; that every man in God’s due time must, therefore, have a fair trial for life, and to this end there shall be a resurrection of all the dead; that Jesus Christ ascended into heaven and must come the second time; that the period of time elapsing between the first and second coming of the Lord is devoted to the election of the members of the body of Christ, taken from amongst men; that the requirements for election to that exalted position are, full faith in the shed blood of Jesus as the ransom price, a full consecration to do the Father’s will even

unto death; that all who thus are consecrated and begotten of the holy Spirit and are overcomers shall have part in the chief resurrection, and be exalted to positions in the heavenly kingdom of God and participate with Christ Jesus in his Millennial reign for the blessing of all the families of the earth; that during the thousand-year reign of Christ all of the dead shall be awakened, and given a fair and impartial trial for life or death; that under said reign the wilfully disobedient shall be everlastingly destroyed, while those obedient to the righteous rule of Christ shall be fully restored to human perfection of body, mind and character; that during this Millennial reign the earth shall be brought to a state of Edenic Paradise, and made fit as a place habitable for perfect man; that man, fully restored to perfection, will inhabit the beautiful earth in all the ages to come.” (R5997:5, 6)

“... that the Church is the Temple of the living God, peculiarly His workmanship. Its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age – ever since Christ became the world’s Redeemer and Chief Corner Stone of His Temple, through which, when finished, God’s blessings shall flow to all people who find access to him. That meantime the chiseling, shaping, polishing of consecrated believers in Christ’s Atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these living stones, ‘elect and precious,’ shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection. Then the Temple shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.

“... affirm the pre-existence of Jesus as the mighty Word of God, Logos or Spokesman – ‘**the beginning of the Creation of God,**’ ‘the first-born of every creature,’ the active agent of the Heavenly Father, in all His mighty creative works. ‘Without him was not anything made that was made.’

“... the personality of the Holy Spirit is the Father and the Son; that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both, and is manifested in all who receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit and thereby become sons of God ... the resurrection of Christ – that he was put to death in the flesh but quickened in the Spirit ... deny that he was raised in the flesh ... the basis for hope, for the Church and for the world, lies in the fact that ‘Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man’ – ‘gave himself a Ransom for all’.” (R1701:1)

The message comes from the “**Amen.**” Literally, this word means “true,” or “truth;” and we do know that Jesus did identify himself with the truth. (John 14:6) In a more general sense the word means also “so be it,” “truly,” and “indeed.” Yet it has sometimes been used as the equivalent of a strong affirmative, having almost the strength of

an oath! Jesus seems to have used it in this sense during his earthly ministry, to wit: John 1:51; 5:24, 25, etc. Here, in Rev. 3:14, he calls **himself** the “**Amen**,” and lest there be any doubt as to its significance, he adds, “**the faithful and true witness**, the beginning of the creation of God.”

This, of course, implies that he had an existence before any of those who now call themselves the witnesses and mouthpieces of God. If any one could know Jehovah’s mind – his plans, and purposes, surely, it would be he who had been in fellowship with him even before the world was; yea, he who himself was the beginning of his creation – **the “first-born of every creature.”** (Col. 1:15) Only he, could be a “faithful and true witness” of these matters. The Plan of God had become so confused, confounded and distorted, that the Saints living in the “Laodicean” period needed a restatement of it. The Lord gave them exactly this, when he had his “angel” write for them, “*The Plan of the Ages*,” published by C. T. Russell, in A.D. 1886.

There were also other things which “Jezebel’s” priests had twisted and distorted, among which was that of the incarnation. It is true, the Apostle John did say that he who was in the beginning **with** God, was “made flesh” (*σὰρξ ἐγένετο*); and that this Logos was a God (*Θεός*), a mighty one; but he did **not** say that he was **identified with the God** (*τὸν Θεόν*), and therefore was a possessor of the divine nature. In the Apostle John’s Revelation, he has Jesus specifically saying, I am “**the beginning of the creation of God**,” which means that unlike the Father (God), he himself was a creature, i.e., a created being! This too, did the Lord lay upon his “angel” or messenger, to set aright:

“‘The Beginning of the creation of God.’ What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is he?’ (Matt. 22:42) This question has had many answers. More Bible and less hymn book theology would have made the subject clearer to all. The doctrine of the trinity is totally opposed to Scripture, and has not even one reasonable text to support it when the well known interpolation of (1 John 5:7) is discarded and when (John 1:1) is properly understood. We suggest that any reader who does not see this subject clearly should read carefully and prayerfully the 17th chapter of St. John’s Gospel.” (RS992:2)

John 1:1 – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with **the God**, and the Word was **a God**. The same was in the beginning with **the God**.”

“What ‘beginning’ is here referred to? Surely not the beginning of the existence of Jehovah, the God, the Father; because he is ‘from everlasting to everlasting,’ and never had a beginning. (Psa. 41:13; 90:2; 106:48) But Jehovah’s work had a beginning, and it is to this that reference is here made – the beginning of the creation. The statement, thus understood,

implies that our Lord Jesus, in his pre-human existence, as the Logos, was with the Father in the very beginning of creation. This confirms the inspired statement that the Logos himself was ‘**the beginning of the creation of God**’: this is the precise statement of the Apostle, who assures us that our Lord is not only ‘the Head of the body, the Church,’ and ‘the first-born from the dead,’ but also the beginning of all creation – ‘that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.’ His words are: ‘He is the image of the invisible God – first-born of all creation; because by him were all things created, those in the heavens and those on the earth, visible and invisible – whether thrones, or lordships, or governments, or authorities: all things were created by him and for him, and he precedes all things, and in him all things have been permanently placed.’ (Col. 1:15-18) Here also the word of prophecy concerning the Only Begotten, not only declaring his coming exaltation as King of earthly kings, but describing him as already Jehovah’s firstborn, saying, ‘I will make him, my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.’ (Psa. 89:27) Note also that our Lord (referring to his own origin), declares himself to be, ‘The faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.’ – (Rev. 3:14)” (E86, 87)

- A. V. . . . . . “the beginning of the creation of God”
- A. S. . . . . . “the beginning of the creation of God”
- R. S. V. . . . . . “the beginning of God’s creation”

The following translations are all more or less in accord with this rendering: *Berkeley, Confraternity, Diaglott, Fenton, Montgomery, New World, Phillips, Rotherham, Weymouth*; but the following have rendered the text (evidently to support the so-called Trinitarian view) as follows:

- Amer. Tr.* . . . . . “the origin of God’s creation”
- Amplified* “the beginning and author of God’s creation”
- Barclay* . . . . . “the moving cause of God’s creation”
- Beck* . . . . . “the origin of God’s creation”
- Good News* . . . . . “the origin of all that God has created”
- Jerusalem* . . . . . “the ultimate source of God’s creation”
- Marshall* . . . . . “the chief of the creation of God”
- Moffatt* . . . . . “the origin of God’s creation”
- N. E. Bible* . . . . . “the prime source of all God’s creation”
- New International* . . . . . “the ruler of God’s creation”
- Living Bible* . . . . . “the primeval source of God’s creation”
- Williams* . . . . . “the origin of God’s creation”

The *New World Translation* renders the text: “the beginning of the creation **by** God”

### The Beginning of the Creation of God

“The Logos, the beginning of the creation of God, called also by Isaiah, the Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, etc., (Isa. 9:6) we find described by Solomon, and represented under the name of Wisdom, yet with all the details which harmonize the

statement with the account given by John the Evangelist (John 1:1, 18), as follows:

“Jehovah possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was [formed]. When there were no depths [seas] I was brought forth: when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his command: when he appointed the fountains of the earth: then was I by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.” (Prov. 8:22-30) (E92)

“This glorious One ... the Logos, the Word, the Message, the Expression of God. In the Old Testament he is symbolically referred to as ‘Wisdom’ (Prov. 8:22-30): ‘Jehovah possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old ... Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him, and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.’

“This mighty One, personified as Wisdom, is declared by St. Paul to be ‘the First-born of all creation.’ (Col. 1:15-18) The Psalmist similarly refers to Him as Jehovah’s ‘First-born, higher than the kings of earth.’ (Psa. 89:27) Jesus refers to Himself as one who had a prehuman existence, saying, ‘Before Abraham was, I am.’ (John 8:14, 23, 52, 58) The glorified ascended Christ, in Apocalyptic vision, declared the same great truth, that He was ‘the beginning of the creation of God.’ (Rev. 3:14) And again He declared, ‘I am the First and the Last.’ (Rev. 1:17; 2:8)” (SM491)

It is interesting to note that George M. Lamsa, in his translation of the Bible from “ancient eastern manuscripts” renders the following verses of Proverbs 8, as:

22 – “**The LORD created me as the first of his creation;** before all of his works.”

30 – “I together with him was establishing them, and daily I was his delight, rejoicing always before him.”

### **Anent Jesus and the Logos**

“The Scriptures do not explain how the spark of life belonging to the spirit being known as the Logos became transferred to the human plane. When our Lord was thus changed, he merely took the step of getting ready to become the sacrifice for sinners. In

his pre-existent state he could not have given the corresponding price for Adam.” (RS064:2)

“Our Lord’s statement, ‘Before Abraham was, I am’ (John 8:58), serves to identify the man Jesus with his previous condition as the Logos before he was made flesh and dwelt among us....

“‘Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever.’ (Heb. 13:8) This statement would not identify our Lord with his previous condition; for in his pre-existent state, he was not Jesus. He was called Jesus at his birth. He became Jesus Christ at his baptism.” (RS065:5)

### **The Nominal Church Not a Faithful and True Witness**

“... by declaring himself ‘the Faithful and True witness, the beginning of the creation of God,’ he implies that **she is not a faithful witness for the truth, and in acknowledging the supremacy of the Father as his Creator, shows his opposition to the man-made dogma of the trinity.**” (R718:4, W. I. Mann)

**3:15, 16** – “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.”

One of the strongest evidences in support of our belief that Pastor Russell was the “angel” or messenger to the “Laodicean” church, lies in the fact that he was the only one who knew of the nominal church’s rejection by the Lord, and immediately began to make this known.

“It was in the spring of 1879, that seeing clearly the parallelism between the nominal Jewish church and the nominal Gospel church, we were enabled to know where the latter was finally rejected of the Lord and spewed out of his mouth (Rev. 3:16) no longer to be his mouthpiece. We saw that this was due in 1878, as the parallel of the rejection of the Jewish church, when Jesus just prior to his crucifixion, wept over them and said, ‘Your house is left unto you desolate’ – the Jewish church was there likewise cast off, or spewed from his mouth.

“We were led to see very clearly that the nominal church of the Gospel age, is the Babylon (confused, mixed condition of worldly mindedness and lukewarm Christianity) described in Rev. 18:2-4.

“This spewing out, or casting off, of the nominal church, as an organization in 1878 – we then understood, and still proclaim to be the date of the commencement of Babylon’s fall, as recorded there. And **since then we feel ourselves led of the spirit, through the unfolding of this portion of the word of truth to say in the name of the Lord, to all God’s true children** in Babylon: ‘Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and

receive not of her plagues.’ This seems to accord wonderfully with the second message – ‘Babylon is fallen’. (Rev. 14:8)” (R304:2)

### The Rejection of the Nominal Church

“God’s Word reveals the fact that the nominal church, after its fall from his favor and from being his mouthpiece (Rev. 3:16) will gradually settle into a condition of unbelief, in which the Bible will eventually be entirely ignored in fact, though retained in name, and in which philosophic speculations of various shades will be the real creeds. From this fall the faithful sealed ones will escape; for they will be ‘accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand’ – not fall, in the time of the Lord’s presence. (Luke 21:36)” (C167)

Rev. 18:4 – “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”

See comments under Rev. 18:4!

### The Laodicean The Nominal Church of Today

“The message to the Laodicean stage of the church pictures the nominal church of today as our Lord sees her. In one sense she is not cold. She has much zeal, but not according to knowledge. She has organized her armies, developed her machinery and multiplied her stores; but yet the enemy does not fall before her. She claims that her principal object is to convert sinners, to bring forth spiritual children. The Prophet puts these words into the mouth of nominal Christians when they awake to a knowledge of the situation: ‘We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the earth fallen.’ (Isa. 26:16-18) This is said after they have realized the presence of the Lord.” (R5993:6)

**3:17,18** – “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 mayst 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.”

“**I am rich.**’ I have all the spiritual light that exists in the world. I have gotten riches; have still more enriched myself; have much goods laid up for many years. I have all that is worth having, and need no more. ‘I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall in no wise see mourning.’ Of course she cannot recognize her own picture, she is ‘**blind.**’ ‘And knowest not

that thou art the **wretched** one,’ etc. Just as the Jewish house fell, because they knew not the time of their visitation (Luke 19:44) so must their counterpart of this dispensation. The visitation (presence) of the Lord is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel. (Isa. 8:14; Heb. 3:5, 6) The fleshly house failed to recognize his presence in the flesh; the spiritual house refuse to acknowledge his presence in a spiritual body. Just as he could be seen by the eye of flesh in his first visitation, so must he be recognized in this only by the eyes of our understanding – the only spiritual eyesight we now possess. When we are made like him, by and by, we shall see him as he is.

“If she is so **blind** that she cannot recognize her own condition and location, how can it be expected that she could see his. When she has learned his, she will recognize her own, and it will be ‘pitiable, and **poor, and naked.**’” (R505:5, W. I. Mann)

“Laodiceans look upon their material prosperity, and the numbers of wealthy people associated with their confederating denominations, and count their money and their donations by millions, and say, ‘We are rich as never before.’ Alas! that they do not realize that these are earthly riches of the kind which our Lord declares are no evidence of his favor during this Gospel age, but rather to the contrary. And they see not the true riches which the Lord admires, and which are the foretaste of his favor and the coming Kingdom wealth.

“And so the Lord declares to Laodicea, ‘**Thou knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.**’ She is poor, in that she has so little of the Master’s spirit, so little of the Truth and the spirit of the Truth. The only riches which God can recognize are those which he promised to, and bestows upon his people in this present time. Laodicea is **blind**, in that the god of this world hath blinded her perceptions of God’s character and plan and is leading her further away from confidence in his Word, under the guidance of her chosen and well paid lords and masters, the clergy, who under the name of Higher Criticism and Evolution are rapidly taking away from her every good possession and thing which would be estimable in the sight of the Lord, and who are thus denuding her, making her **naked**, taking from her the robe of Christ’s righteousness, and leading her to trust, not in the precious blood of the redemption, the death of the Redeemer, but to trust in an evolutionary process which needs no Savior, which denies an atonement for sin, yea, denies that there is, or has been any sin to make atonement for; and claims, on the contrary that humanity has ground for pride in its own progress, which will be quite sufficient eventually to bring them every desired blessing, without any Savior and

without his Kingdom, which God has promised as the hope of the groaning creation. (Rom. 8:19-23)

“Laodicea is indeed **counseled to buy the true gold**, the true riches of the Lord, and to use **eye salve** that **she may see**, and to **put on the garment of Christ’s righteousness**, that she may **not be put to shame**; but we have no intimation in the Scripture that she will give any heed to this counsel; on the contrary, the intimation is that more and more she will become a Babel of confusion, and that she will go down with the political and financial systems of this present age, in the great time of trouble with which this age will terminate, and which will fit and prepare mankind for the Kingdom of God’s dear Son, and its reign of righteousness. ‘When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.’ (Isa. 26:9)” (R2763:1, 2, 4)

### The Pride of Nominal Christendom!

“... with few exceptions, the attitude of all Christendom is that of pride, self-righteousness and self-complacency ... manifest to the most casual observer. She still saith in her heart, ‘I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.’ She still glorifies herself and lives deliciously. She says, **I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing**,’ and does not realize that **she is ‘wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.**’ Nor does she heed the counsel of the Lord to **buy** of him (at cost of self-sacrifice) **gold tried in the fire** (the true riches, the heavenly riches, ‘the divine nature’), and **white raiment** (the robe of Christ’s imputed righteousness, which so many are now discarding, to appear before God in their own unrighteousness), and to **anoint her eyes with eyesalve** (complete consecration and submission to the divine will as expressed in the Scriptures), that she might see and be healed. (Rev. 3:18)” (D41)

**GOLD** is the symbol for that which is Divine; be it Jehovah-God himself; His Attributes; His Life, His Nature; His holy Spirit; or Divine Truth, of which He is the originating source. It will, of course, be recalled that the Candlestick which graced the ancient Tabernacle’s Holy, and represented the “deeper aspects” of His Truth (God’s Word – T16; 22) was made of **gold**. (Exod. 25:36; 37:17)

**FIRE**, is the well-recognized symbol for destruction.

If then we assume that the “**gold**” which the Laodicean Church was to buy, represents Divine Truth, the possession of which maketh “rich,” then the fact that it was “tried in the fire” must have reference to the fire of the Adversary’s hatred and jealousy, which from the beginning has sought to destroy it. It will be recalled that Adam was told by Jehovah God, that, “in the day thou eatest thereof, **thou shalt surely die.**” (Gen. 2:17); but that

Satan, in his endeavor to destroy, or make of non-effect that bit of divine truth, declared to Eve, “**Ye shall not surely die.**” (Gen. 3:4) When Jesus, in due course, came (and He was the embodiment of the Truth), (John 14:6), Satan tried frantically, in devious ways, to frustrate the Divine Purposes. **Divine Truth is Indestructible!**

We note, this **gold**, the Divine Truth, which in a sense centers in “precious promises” whereby some might be made partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4), was indeed tried in the fire of the Adversary’s hatred and jealousy, as set forth above. Since all things are of the Father, and by the Son, it is not strange that the Laodicean Church should be counselled to buy this “**gold**,” from the Lord. And, by way of this divine Truth, she who is really “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (Rev. 3:17), might become “rich” in the grace and favor of God; and “clothed” in white raiment (the imputed righteousness of Jesus) thus no longer be “naked” but “clothed”! Then too, she might seek to obtain the “eyesalve” of meekness with which to anoint her eyes, so that she might “see” clearly the things of the Spirit, esteeming all things else “of trifling worth.” But the price or cost for this purchase would be consecration, i.e., complete self-surrender! But “... with few individual exceptions, the attitude of all Christendom is that of pride, self-righteousness, and self-complacency is manifest to the most casual observer. She still saith in her heart, ‘I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.’ She glorifies herself and lives deliciously. She says, ‘I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing,’ and does not realize that she is ‘wretched, and miserable, and poor, and naked.’ Nor does she heed the counsel of the Lord to buy of him (at the cost of self-sacrifice) **gold tried in the fire** (the true riches, the heavenly riches, ‘the divine nature’), and **white raiment** (the robe of Christ’s imputed righteousness, which so many are now discarding, to appear before God in their own unrighteousness), and to anoint her eyes with the eyesalve (complete consecration and submission to the divine will as expressed in the Scriptures), that she might see and be healed. Rev. 3:18” (D41)

**3:19** – “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”

“**As many as I love** [as many as are honest and at heart loyal to God] **I rebuke and chasten.**” (R1372:1)

“The words translated rebuke and chasten, are in the Greek much more forcible than here appears. The first means reproach, disgrace; put to shame, dishonor. The latter, to train or educate like a child or youth. What a call! No wonder that the proud and conceited teachers of popular churches cannot hear the call. No wonder that some who have seen and heard refuse to follow ‘the path their leader trod.’ **As many as I love, I disgrace and train: be zealous, therefore, and repent.**’

“What poor despised company  
Of travelers are these,  
Who walk in yonder narrow way  
Along the rugged maze?  
Ah, these are of a royal line,  
All children of a King!  
Heirs of immortal crowns divine,  
And lo! for joy they sing’.”  
(R505:6, W. I. Mann)

**3:20** — “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.”

“Unknown to the Laodicean Church the Lord has returned. He stands at the door. He could not do this if he were not present. He has not been always there, as some think. To Sardis he said, ‘I will come’; to Philadelphia, ‘I come quickly’; to Laodicea, it is rap, rap, rap. Awake; let me come in. Do they hear?” (R506:1, W. I. Mann)

“Behold the Bridegroom.’ This is the announcement which we are now giving – Not, Behold the Bridegroom cometh, but ‘Behold the Bridegroom’! already here, present, knocking gently with the prophecies to arouse the Virgins, but not to arouse the world. (Rev. 3:20) This is the reading of the oldest Greek manuscripts, which omit ‘cometh.’ Our Lord says, **‘If any man hear my voice [knock] and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him.’** This message to the present Laodicean phase of the church, intimates very clearly (1) that the **‘knock’** and **‘voice’** will be inaudible to natural ears, and heard only by the ears of the understanding, the hearing of faith; (2) that it will not be a denominational knock or call (as to Adventists, Presbyterians, etc.), but (3) that it will be a knock that must be heard individually, and responded to individually; ‘any man’ who hears the ‘knock’ or ‘voice’ if he so wills, may exercise faith, open the door of his understanding, and realize his Lord’s second presence.

“The man who never hears the ‘knock’ is evidently not counted worthy to hear it. But those who hear are just as evidently not compelled to respond and to accept the present, knocking King: hence he says, if the hearing one open the door, I will come in. However, only those who recognize the ‘knock,’ and who respond and by faith open to the Lord and receive him as their present King – only these are to have the great blessing of spiritual nourishment – the feast of ‘meat in due season,’ ‘things new and old,’ which the Master promised to provide at that time to strengthen the faithful for the judgments, trials, testings and siftings which must ‘begin with the house of God.’ **‘I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.’** (Rev. 3:20; Luke 12:37)” (R2978:4, 5)

**3:21** — “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”

Once again the dear Lord reminds us that the promises belong to the overcomers only! And all of these promises ought to inspire us, not merely to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3), but also to strive sincerely to make our calling and election sure. (2 Pet. 1:10)

“Listen to some of the blessed and inspiring promises with which the Father and the Son cheer the Bride: ‘Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty.’ (Isa. 33:17) Ye ‘shall be mine, in that day when I make up my jewels.’ (Mal. 3:17) ‘I will give thee to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give thee a white stone (a precious token of love), and in the stone a new name written (the name of our Bridegroom, henceforth to be our name) which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.’ (Rev. 2:17) ‘Lo, I am with you alway.’ (Matt. 28:20) ‘And if I go away, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also (and he has come, he is even now present, and will soon receive us unto himself forevermore).’ (John 14:3) ‘Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.’ (John 15:16) ‘Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.’ (Rev. 2:10) **‘To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne.’** (Rev. 3:21)

“Precious promises are these, wonderful words of life! Let us count them over and over again, that all their sweet significance may sink deep into our hearts and bring forth their blessed fruitage in our lives. May they cheer us in every dark and trying hour and reinforce our waning powers with renewed vigor, courage and zeal, that we may press along the narrow way until indeed ‘our eyes shall see the King in his beauty.’ What wondrous treasures do we thus find laid up in heaven for us, because we have left the world and all its delusive fancies and aspirations and have laid hold upon the things eternal! And while this glorious inheritance is to be the possession of all the faithful, the Apostle intimates clearly that our heavenly treasure may be augmented by special zeal and faithfulness under the peculiar trials of the present time.” (R5863:1, 2)

#### “To Him That overcometh”

“The third great dispensation ... is to be composed of many ages, ‘The Ages to Come.’ The first of these, the Millennial age ... is the only one concerning which we have any definite information. It is the thousand years during which Christ will reign over and thereby bless all the families of the earth, accomplishing the ‘restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets.’ (Acts 3:19-21) During that age, sin and death shall be forever blotted out;



for 'Christ must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.... The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death,' Adamic death. (1 Cor. 15:25, 26) That will be the great reconstruction period. **Associated with Christ Jesus in that reign will be the Church, his bride, his body, even as he promised, saying, 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.'** (Rev. 3:21)" (A222, 223)

### The Reward to the Overcomer!

"Blessed are the overcomers! 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.' (Rev. 3:21)

"What a reward is this which is held out as an incentive and inspiration to urge us on to noble and heroic effort! – to reign with Christ, to be his Bride and joint-heir, his beloved and confidential companion through all eternity, and to be partakers of his divine nature and glory. These promises are freighted with an 'exceeding and eternal weight of glory,' which 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard; neither hath it entered the heart of man; but God hath revealed it unto us (brought it within the range of our appreciation) by his Spirit.' The words sound hollow and meaningless to those who have no appreciation of spiritual things, but to the consecrated children of God who are faithfully striving to meet the conditions upon which the fulfillment depends, and who have therefore a good hope, they are exceeding precious, and fill their hearts with joy unspeakable and full of glory." (R1719:2, 3)

### Patient Endurance – Its Present Reward

"This is the special reward of those who are running the race with **patient endurance** in the present time, in the Laodicean period. While it was not our privilege to escape the hour of temptation, it is our privilege to have a counter-balancing special blessing as a result of living in the time of our Lord's **parousia** (presence). We may have His fellowship, His instruction, His dispensing of spiritual food which is now 'meat in due season,' in a manner and to a degree in which none of the faithful of past periods enjoyed these. But as we might expect, this greatest favor is correspondingly offset by the subtlety and severity of the trials of this hour of temptation coming upon the whole world. If ever **patient endurance** was necessary, it is necessary now." (R2792:3, 4; *Manna* Dec. 3)

**3:22** – "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches."

"So the warning voice goes forth to '**him that hath an ear to hear.**' We are in the time of the last or Laodicean stage of the great nominal gospel church of wheat and tares. (Rev. 3:14-22) She is upbraided

for her lukewarmness, pride, spiritual poverty, blindness and nakedness, and counseled to forsake quickly her evil ways before it is too late. But the Lord knew that only a few would hearken to the warning and call; and so the promise of reward is given, not to the whole mass of those addressed, but to the few who still have an ear for the truth, and who **overcome** the general disposition and spirit of Babylon – 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. **He that hath an ear** (a disposition to hearken to and heed the word of the Lord), **let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.**' But upon those who have no ear, no disposition to hear, the Lord will pour his indignation." (D41)

**4:1** – "After this 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."

"After this I looked," signifies that the vision of the "seven churches which are in Asia," having been completed, John's attention was now drawn to another scene. It seemed to him "**a door was opened in heaven.**" Then, it was, that for a moment it was not so much what he **saw**, but rather, what he **heard**, that attracted him particularly; the "**voice ... as it were like that of a trumpet**" talking with him; and this is what it said, "**Come hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.**"

In a sense, John represented the Church class, as it tarried till he come, all down through the Gospel Age.

"In the Book of Revelation we believe that John, personally, always symbolized the beloved disciples – the faithful in the Church – who are alive at the time required by the events described. We think the Master referred to this in John 21:22, 23: 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that this disciple should not die; yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come what is that to thee?' If we observe the standpoint from which John sees each vision, we will know that of the class he represents." (R528:3, 6, W. I. Mann)

The vision which John was about to "see" **represented the progressive unfolding of the plan of God**, as it would be revealed to the "John" class throughout the Age. It does not necessarily follow that all that John **saw** was to be in the future; only the perception and understanding of it, would be more or less, in the future. This seems to be the implication, we believe, of the words in the succeeding verse, 'I was in the spirit.' (Rev. 4:2) John, truly was in a trance – it was a vision for him; but for the Church it was to be the understanding granted to the members of the

body of the Christ; and this only, because they had been begotten of the holy Spirit, and therefore, could discern spiritual things. (1 Cor. 2:14) The holy Spirit, (heretofore referred to, or represented by, the “seven spirits of God” – Rev. 1:4, 3:1) would be the **trumpet voice** of the Lord Jesus, as it would speak, in the unfolding to them, of the mysterious plan of God; but ever **glorifying the Son** (John 14:16; 17, 26; 16:13, 14), **who, of all of God’s creatures, was the only one who could bring it to pass, i.e., to fulfillment.** (Rev. 5:5)

This process, therefore, had already begun, when at Pentecost, the holy Spirit was poured out upon the waiting disciples gathered together **in the upper room.** The “**voice**” to which John referred was, for the first time heard then, with the “**sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind,**” (Acts 2:2), when they received for the first time the witness of the holy Spirit’s presence among them. (Acts 2:3, 4) **The full and complete understanding of the whole plan of God, however, was to be reserved for those of the “John” class living in the very end of the Gospel Age.**

**4:2, 3** – “And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. 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.”

The invitation of the Lord to John was, “**Come up hither, and I will show thee things.**” (Rev. 4:1) And John says, that on complying “**Immediately I was in the spirit.**” (Rev. 4:2)

So has it been with all the disciples of the Lord, who, being first justified by faith, have been invited by way of consecration (Rom. 12:1) to “**come up hither,**” i.e., to respond to the “heavenly calling” (Heb. 3:1), the “high-calling” (Phil. 3:14); and by complying, and being accepted, have found themselves “**immediately in the spirit**” – that is, spirit-begotten, and then able to see such things as “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” and which God reveals by his spirit, “for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” (1 Cor. 2:9, 10)

What John saw, was “**a throne set in heaven**” and the **One who sat on that throne.** In the vision, he thus beheld Jehovah God, the Father, as the ruler of his Empire – the Universe. It can readily be realized that a description of one so altogether glorious, is entirely beyond the powers of any finite man; yet, John endeavors to do so by declaring that he “**was to look upon** like a jasper and a sardine stone”; intending by this description to symbolize, if possible, not only the glory of God, but also his character.

“The first object to meet the gaze of John is that of a glorious King seated on his throne. This is the Father, the ‘Ancient of Days.’ **He is ‘to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone.’** The jasper is supposed to mean the diamond. It is described as

‘most precious’ and ‘clear as crystal.’ Being the most brilliant gem, it fittingly symbolizes the glory of God; the light (luminary, or source of light) of the New Jerusalem. (Rev. 21:11-23) The sardine is a stone of a red color. We think it here symbolizes love, which is the underlying element in all God’s actions – tinging the glory through which it shines.” (R529:3, W. I. Mann)

John goes on to tell how the throne was circled by a **rainbow – “in sight like an emerald.”**

“The throne is encircled by a **rainbow ‘like unto an emerald.’** A rainbow is the ‘token’ of a covenant. (Gen. 9:12-17) The green or emerald color probably symbolizes freshness and vigor; that God’s plans are, like nature in the springtime, filled with life, and continually developing and unfolding – blossoming into luscious fruit for the sustenance and pleasure of His creatures.” (R529:3, W. I. Mann)

#### **Additional Comments Regarding The Rainbow of Rev. 4:3**

“The rainbow was a seal and token of the covenant of providence that God made with Noah. This rainbow looked like the emerald, the most prevailing color was a pleasant green to show the reviving and refreshing nature of the new covenant.” (*Barnes’ Notes*)

“... a rainbow, completely encircling the throne. (See *Diaglott*) The rainbow in the vision was not such as is seen from the earth – an incomplete circle. This which the Apostle saw completely encircled the All-Glorious and Perfect One. Looking at this symbolical rainbow in the light of the Genesis account (Gen. 9:12-17), will assist us to understand its significance. There we learn that the rainbow is the token of God’s promise and agreement with the earth and mankind that there should never be another flood. The waters had just abated, and the sun for the first time was shining out through the last fragments of the mists and clouds as the storm of judgment was retreating. This it was that produced the rainbow effect, and seems to teach that the many troublous times portrayed by the visions throughout the Revelation, culminating at last in a general storm of judgment, will eventually be for man’s good, for his correction, for his everlasting blessing. It is through these troubles and severe experiences that the followers of Christ are developed and perfected and will finally be made joint-heirs with Him in His Kingdom for the blessing of all mankind. The rainbow then seems to announce that earth’s storms are to cease, and speaks of the hope of life, of peace and blessing to come out of the trials encountered by the true Church, and out of the final storm of judgment experienced by the world, all of which is in full harmony with the Divine promise of blessed refresh-

ment and restitution for man and his home, the earth – a ‘new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.’ – (2 Pet. 3:13)

“It is then manifest that the rainbow-encircled throne, in this aspect of the vision, describes Jehovah’s sovereignty in its general attitude and conduct towards man in redemptive grace, in providing deliverance for him from the slavery to sin and death. We have in the Scriptures several symbolic descriptions of God’s throne, but they differ widely in their surroundings from this one. The ‘emerald’ appearance of the rainbow (greenish in color) is significant of the ‘olive leaf’ of hope and promise that was brought to Noah by the dove when the waters of the flood were subsiding. The ‘emerald’ effect of the rainbow ... seems to suggest the springing up of new life – the restitution times, subsequent to the closing scenes of this dispensation, after the Church is complete and the world has passed through its judgment – troubles. Then all nations shall come and worship before God. (Rev. 15:4)” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 1, p. 267-268)

At the end of this Age, there must of needs be another deluge – a deluge of truth. The Prophet says, “Judgment ... will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail [righteous judgment] shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters [truth] shall overflow the hiding place.” (Isa. 28:17) When these “waters” have done their work of destroying the old order, the “sun of righteousness” – the light of God’s favor, will appear in the “heavens” and by virtue of this there will be the “rainbow” – his everlasting covenant, giving assurance that never again will He permit sin to defile the habitable of man. (See A303)

**4:4** – “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.”

“Around the throne of God are seen **twenty-four thrones**, on which are seated **twenty-four elders**. Many opinions have been given in regard to who these symbolize. With the present light we present the following: it is clear that, being symbolic, they cannot be individual saints. It cannot well be the Church of the firstborn, as they appear under another symbol. It is unlikely that they represent angels.

“There have been, as we count, twenty-four prophets that have prophesied of ‘things pertaining to the kingdom of God.’ Their **testimonies**<sup>1</sup> here seem to be personified, exalted and enthroned ...

“These twenty-four witnesses for God, while now more or less despised and disbelieved, will yet be proved true and faithful, and will thus be ... exalted in the sight of all men.... As yet, we only are enabled thus to see them. They are **clothed in white**, denoting purity. The **crowns** of gold symbolize their divine authority.” (RS29:3, 4, W. I. Mann)

The “Twenty-Four Elders”: Personifications of the Testimonies of 24 prophets who foretold things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. (Rev. 4:4)

Enoch: His message – “Behold, **the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment.**” (Jude 14, 15)

Jacob: His message – “... **the scepter** [the right to rule in the earthly Kingdom] **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.**” (Gen. 49:10)

Moses: His message – “**The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him shalt thou hearken; ... and the LORD said ... and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him, and it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.**” (Deut. 18:15-19)

Samuel: His message – “**I will establish the throne of his Kingdom for ever.**” (2 Sam. 7:13)

Job: His message – “**I know that my Redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.**” (Job 19:25, 26)

David: His message – “... **weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.**” (Psa. 30:5)

Solomon: His message – “**The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was, when there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water, before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the**

<sup>1</sup> Such testimonies were given by Enoch, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, Job, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and John the Baptist.

highest part of the dust of the world, when he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; then he appointed the foundations of the earth; then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." (Prov. 8:22-30)

What a wonderful description is this of **him who** was in the beginning with God; who in due time came to be the Redeemer of the world of mankind, and who is to come to re-establish God's glorious earthly Kingdom among men!

Isaiah: His message – "... an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness, the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein; no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there; and the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isa. 35:8-10)

Jeremiah: His message – "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge; but every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge." (Jer. 31:29, 30)

Ezekiel: His message – "Thus saith the Lord God; remove the diadem, and take off the crown; this shall not be the same; exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high; I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it him." (Ezek. 21:26, 27)

Daniel: His message – "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." (Dan. 12:12)

Hosea: His message – "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their King, and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days." (Hosea 3:5)

Joel: His message – "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh" (Joel 2:28)

Amos: His message – "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed, and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt, and I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof: they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God." (Amos 9:13-15)

Obadiah: His message – "And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau, and the Kingdom shall be the LORD's." (Obad. 21)

Jonah: His message – "... thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow, which came up in the night, and perished in the night: and should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?" (Jonah 4:10, 11)

Reflecting, if you please that God's ways are not man's. (Isa. 55:9)

Micah: His message – "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and the people shall flow into it. And nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." (Micah 4:1, 2)

Nahum: His message – "Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!" (Nahum 1:15)

Habakkuk: His message – "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." (Hab. 2:14)

Zephaniah: His message – **“Therefore wait upon me, saith the LORD until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the Kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger, for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then shall I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD to serve him with one consent.”** (Zeph. 3: 8, 9)

Haggai: His message – **“Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land, and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.”** (Haggai 2:6, 7)

Zechariah: His message – **“Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”** (Zech. 6:12, 13)

Malachi: His message – **“And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.”** (Mal. 3:17)

John: (the Baptist) His message **“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”** (John 1:29)

From Luke 2:10, 11 – **“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, A Savior, which is Christ the Lord.”**

**4:5** – **“And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God.”**

“His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw and trembled.’ (Psa. 97:4) How apt is this figure? Truly like **lightning** flashes in the midst of the gloom and perplexity of this cloudy day, come to men the remarkable glimpses of the great principles of truth and righteousness in contrast with which the world’s present disorder is manifest! A flash of lightning from the obscured throne discloses here one error, and there another, and another.

“Soon the whole world will be aroused. Already it is largely so. Every day adds to the intensity of the trouble, and the whole world trembles for fear, not knowing what the outcome will be, but dreading the worst... ‘Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for apprehension of the things coming on the earth’! (Luke 21:26)

“It is remarkable that these lightning flashes are continually **calling attention to the Word of God, to the golden rule, to the equal rights and privileges of human brotherhood, to the faultless character and loving and self-sacrificing disposition of Jesus Christ, to the law of love** in contrast with the law of selfishness everywhere prevailing. It seems remarkable too, how often in these days of war and stress worldly men are drawing attention to the prophecies of the Scriptures, and wondering whether present conditions, and troubles which all intelligent people see just ahead, are not fulfillments of these Bible prophecies. All this is leading men to reason of righteousness and of coming judgments (Acts 24:25), when they hope and believe that in some way present wrongs will be righted and righteousness established...

“As a result of God’s **lightning flashes which are enlightening the world**, there is great commotion everywhere manifest. Never before have such conditions prevailed. There are **mutterings of dissatisfaction, unrest and the whole current of popular thought throughout the earth is set in a revolutionary direction. The lightning flashes are revealing the corruption in the world, the dishonesty in high places, and showing men that they are living far below the dignity of manhood.** But how to right these things they are not able to see; and the conflicting ideas, voices, theories and threats, reveal the facts which the prophets foretold; for ‘the nations are angry,’ ‘the heathen [Gentiles, peoples] rage,’ and the whole earth trembles from the din of a worldly conflict and from the blows which even now are beginning to arouse the world.” (R5989:4)

### The Thunderings

“‘Out of the throne [of God] proceed lightnings and thunderings and voices.’ These refer to the **mutterings of the tempest** which is already gathering over the Church and the world. Others besides ourselves see the approaching storm, but they fail to recognize from whence it comes.” (R529:4)

“We hear the **thunder tones of judgment** that ‘call the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof’ (Psa. 50:1) – from the east to the west. We see the **lightning flashes of truth and righteousness**, and observe how the whole earth is now in the shaking process which will eventuate in the complete overthrow of all existing institutions,

systems and governments. **Present events indeed speak in trumpet tones.** How shall we regard these things? Surely, dear brethren, it will be with thoughtful and reverent hearts! Surely we shall watch and pray, lest 'a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it!' (Heb. 4:1) We shall guide our course with the greatest carefulness that we may make our calling and election sure." (R5990:4)

The "**seven lamps of fire burning before the throne,**" we are expressly told, "**are the seven spirits of God.**" Basically, of course, these "seven spirits of God" are really, the one holy Spirit of God, i.e., "the divine will, influence, or power, **exercised any and everywhere, and for any purpose in harmony with the divine will...**" (E182) Not only does "seven" here set forth the fact of its divine perfection, but also that of its diversity. Let it be noted that in Rev. 4:5, the "seven spirits of God" are identified with the "seven lamps of fire burning **before the throne**"; and in Rev. 5:6, with the "seven eyes ... sent forth **into all the earth.**" Just such a diversity of Spirit, or its administration is reflected in Paul's epistle to the Corinthians. (1 Cor. 12:4-11)

It was at Pentecost, that this holy Spirit of God first came upon the disciples of Jesus; and by virtue of the "indwelling" constituted them, "the Church of the Living God." This holy Spirit created a **burning** within them (Jer. 20:9), to speak forth the praises of God, and of His Christ. Then, as the Church of God, they were henceforth to be his "light-bearers" – candlesticks, if you please, to let their light shine "before men" that seeing their good works, they would in response to this witness, glorify the Father in heaven. (Matt. 5:14, 16) It is in this sense, we believe, that the "seven lamps burning before the throne" and "which are the seven spirits of God" are also the "seven golden candlesticks ... the seven churches" (Rev. 1:20) with their holy, God-given mission, to be "the light of the world." (Matt. 5:15)

"Before the throne are seen **seven lamps of fire burning**, which are the seven spirits of God – the seven (perfect or complete number) channels through which God is about to manifest his power. If we compare carefully Rev. 1:4, 12, 20; 2:1; 3:1; 5:6 we find that **they are the church of the firstborn.** These were called from the beginning 'the light of the world,' but from henceforth they are to 'shine forth as the Sun in the kingdom of their Father.' (Matt. 13:43) These, too, are to be the honored instruments by which he will smite the nations, pour out his plagues, and shed light and truth upon mankind. 'This honor hath all his saints.' (Psa. 149)" (R529:5, W. I. Mann)

But,  
"If we refrain from telling the glad tidings, the result will be that **the fire of God's holy Spirit** will become extinguished within us. And if **the light that is**

**within us** becomes darkness, how great will be that darkness." (R5489:6)

**4:6** – "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 [living ones – *Diaglott*], full of eyes before and behind."

"In full view of the throne is also seen 'a sea of glass.' This sea is soon to be mingled with fire. (Rev. 15:2) From our standpoint it is transparent. The sea represents **the unfettered, irreligious masses of the people.** We are enabled to see clearly the internal forces that control them, what they are about to do, and why they do it. We can see that the fire is 'already kindled.' We see it smouldering; in their breasts, ready to break out, a wild, unquenchable whirlwind of flame, when the due time comes. The whole matter is **clear as crystal** from the standpoint of those who are walking in the light." (R529:5, W. I. Mann)

### The "Sea"

"Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; **the sea and the waves** [the restless and lawless elements] roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth [society] for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.'

"The roaring **sea** and waves symbolize the restless masses of humanity, curbed, but not fully restrained, by the laws and regulations of society. Everyone has heard some of this 'roaring' for the past twenty years, with occasional stormy outbreaks dashing like tidal-waves against the earth (social order) and seeking to swallow it up. Restrained for a time, these waves are gathering weight and force; and, as prophetically shown, it is only a question of a few years until all the mountains (kingdoms) are 'removed and carried into the midst of the sea,' in anarchy. (Psa. 46)

"And it is as men begin to realize that the sea-roar and unrest is due largely to the wane of superstition and of ecclesiastical influence, and as they more and more see the powers of heaven (sectarian creeds and systems) shaken, that their hearts are failing them for fear – in apprehension of the things coming upon the earth (society); but the strenuous efforts now being made to reestablish and unify sectarian power and influence, will be in great measure successful only for a short time; for it will surely disintegrate completely." (D596)

The "**four living ones full of eyes before and behind,**" were undoubtedly – by way of personification – intended to represent, or symbolize, the four cardinal attributes – power, justice, love and wisdom – of the **all-seeing, omniscient God.** (The God, "that knows all things." R5210:4) These four attributes are also brought to our attention in connection with the ancient Tabernacle's



Ark of the Covenant, where two cherubim were used to represent “love” and “power;” “justice” being represented by the lid (the mercy seat); and “wisdom” by the Shekinah glory, which appeared between the cherubim. (T124)

**The Cherubim “Beasts”**

“What then, do the cherubim symbolize? We think they personify the attributes of God. Scholars have suggested a number of attributes. We think there are just four which are fundamental, namely: Power, Wisdom, Justice and Love. These four include all others. For instance: independence, omniscience, holiness and benevolence are dependent on or similar to the above in their absolute perfection as God has them. On these his throne is represented as being supported.

“When the way back to Eden was closed by ‘the cherubim,’ it was not only the act of his power and justice, it was also done by wisdom and love. ‘Cursed is the ground for thy sake’ was the utterance of love and wisdom. Idleness destroys; activity develops. The latter made the Greeks, even in a rugged country, a finely developed people; while idleness ruined Rome, with the treasures of the world at her feet.” (RS29:6, W. I. Mann)<sup>1</sup>

**“Beasts”**

The Greek word (ζωα) rendered “beasts” in the *Authorized Version*, at Rev. 4:6, really means “living creatures” i.e., living things, something endowed with life as any animal might be.

It is interesting to note how the various translators have rendered the term:

|                                      |                  |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| <i>American Standard</i> .....       | living creatures |
| <i>Revised Standard</i> .....        | living creatures |
| <i>An American Translation</i> ..... | animals          |
| <i>Authentic Schonfield</i> .....    | living creatures |
| <i>Barclay</i> .....                 | living creatures |
| <i>Beck</i> .....                    | living beings    |
| <i>Berkeley (Verkuyl)</i> .....      | living beings    |
| <i>Berg</i> .....                    | living creatures |
| <i>Darby</i> .....                   | living creatures |
| <i>Diaglott (Wilson)</i> .....       | living ones      |
| <i>Holy Name (Traina)</i> .....      | living creatures |
| <i>Marshall</i> .....                | living creatures |
| <i>Meyer</i> .....                   | living creatures |
| <i>Moffatt</i> .....                 | living creatures |
| <i>Montgomery</i> .....              | living creatures |
| <i>New Amer. Standard</i> .....      | living creatures |
| <i>New English</i> .....             | living creatures |
| <i>New International</i> .....       | living creatures |
| <i>New World</i> .....               | living creatures |
| <i>Phillips</i> .....                | living creatures |
| <i>Rotherham</i> .....               | living creatures |

|  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <i>The Amplified</i> .....             | living creatures (ones or beings) |
| <i>The Living Bible (Taylor)</i> ..... | Living Beings                     |
| <i>Today’s English</i> .....           | living creatures                  |
| <i>Twentieth Century</i> .....         | Creatures                         |
| <i>Weymouth</i> .....                  | living creatures                  |
| <i>Williams</i> .....                  | living creatures                  |
| <i>Young’s Literal</i> .....           | living creatures                  |
| <i>Douay</i> .....                     | living creatures                  |
| <i>Confraternity</i> .....             | living creatures                  |
| <i>Knox</i> .....                      | living figures                    |
| <i>Jerusalem</i> .....                 | animals (angels or principles)    |
| <i>New American</i> .....              | living creatures                  |
| <i>Lamsa</i> .....                     | animals (or beasts)               |

There is a similar reference to “living ones,” i.e., living creatures, in Ezek. 1:5, but in Ezek. 10:15, 20, these are referred to the “cherubim.”

**4:7** – “And the first beast [living one] was like a lion, and the second beast [living one] like a calf, and the third beast [living one] had a face as a man, and the fourth beast [living one] was like a flying eagle.”

It is important that we note, John did not say, that the “living ones” were a lion, a calf, a man, and an eagle, respectively; but rather that they were “like” unto these. The significance of this seems to be that some particular characteristic of each of these creatures, or the manner or purpose in which it was used, is to be considered, or regarded as a symbolism for the four cardinal attributes of God, viz., POWER; JUSTICE; LOVE and WISDOM.

The first of the “living ones,” John says, was “like a lion.” An outstanding characteristic of the lion is its phenomenal strength! (*Encyclopedia Britannica*; Article: Lion) Thus we have here the symbolism that stands for God’s POWER, everywhere manifest throughout this wonderful universe. (Gen. 1:1; Psa. 8:3, 4; 19:1; 89:9; 102:25; Isa. 48:13)

“... the Lion (the strong one) ...” (B85)

The second “living one” was “like a calf.” The animal referred to here, is the same as that of Lev. 16:3. The calf (young bullock) in this latter text is designated a “sin-offering,” and was brought to be sacrificed to “satisfy” a violated justice! Thus we have here the symbolism which is to stand for God’s JUSTICE. (Psa. 89:14)

The third “living one,” had, as it were, “a face as a man.” As already suggested, in Old Testament times, animals were frequently brought to be sacrificed to satisfy justice. While God had so ordained it for the purpose of establishing the type, these sacrifices never did “satisfy” justice, nor could they take away sin. (Heb. 10:1-4) Thus was it impossible for man in his fallen estate to redeem himself; and there was none righteous, no, not one (Rom. 3:10); nor was it possible for any man to redeem his brother. (Psa. 49:7) A perfect man had sinned and was

<sup>1</sup> It is possible that the thought here (in 1883) was based on Bro. Russell’s thought as expressed (in 1881) on T123-125!

justly condemned to death; and since God's justice demanded "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," (Exod. 21:24; Deut. 19:21), only a **perfect man** could be the Redeemer. It was not incumbent upon God to furnish such a redeemer; but he did; and thereby showed his own great Love; as the Apostle declares, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8) And so God's **LOVE** was reflected in the **face** of him who left the glory he had with the Father before the world was (John 17:5; 2 Cor. 8:9), and became **the man** Christ Jesus. And he (Jesus) in giving himself the ransom for all (Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6) tasted death – the penalty for violated justice – for every man. (Heb. 2:9) Thus have we here, in the "face as a man" the symbolism of God's **LOVE**.

The fourth "living one" was said to be "**like a flying eagle**." An eagle, especially a flying one, because of his proverbial sharpness of vision, is able to see, and therefore to know, what is going on in the earth beneath him. He is, therefore, a very wise bird, and thus we have here a most apt symbolism of the **WISDOM** of God. (Psa. 56:2; 102:19; Deut. 32:11, 12)

John has already told us that these "living ones" were "full of eyes before and behind." (Rev. 4:6) The "eyes before" seem to bespeak God's ability to exercise himself in his **POWER, JUSTICE, LOVE, and WISDOM**, according to his foreknowledge of all things; "and (eyes) behind" would signify his ability to "see" what is already past, as if it were still present, or, to "see" things to come, as if they were already in the past. (Isa. 46:10)

### Jehovah-God – His Wisdom

"He is never confused, bewildered, perplexed, anxious or careworn, nor in the least fearful that his plans will miscarry or his purposes fail; because all power and wisdom inhere in him. The scope of his mighty intellect reaches to the utmost bounds of possibility, comprehends all causes and discerns with precision all effects; consequently he knows the end from the beginning, and that, not only upon philosophical principles, but also by intuition." (R1832:6)

The "faces" or the "likeness of four living creatures" of Ezek. 1:5:

"...the face of a man ... and the face of a lion ... the face of an ox ... the face of an eagle." (Ezek. 1:10)

(See "Special Treasures" Book – The Four Cherubim)

**4:8** – "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."

### The "Six Wings" of the "Four Beasts"

Six (6) is the number that identifies good men, who in evil times were used of God. Peter speaks of these when

declaring "the prophecy came not in old times by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy Spirit." (2 Pet. 1:21) Bro. Russell applied it to the saints of the Gospel age. (R3164:1)

In Rev. 4:4, reference is made to the "24 elders," which, of course, represent **the personification of the testimonies** of these men who in evil times were used by Jehovah-God to proclaim the good tidings regarding the Millennial Kingdom. (R529:3, 4, W. I. Mann)

In Rev. 4:6, we have brought to our attention the "four beasts" (living ones) that were "full of eyes," to represent the four cardinal attributes of God – Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, and his all-seeing omniscience. (R5210:4)

However, in Rev. 4:8, we are told that each of the "four beasts" had "six wings," which means that for the four there were (4 x 6 =) 24 "wings" in all, and that is the exact number of the "elders." This, seemingly suggests that **the testimonies** of these "24 elders" concerning the Millennial Kingdom, were also to reflect the Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, of Jehovah-God, even as the fullness of these was subsequent to their day, to dwell bodily in Christ Jesus. (Col. 2:9)

Both the Father and the Son were seated upon this throne, and we understand that the glory and honor being rendered by the "24 elders" must have been unto both. It was the Father that had honored the Son (Phil. 2:9), so how could any one honor the Father without honoring the Son? If they were already one in spirit, while the Son was still here, how much is it even more so now! (John 10:30; 14:11; 17:22; Phil. 2:11)

### Wings!

It will have been observed that Bro. Mann, in dealing with the matter of the "four beasts" (living ones – *Emphatic Diaglott*) used the term "cherubim" (R530:1, 2)! Perhaps this was because the "four living creatures" of Ezek. 1:5, are in Ezek. 10:15, 20 identified with the cherubim. However, those cherubim had each of them but "four wings" (Ezek. 1:6); whereas those in Rev. 4:6-8 had "six wings"!

Only in Isa. 6:2 do we read of another "six winged" creature, but he belonged to the order of the **seraphim!**

There seems to have been beside the "four winged" cherub, one also having but **two** wings, such as those that were represented on the top of the Ark of the Covenant's Mercy Seat, which was made by Bezaleel according to the pattern shown Moses in the mount. (Exod. 37:1-9; 25:9, 40) Of course, nothing is said in the Exodus accounts about these two cherubim having but **two wings**, yet it is very clearly stated in 1 Kings 8:7, of the time when the Ark of the Covenant was transferred to the Temple.

**4:9-11** – "And when those beasts 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, 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.”

Perhaps we ought to recognize that there are two who sit on this throne (Rev. 3:21; 5:6): **the Father, “who liveth for ever and ever”** – who had no beginning, but is “from everlasting to everlasting,” (Rev. 4:9; Psa. 90:2); and **his exalted Son**, who had a beginning (Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:15), “**which was, and is, and is to come,**” – the “Almighty.” (Rev. 1:8; 4:8) Note, not only does Jesus already share the throne with the Father, but he also promises the “overcomers” that they too, are to share it with him. (Rev. 22:1; 3:21)

### The Throne of our Lord!

Heb. 1:3, 8, 13 – “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, **sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high...** Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom.... But to which of the angels said he, **Sit on my right hand,** until I make thine enemies thy footstool?”

### The Throne – Authority and Rulership

“**The throne of God ... is not a material one, but refers to his supreme authority and rulership; and the Lord Jesus has been exalted to a share in that rulership.** Paul declares, ‘God hath highly exalted him (Jesus) and given him a name above every name.’ He hath given him authority above every other, next to the Father.” (A92)

Psa. 110:1 – “Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

“The vague, indefinite idea regarding this text seems to be that Christ sits on a material throne somewhere in the heavens until the work of subduing all things is accomplished for him through the Church, and then he comes to reign. This is a misconception. **The throne of God referred to is not a material one, but refers to his supreme authority and rulership;** and the Lord Jesus has been exalted to share in that rulership. Paul declares, ‘God hath highly exalted him (Jesus) and given him a name above every name.’ He hath given him authority above every other, next to the Father?” (A92)

In harmony with the Father’s will, the “four living ones” cease not to honor and glorify the Son for his faithfulness to the heavenly Father’s will. Their wings and eyes bespeak the omniscience of God in every place. And such as these, finding the Wisdom, Love, Justice and Power of God fully exemplified in him – “which was, and

is, and is to come” – Christ Jesus, they proclaimed him by these divine standards to be, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.” (Rev. 4:8; See also Col. 2:9; T125)

But not only did these “living ones” thus glorify the Son, but also the Father, who has always been “from everlasting to everlasting” (Psa. 90:2) – the One who “liveth for ever and ever,” the chief exponent of these attributes.

Immediately upon this glorification of the Father by these four “living ones,” **the twenty-four elders** (the personification of the testimonies pertaining to the kingdom), **cast their crowns before the throne,** (Rev. 4:10), as if in recognition of the fact that it was all the heavenly Father’s plan, and that it was from him that they had received their divine inspiration, to foretell the glories and beauties of that Plan. Thus did they feel it their duty as well as their privilege to declare **the Father’s worthiness to receive glory and honor and power; for in His pleasure did He create all things for the blessing and favor unto others.** (Rev. 4:11)

“In Rev. 4:9-11, John hears the cherubim ‘give glory and honor and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne,’ and immediately the twenty-four elders fall down before him, saying, ‘Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and honor and the power: for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they are and were created.’

“When we can hear the power, wisdom, justice, and love, of God proclaiming in perfect harmony the glory and honor of our Father, then indeed his twenty-four witnesses ring out his praise as never before, and we realize that he created all things, both good and evil, and they exist by his permission and shall ultimately work out his pleasure.” (RS30:5, W. I. Mann)

### “Worthy, O Lord”

“The Scriptures declare that **all things were created for the Lord’s pleasure** (Rev. 4:11) – without doubt, for the pleasure of dispensing his blessings, and of exercising the attributes of his glorious being. And though, in the working out of his benevolent designs, he permits evil and evil-doers for a time to play an active part, yet it is not for evil’s sake, nor because he is in league with sin; for he declares that he is ‘not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness.’ (Psa. 5:4) Though opposed to evil in every sense, God permits (i.e., does not hinder) it for a time, because his wisdom sees a way in which it may be made a lasting and valuable lesson to his creatures.” (A 118)

**5:1** – “And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.”

The last to be referred to in the throne scene of Rev. 4:9-11, was Jehovah. The narrative continues: it tells us that in his right hand there was a book or **scroll, written**

**within and on the backside, but sealed with seven seals.** Just what did this scroll represent?

“He that sits upon the throne is Jehovah. The scroll in his right hand is his plan for human redemption, sealed from all until the one ‘worthy’ to carry out to completion its details should be found and proved ‘worthy’.” (R2156:1)

### **The Scroll and the Lamb’s Worthiness!**

“... the Heavenly Father, the Ancient of Days, is shown seated on the heavenly throne, and in his hand a scroll written inside and outside, sealed with seven seals. That scroll, representing the divine plan, known only to the Father, Jehovah himself, was kept in his own power – in his own hand – until someone should be proven worthy to know it and become its executor as Jehovah’s honored agent and representative. The symbolic picture proceeds to show that up to the time our Lord Jesus suffered for us at Calvary, ‘the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God,’ no one had ever been found (proved) worthy to take up the divine plan and even understand its contents.

“But when our Lord Jesus had proven his loyalty to the heavenly Father by his obedience, not only in humbling himself to take man’s estate for the suffering of death, but also in his obedience ‘even unto death,’ and still further, ‘even unto the (ignominious) death of the cross,’ then and thereby he did prove himself worthy of every confidence and trust. As the Apostle declares, ‘Wherefore him hath God highly exalted and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, both of things in heaven and things on earth.’ (Phil. 2:9-11) It is at this point that the picture we are considering (Rev. 5:9-13) shows our Lord Jesus as the Lamb that had been slain, before whom obeisance was made, and who was proclaimed, Worthy the Lamb! ‘Thou art worthy to take the scroll and to open the seals thereof, because thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation.’ Thus is pictured to us the high exaltation of the Heavenly Father’s representative, the ‘Messenger (servant) of the Covenant.’ Because of his humility and complete submission and obedience to the Father’s will he is proclaimed thenceforth the sharer of the Father’s throne, and, by the Father’s own arrangement, the proclamation was made throughout the heavenly hosts, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and blessing;’ and finally ‘every creature’ shall catch the thought that Jehovah has very highly exalted his Only Begotten Son, even to association with himself in the Kingdom, and shout their approval, saying, ‘The blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the power be unto Him that

sitteth upon the throne (of the universe – Jehovah) and unto the Lamb – for ever and ever!’ No wonder, then that we are instructed that thenceforth all men shall honor the exalted Son even as they honor the Father who thus highly exalted him. (John 5:23)” (E36-38)

### **The Book (or Scroll)**

“A picture that goes back before our Lord came into the world, a picture that shows God’s plan, recorded in figurative language, was shown to St. John on the Isle of Patmos, in which he beheld Jehovah-God sitting upon a throne, and holding in His right hand a scroll, written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals, ... In that symbolical language, the scroll represents all things that God had prepared in His mind before the foundation of the world, respecting what He would do with reference to the church, respecting also the great work for the world in the Millennial age, and respecting the future things that Messiah would do. All these things were represented by the scroll held in His right hand – the hand being symbolical of power.” (Convention Report 1915, p. 88)

**5:2-4** – “And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.”

The **strong angel** of Rev. 5:2 may possibly be the personification of the Law of God, which through the ages past, by way of the types, shadows, pictures, symbols, etc., could find no one able, let alone worthy, to become the executor of God’s divine plan of the ages.

“The inquiry, ‘**Who is worthy to open the book [scroll] and to loose the seals thereof?**’ had long been made: for four thousand years, from the giving of the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head, it had been the query – Who shall be esteemed, by Jehovah God, to be worthy to perform his gracious purposes, and thus be honored above all others as the Servant (messenger) of the New Covenant of grace?

“When silence prevailed, and none was found worthy either in heaven or on earth (representing the condition of things prior to the first advent), **John began to weep**, saying to himself: Alas! though God has some gracious and wise plans for the welfare of his creatures, we may never know them, because none is found worthy to know or to execute them. So it was that even our Lord Jesus, prior to the finishing of his sacrifice, as he then declared, did not know all about the Father’s plans, and times, and seasons. (Mark 13:32)” (R2156:1)

**5:5** – “And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.”

### Jacob’s Prophecy

The “elder” here referred to was Jacob – or rather his testimony, as set forth in his deathbed prophecy concerning Judah and the Kingdom, which was as follows:

Gen. 49:8-10 – “Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father’s children shall bow down before thee. **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? The scepter 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.”

“This elder proves to be the old patriarch, Jacob, who made the prophecy on his death-bed when blessing his sons. (Gen. 49:8-12)” (R530:5, W. I. Mann)

“God had given the most honorable One of all the host of heaven the first opportunity to prove his worthiness to loose the scroll of God’s great plan, and to fulfill its provisions. He was given this opportunity because, as the First-born of Jehovah, he had the right to the first privilege of service. And he did not allow the privilege to go by. He accepted it. He was faithful. He humbled himself to the human nature, and thus he became the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, of which tribe he was born as a man. He did not have this title in his position as Logos. It was as the Son of Mary that he was the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David.

“Our Lord’s worthiness was not then proven. It was not until he cried with his dying breath, ‘It is finished!’ that the demonstration was complete. All the way down from Adam to Jesus no one had been found worthy to open the great scroll. But Jesus was now found worthy.” (R5943:4, 5)

### The Scroll

“Excepting the bare promise (written on the outside of the scroll – vs. 1) of salvation through the Seed of the woman, nothing could be known of the wonderful scheme for human restitution until the Son of God, having left the glory of the spiritual nature, took our nature and by the sacrifice of himself redeemed us from death. Then having his righteousness imputed to us by faith, we are counted worthy to look upon the scroll as he opens the seals one after another.” (R3103:2)

### The Scroll!

#### When Was it Put into Jesus’ Hands?

Seemingly, Bro. Russell must have changed his mind somewhere between August 15, 1912, and August 15, 1916, as the following will show:

**“After our Lord had entered upon his consecration he was the newly slain Lamb. Then the Father gave into his hand the scroll of the great divine plan of the ages – the scroll written on both inside and outside.** The outside he was already able to read. But the inside, which contained information on spiritual things, remained sealed.

**“As soon as our Lord came up out of the water after his baptism, he was begotten of the Holy Spirit and began to understand spiritual things.** ‘The heavens (higher things) were opened unto him.’ **The time when he began to be considered the slain Lamb, the time when the scroll was delivered to him, was the time of his consecration.**” (R5080:6)

“Our Lord Jesus received the anointing of the Holy Spirit when he came up out of the water at his baptism. Then the heavens were opened unto him. The higher things which he had not previously understood became clear ...

“Our Lord’s worthiness was not then proven. **It was not until he cried with his dying breath, ‘It is finished!’ that the demonstration was complete.**” (R5943:3, 5)

“Jesus had not proven himself worthy of this great honor when he made his consecration, but when he had finished his course in death, he was then worthy to receive glory, honor and power. After his resurrection and ascension the scroll was given into his hands to be opened. This means that the divine plan as a whole was here made known to him – for he already had knowledge of much of this – but all things were given him to unloose. There had been some things that our Lord did not know. He had said, ‘Of that day and hour (of his second coming) knoweth no man; no, not the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but my Father only.’ (Mark 13:32) **A part of the plan was written on the outside of the scroll, and a part was written on the inside.** The things that were sealed were not proper to be understood by our Redeemer until he had received the all-power, after his resurrection. The execution of God’s plan was then given into his hands.

“The opening of the seals has progressed during all the Gospel age. **The whole plan of God is represented in this book – the scroll.** It has required all of the present age and will require all of the next age to complete the plan. The plan of God includes the ‘restitution of all things spoken.’ We are now able to see these wonderful things and to tell about them, because each of the seals as it has been opened has

made the plan a little clearer. We may suppose that the Lord Jesus was made aware of all its features after his ascension to the presence of Jehovah. We who are God's people are seeking to know these things more and more fully. The Master declared that as the Father revealed them unto him, so would he reveal them unto us; but this revelation has been gradual, as the successive seals have been broken.

“Brethren, beloved of Christ, realizing that our God has hitherto counted us worthy to look upon the wondrous scroll of his great plan, which has been unsealed for us by Jesus our Lord, let us continue to prove ourselves worthy to look therein and to comprehend the glorious things of his Word, by faithfulness, obedience and loyalty to this plan in everything! Let our appreciation continually increase for our wondrous privilege in being permitted to share this blessed ministry of bearing divine truth to other hungry hearts, that they also may rejoice in the Lord and in the power of his might!” (RS943:5, 6)

### The Scroll – To Whom Revealed

“The Lion of the Tribe of Judah was our Lord Jesus, to whom the Book was delivered. It is not due for any believers to understand any of the deep things written in that Book until they have come to the place of consecration. But God does not reveal them to us by his Spirit in the same manner as he revealed them to the Lord Jesus. John said that this is the ‘Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.’ ‘All things are of the Father, and all things are by the Son, and we by him.’ (Rev. 1:1; 1 Cor. 8:6)” (RS055:1)

### The Root of David – the Resurrected Messiah

“It was ... **not the prehuman Logos, nor yet the man Jesus** that was David's Lord and David's Root; **but the resurrected Messiah**. When David in spirit (i.e., speaking under the prophetic spirit of influence) called Jesus, Lord, saying, ‘Jehovah said unto my Lord (Jesus), sit thou on my right hand,’ etc., the reference was not to the sacrificing one, ‘the man Christ Jesus,’ who had not yet finished his sacrifice, but to the victor Jesus, the Lord of life and glory, ‘the first born from the dead, the prince of the kings of the earth.’ (Rev. 1:5)” (E136)

**5:6** – “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.”

John beheld next in his vision, **in the midst of the throne and of the four “living ones,”** (i.e., in the bosom

of the Father – John 1:18; and now the express image of the Father's Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power); and **in the midst of the elders** (i.e., the central theme of all their prophecies) **a lamb** (so designated in John's Gospel – John 1:29, 36) **as it had been slain!** In other words, John was now beholding him – the one who had humbled himself, even to the dying of an ignominious death on the cross, but whom God had exalted (Phil. 2:7-11), now ready to take the Book from the Father's hand. The “**seven horns**” bespeak the perfect power committed to him by the Father (Matt. 28:18); the “**seven eyes**” the perfect treasures of wisdom and knowledge with which the Father had endowed him (Col. 2:3) and which are here identified with the “**seven spirits of God**” – the Holy Spirit, sent forth into all the earth in Jesus' name, for the comfort and encouragement and enlightenment of his saints. (John 14:16-18, 26, 27)

“John now sees ‘in the midst of the throne’ and of the living ones and the elders ‘a lamb standing, as though it had been slain.’ We recognize at once the One whom John the Baptist introduced to the Jews as ‘The Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.’ He comes and receives the scroll out of the right hand of the One sitting on the throne. **Not until he had passed the last test, had endured ‘to the end,’ had risen in victory a spiritual body, had been caught away in glory, did he receive the wonderful scroll which ‘the angels desired to look into’.**” (RS30:6, W. I. Mann)

### When Did Jesus Become the Slain Lamb and Receive the Scroll?

“Jesus was the slain lamb from the very moment he consecrated himself, and that was where he received the scroll. And that is what is meant, you see, by the heavens being opened. The higher things were opened unto him – not that he could read, as yet, all that was in the scroll: he could read many of the things in it; that is to say, the scroll was written on the outside and on the inside both, and sealed with seven seals. These seals could not be broken until he should have finished his work; but he had the scroll and was permitted to read all the outside things. They were for his encouragement and strength, and showed him how he was to be the lamb slain, and how he was to be the antitypical bullock and the antitypical priest, and all the work he was to do in the acceptance of the Father's will, and if he would be faithful unto death, then the seals would be opened unto him – everything in the scroll.

“Jesus did not before his death know all that was written in the book... He knew the outside of the scroll, but he did not know everything that was on the inside of it – the times and the seasons were still on the inside, under seal. But after his resurrection beyond the veil, he then said, ‘All power in heaven

and on earth is given to me.' He was then on the plane of glory and had full knowledge of all the features of the divine plan." – (*Convention Report*, 1910, p. 111)

### The Scroll – Its Contents

"That sealed scroll represents the divine plan which God purposed in himself from before the foundation of the world, but which he had revealed to no one, no, not to the angels, neither to the Son. (Matt. 24:36) In a word, all that had occurred since creation – the permission of sin, the fall, the Covenant with Abraham, the Law Covenant with Israel, the coming of Jesus, the Pentecostal blessing, the gathering of members of the Church – all these things were foreknown to the Father and provided for. Additionally, that scroll contains a record of all that is happening now, and all that will occur throughout the Millennial age, down to its very close – down to the time when every creature in heaven and in earth ... shall ascribe praise, honor, glory and dominion to him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever. (Rev. 5:13)" (*R4451:1*)

**5:7-10** – "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. 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 – oldest MS. omits this word] to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue and people, and nation; And hast made them unto our God kings and priests: and they shall reign on the earth."

"Symbolically our Lord shows that it was not possible for him to know the completeness of the divine plan until after he had demonstrated his worthiness to be the heir of all things, and until that worthiness was proven by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. In the symbols of Revelation he points out to us, showing how the divine plan had long been in the Father's hand a sealed scroll, and how that no one in heaven or earth had been found worthy to open that book or scroll or to understand the particulars of the divine program until he, as the antitypical Lamb of God, had been slain, and by his sacrifice had demonstrated his worthiness to receive wisdom, honor, dominion and might. Then to him was the scroll or book of the divine plan entrusted in its every detail, that in due time all the wonderful provisions of the divine plan might be fully executed in the glorification of the church and the blessing of all the families of the earth." (*R3716:3*)

Upon the Lamb's taking the Book, the "**living ones,**" and the "**four and twenty elders,**" **fell down before him.** This suggests that God himself (represented by the "living ones,") and the prophetic testimonies (represented by the "four and twenty elders,") found in the faithfulness of **the Lamb**, a glorious fulfillment of the divine plan as it had originally been conceived and purposed in the mind of God, in the One to be known as Christ Jesus. (Eph. 3:11)

But this was not all that the Spirit of God had foretold through the prophecies of old; for the plan involved also a very small group of those redeemed from among men (Rom. 8:29), who were to be privileged to become Sons of God (John 1:12), and by identification with Christ Jesus, to suffer with him, so that in due time they might also reign with him. (2 Tim. 2:12)

The "**harps**" here mentioned, might represent the gratitude, blessings and praises (Psa. 103:1-22) which these prophetic testimonies had put into the mouth of this "little flock" of the redeemed. The "**vials** [bowls; spoons, or even censers] **full of odors,**" we are told, represent the acceptable prayers of these saints! (Rev. 5:8; Psa. 141:1, 2)

"The Prophet David ... pictures the Christian in his distress coming to God in his appointed way: 'O Lord, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me: give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee. **Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense.**' (Psa. 141:1, 2) This is the same thought elsewhere expressed in the Bible – that the prayers of God's people rise before him as a sweet perfume. (Rev. 5:8) And, by the way, we remember that the **incense** of old, which **typified the prayers of the saints**, was composed of a rare mixture of spices, giving forth a peculiarly sweet odor; and that nobody was allowed to make that incense except the priests who were to offer it. (Exod. 30:34-38; 37:29) Thus again the Lord shows us that the privilege of prayer, of approaching him in an acceptable manner, is confined to the antitypical priests, called by St. Peter the royal priesthood. (1 Pet. 2:9)" (*R5692:5*)

"**And they,**" that is these personifications of the prophetic testimonies, "**sung**" as it were, "**a new song.**" It was different from what they had sung before, for the One concerning whom they had prophesied **had come, and had proved himself worthy** to execute the plan of God! Note how this is the very tenor of the new song: "**Thou art worthy to take the Book and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed** ['us' does not appear in the most ancient MSS.] **to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.**" While it is true that Jesus' death was "a ransom **for all**" (Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6), here, evidently, reference is to that "little flock" of saints, already mentioned, for the song continues, "and hast made **them** (*Marshall's Translation*) unto our God, a



**kingdom and priests** (*Marshall's Translation*) and they shall reign on the earth." (Rev. 1:6; 20:4, 6; see also Exod. 19:6; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 5:10)

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

#### "Worthy The Lamb That Was Slain"

"Speaking in vision of the three and a half years during which our Lord is represented as slain, John the Revelator says, 'I beheld and lo, a freshly slain Lamb!' And the voices of myriads of angels were heard proclaiming, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.' (Rev. 5:12)" (RS943:5)

#### Homage Unto The Lamb

"And now the symbolical panorama proceeds, and shows us the Lamb approaching Jehovah and receiving from him 'the mystery of his will,' the great plan of the ages, as mapped out in the divine purpose from before the foundation of the world. As soon as the 'mystery of God' was committed to 'the Lamb of God,' who had already fulfilled an important part of that plan by redeeming the world with his own precious blood, he receives homage, as it is written: 'Him hath God highly exalted, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things on earth,' and 'that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father.'" (R2208:6)

This acclamation of the Lamb, which began when the Father exalted him, and conferred upon him the divine nature, for his faithfulness unto death, will never cease; for it is to continue for ever and ever. It had a beginning; but it will never have an end! True, not all of God's creatures have as yet become aware of the Lamb's greatness, his glory and honor; but eventually, all will. Even the world of mankind will voluntarily join this grand and glorious Hallelujah chorus, singing their praises not merely unto Jehovah God, the Father, but also to his blessed Son, our Lord.

"No wonder that the Revelator, prophesying of that glorious time, says 'Every creature in Heaven [the

Church, the Great Company, the angels, the cherubim and seraphim], **and on earth, and under the earth** [those now in the tomb], **heard I saying, Blessing, glory, honor and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever!**' (Rev. 5:13)" (SM231)

"So glorious will be the condition of humanity at the close of Messiah's Kingdom that nothing ever dreamed will compare with it. But the great work of God will not be perfected until every human being will have reached perfection, or will have been destroyed in the Second Death, because of refusal to come into harmony with the laws of righteousness. Then every creature in Heaven and on earth will be heard saying, 'Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb, for ever and ever.' (Rev. 5:13)" (*Overland Monthly*, p. 271)

The most ancient MSS., including the Sinaitic (X) and the Alexandrine (A), render (Rev. 5:14, like this: "**And the four living ones said: Amen, and the elders fell and worshipped.**" (See also *Marshall's Translation*) The plan as it will ultimately be carried out by the Lamb, will be in the fullest accord with the heavenly Father's character, thus, the "Amen" on the part of the "living ones"; and as divine inspiration had indicated through the prophetic testimonies, thus do the "elders" fall down and "worship."

**6:1** – "And I 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."

#### The Opening Of the Seals

"Then came the opening of the seals: the disclosing of one after another of the various features connected with the divine purpose. **Each seal as it was loosed permitted the scroll to open a little wider, and a little wider, thus permitting 'the mystery of God' to be a little more clearly discerned.** And so God's people down through this Gospel age have been privileged to know something of the 'secret of the Lord' – the divine plan. But not until the last seal was broken, did the scroll fly wide open, permitting the 'mystery of God' to be fully disclosed; as it is written; 'In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.' (Rev. 5:1; 10:7)" (R2209:1)

"Since his glorification the Lamb has been breaking the seven seals and thus opening the divine plans before men and angels, and we now living are privileged to share this knowledge more abundantly than others, because, the last seal having been broken, the scroll is open to all who follow the Lamb in love and obedience and meekness; and 'the mystery of God is [about] finished.' (Rev. 10:7)" (R2156:4)

“The opening of the seals has progressed during all the Gospel age. The whole plan of God is represented in this book – the scroll. It has required all of the present age and will require all of the next age to complete the plan. The plan of God includes the ‘restitution of all things spoken.’ We are now able to see these wonderful things and to tell about them, because each of the seals as it has been opened has made the plan a little clearer. We may suppose that the Lord Jesus was made aware of all its features after his ascension to the presence of Jehovah. We who are God’s people are seeking to know these things more and more fully. The Master declared that as the Father revealed them unto him, so would he reveal them unto us; but this revelation has been gradual, as the successive seals have been broken.” (RS943:6)

John says, “**I 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 ...**” The words, “and see,” which follow here (Rev. 6:1) and in Rev. 6:3, 5, 7 do not find support in the oldest MSS; however, from what follows in the context, it is evident that “Come and see,” is not necessarily an improper or incorrect thought.

The “**living one**” referred to, we believe, was the first to be mentioned in Rev. 4:7, “like a lion,” and represented God’s POWER. It is, therefore, not strange that **John heard** a lion-like roar – “**as it were the noise of thunder.**”

**6:2** – “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.”

The “**horse**” would symbolize a doctrine; the fact that it was a “**white horse**” – **pure doctrine!** The “**rider**” seems to represent the **early church**; the “**bow**” indicates him to have been a **warrior sent forth to conquer**; the “**crown**,” the **divinely accredited kingship** of those who go forth in the fullness of consecration against the forces of evil! And John adds, “**he conquered.**” (The *Authorized Version* incorrectly says “to conquer.”) It was the **Power of God** in the indwelling spirit that enabled him to conquer!

“... the warrior upon the white horse is manifestly a representation of the true and faithful servants of Christ of the early Church, as in obedience to His command they went forth on their mission of proclaiming the pure Truth – the word, causing eventually the overthrow of Pagan idolatry, and bringing many of its adherents to yield willing and glad submission to Christ, their King. It evidently has reference to the rapid spread of Gospel Truth in the first and second centuries during the ‘Ephesus’ and the beginning of the ‘Smyrna’ period. The horse being ‘white’ symbolizes purity – pure doctrines,

and victory.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Streeter, Vol. 1, p. 307)

Note the similarity between the following two texts:

Rev. 6:2 – “And I saw, and behold a **white horse: and he that sat upon him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him:**”

Rev. 19:11 – “**And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse<sup>1</sup>; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True**, and in righteousness he doth judge **and make war.**”

The former, it seems evident represented the early Church in its pristine purity, under the headship of Jesus! The latter, judging from the context, refers to Jesus and to Jesus alone. (Rev. 19:12-16)

**6:3, 4** – “And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. 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.”

#### The Rider of the Red Horse, etc.

“If the whiteness of the first horse denoted the purity of the gospel in the period which that symbol covers, the redness of the second horse would signify that in this period that original purity began to be corrupted. The mystery of iniquity already worked in Paul’s day; and the professed church of Christ, it would seem, was now so far corrupted by it as to require this change in the color of the symbol. Errors began to arise. Worldliness came in. The ecclesiastical power sought the alliance of the secular. Troubles and commotions were the result.

“... Of this period, Dr. Rice remarks: ‘It represents a secular period, or union of church and state. Constantine aided the clergy, and put them under obligations to him. He legislated for the church, called the Council of Nicea, and was most prominent in that Council. Constantine, not the gospel had the glory of tearing down the heathen temples. The State had the glory instead of the church. Constantine made decrees against some errors, and was praised, and suffered to go on and introduce many other errors, and oppose some important truths. Controversies arose; and when a new emperor took the throne, there was a rush of the clergy to get him on the side of their peculiar tenets. Mosheim says of this period, ‘There was continual war and trouble.’” (*Thoughts On Daniel and The Revelation* – Uriah Smith, p. 404)

It is well to note, the “**horse**” now is **red** in color, instead of white; the “**rider**” now has a “**sword**,” instead of a “**bow**”; and that he wears **no “crown.**” This all, is

<sup>1</sup> White Horse, symbolism for “pure doctrines.” (R774:6)

very significant. If the “white horse” represented pure doctrines, then the “red horse” must represent – shall we say – false doctrines! And the “rider” being equipped with a “sword” suggests that he is a fighter at very close range! His being without a “crown” seems to say that he is deemed unworthy of kingship in the glory of God’s Kingdom.

It appears that this “rider” “**on the red horse**” was intended to represent **the nominally Christian church and its doctrines**. Among these false doctrines is that concerning the Kingdom itself: it has taught that the Kingdom of God is already established in the earth. Then there is the doctrine concerning Jesus: it teaches that he is “God of very God” (the trinity), which is, of course, contrary to the words of Jesus, when he calls himself “the beginning of the creation of God.” (Rev. 3:14) Then too, the nominal Church created a clergy class (popes, bishops, etc.,) as separate and apart from the laity. This also being contrary to the Word of God which says, “... be not ye called Rabbi: **for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.**” (Matt. 23:8)

The “**sword**” here, does not represent the Truth, but rather a weapon for offensive warfare, with which **the “rider” would be able to “take peace from the earth,”** and to bring about the **killing of one another**. This he did by way of persecutions – the inquisition, the rack, burning at the stake, etc.

Perhaps the reason why it was the “living one” “like a calf” – representing divine Justice, that invited John to “Come and see,” is that Justice is vindicated in the fact that this “rider” was not adorned with a “crown.” The nominal Church, though it bears the name of Christ, and carries on a warfare to conquer (convert) the world for Christ, is not deemed worthy by God of joint-heirship with Jesus in the Kingdom, because of its failure to become identified with him in his sufferings for righteousness’ sake.

“The agents symbolized by this horseman are false teachers who usurp the power of Christ. It is what the Saviour called, Nicolaitanism,<sup>1</sup> which early began to be established in the Church. It refers to the creation of the office of diocesan bishops, which came about in this way: It was the custom of the Lord’s consecrated in each city to meet together for convenience in different assemblies. Necessarily, there would be a bishop or elder (which in the Scriptures are synonymous titles) of each of these assemblies. All were elected by the assemblies, and served as elders or bishops of the congregations that elected them. Before the second century closed, disagreement and strife arose concerning the settlement of disputes, either of doctrine or church government. Councils were held, at which certain

persons were appointed who were given jurisdiction over a certain number of churches, to whom everything of this kind was referred. These decisions were final. These persons to whom were given the name diocesan bishops after a little time used their offices as a means of carrying out their own selfish purposes, claiming, of course, that these were of God. It was the beginning of what in the early part of the sixth century (539 A.D.) culminated in the usurpation of power by the Bishop of Rome as head of all the churches over the world ... and by the powers assumed and exercised by these so-called bishops, discord, strife, and divisions (instead of peace, concord, and unity) were introduced into the Church.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 1, p. 310)

**6:5, 6** – “And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. 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.”

The “rider” of the black horse, we believe, was the same as that of the **red horse**; but instead of having a “sword,” he now had “**a pair of balances**” with which to weigh or measure out his commodity – **wheat and barley**.

The difference in the color of the horse – black instead of red – signifies that a further deterioration of the doctrines of the nominal church system had taken place. Black being the antithesis of white, suggests that its doctrines were now completely devoid of light and purity! The Roman Catholic church had gained for herself the position of chief arbiter of all things, in both church and state. “I sit a queen.” (Rev. 18:7) As the antitypical “Jezebel” she had already mixed her “leaven” with the three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. (Matt. 13:33)

However, divine Love – the “**living one**,” with “**a face as a man**” had permitted this, i.e., overruled it, affording thereby to the true saints of the period, the blessed opportunity of becoming “overcomers”; and lest they be overtaken, this “rider” was restrained: **he could not hurt “the oil and the wine.”** The holy Spirit of God’s indwelling (oil), and the pure doctrines of the Lord (wine) – at least insofar as these true saints were concerned – were not suffered to be contaminated. Seemingly, this implies that the Truth itself (the wheat and barley) might suffer at the hands of the nominal church (Matt. 13:33), but the spirit of holiness, and the basic doctrines – the joys of salvation, etc., by the grace of God, would not.

<sup>1</sup> See Rev. 2:6 – Ephesus; Rev. 2:15 – Pergamos; 2 Thes. 2:7

**Wheat** was used as food by most of the people; whereas **barley** was used for the cattle and by the extremely poor. **Wheat and barley**, as foods, therefore, are apt symbols of the Truth. The “**penny**” – the Roman denarius – was a work-a-day wage for the common laborer. Thus we have the thought that the Truth during the period covered, would be dearly bought; and then would not necessarily be pure and wholesome.

The “balances”:

“Balance joined with symbols denoting the sale of corn and fruits by weight, become the symbol of scarcity; bread by weight being a curse in Lev. 26:26, and in Ezek. 4:16, 17. So in Rev. 6:5, ‘He that sat upon him had a pair of balances in his hand.’ Here the balance is used to weigh corn and the necessities of life, in order to signify great want and scarcity.” (*McClintock & Strong’s Encycl.* – Article: “Balances,” Vol. 1, p. 624)

Thus the “scales” bespeak a curse upon nominal spiritual Israel – want and scarcity of spiritual food – the Word of God: and, of course, the innocent – the true saints, were called upon to suffer because of it too. These latter, however, were comforted and sustained in their “oil and wine” which remain – wholesome and pure.

### The Three Measures of Meal and the Leaven

“... the grace of God given to his people in the beginning of this age, (1) **the faith** once delivered to the saints, (2) **the hope** set before us in the Gospel, (3) **love**, the bond of perfectness, summed up the three measures of the Lord’s provision for his people, in partaking of which they were to become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. But gradually a woman arose, a false woman, represented in Revelation as a harlot, and as ‘that woman Jezebel.’ This Roman Catholic system obtained great power over the three measures of meal provided for God’s household, and proceeded to mix therewith the leaven of her own impurity. The result was that **all the family food, all holy doctrines were contaminated** with her false doctrines – nothing was left pure and clean, as handed to us originally by the apostles. The faith once delivered to the saints was distorted out of all semblance to its original simplicity; the hope set before us in the gospel was changed to another hope entirely, unlike the original; the spirit of the Lord, love, was perverted to a selfish love of creeds of men and human institutions. Alas! no wonder all Christendom is spiritually sick, because of this adulteration in its food supply.” (R2635:4)

### Devitalization of Spiritual “Food”

“... so-called teachers and bishops who professing to be placed over the flock to feed it, robbed the flock of spirituality and that which supported spiritual life. Discontinuing to preach Christ and the Word, they substituted forms and ceremonies instead. There

were introduced at this time into the Church, formal fastings, celibacy, and asceticism as a so-called means of sanctification. The development of these conditions was gradual throughout the third century, and has continued ever since in the Romish Church and in some others.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 1, p. 312)

**6:7, 8** – “And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast, say, Come and see. 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 the sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.”

The last of the “living ones” divine Wisdom, would display itself in the foreknowledge of all the events which would transpire incidental to the trial and testing of those who were “foreknown” and “predestinated” to be conformed to the image of God’s dear Son (Rom. 8:29); and thus he says unto John, “Come and see.” And John beheld a pale horse and his rider, etc.

This fourth “rider” sat on a pale horse. “The ghastly green of terror and of death.” The word is used of grass in Rev. 8:7; 9:4; Mark 6:39. (*Revelation* – Cook) J. B. Phillips in his *The New Testament in Modern English*, has rendered the text as follows: “Again I looked, and there appeared a horse sickly green in color.”

This “**horse**” as those two, the red and the black, which preceded it, represents doctrines: the **grim and macabre doctrines** of the nominal Church of this period. As for the “rider” – we are this time given his name, “Death”; and also that of his fellow-traveler, “Hell” (Ἅδης). We are not specifically told as to whether or not this fellow-traveler rode on another horse; nor does it seem amiss to assume that they both rode one and the same horse! The chief “rider” was the same as had sat upon the red and the black horses that preceded, viz., the nominally Christian Church – more specifically, “The Antichrist” – the Roman Catholicism – the Papacy.

The fact that the “riders” bore the names of Death and Hell, seems to have been intended to indicate how **power** would be used “**over the fourth part of the earth** [probably a symbolism for the continent of Europe], **to kill with the sword, and with hunger, and with death.**”

“What Antichrist was pleased to call heresy (**much of which was truth and righteousness endeavoring to hold a footing**) was classed as worse than infidelity by kings, emperors and theologians; and both were persecuted, especially the former, by the Inquisition.” (B332)

### Death and Hell – The Antichrist – his Power

“It is estimated, by those who seemingly have given the subject thorough investigation, that **Papacy**,

during the past thirteen hundred years, has, directly or indirectly, **caused the death of fifty millions of people**. And it may safely be said that human and Satanic ingenuity were taxed to their utmost to invent new and horrible tortures, for both the political and religious opponents of Antichrist; the latter – heretics – being pursued with tenfold fury. Besides the common forms of persecution and death, such as racking, burning, drowning, stabbing, starving and shooting with arrows and guns, fiendish hearts meditated how the most delicate and sensitive parts of the body, capable of the most excruciating pain, could be affected; molten lead was poured into the ears; tongues were cut out and lead poured into the mouths; wheels were arranged with knife blades attached so that the victim could be slowly chopped to pieces; claws and pincers were made red hot and used upon sensitive parts of the body; eyes were gouged out; finger nails were pulled off with red hot irons; holes, by which the victim was tied up, were bored through the heels; some were forced to jump from eminences onto long spikes fixed below, where, quivering with pain, they slowly died. The mouths of some were filled with gunpowder, which, when fired, blew their heads to pieces; others were hammered to pieces on anvils; others attached to bellows, had air pumped into them until they burst; others were choked to death with mangled pieces of their own bodies; others with urine, excrement, etc., etc.

“Some of these fiendish atrocities would be quite beyond belief were they not well authenticated. They serve to show to what awful depravity the human heart can descend; and how blind to right, and every good instinct, men can become under the influence of false, counterfeit religion. The spirit of Antichrist degraded and debased the world as the spirit of the true Christ and the power and influence of the true kingdom of God would have elevated and ennobled men’s hearts and actions; and as they will do during the Millennium. This is to a slight extent illustrated by the advance of civilization, and the increase of justice and mercy, since the power of Antichrist began to wane, and the word of God began to be heard, and heeded, even slightly.” (B346)

Luke 9:56 – “For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.”

“... **and with** [by the domination of] **the beasts** [earthly governments] **of the earth.**”

“... as early as the year A.D. 630, the Council of Toledo compelled the king of Spain, on his ascension to the throne, to swear to tolerate no heretical subjects in the Spanish dominions; and it was declared that the sovereign who should violate such oath would ‘be accursed in the sight of the everlast-

ing God, and become the fuel of eternal fire.’ But the awful import of such demands was much more fully realized when the awakening began, and when Antichrist had obtained the maximum of his power.

“The Council of Oxford in 1160 consigned a company of Waldenses, who had emigrated from Gascony to England, to the secular arm for punishment. Accordingly, King Henry II ordered them, men and women, to be publicly whipped, branded on the cheek with a red-hot iron, and driven, half naked, out of the city in the dead of winter; and none were permitted to show them pity or to grant them the slightest favor.

“Frederick, the emperor of Germany, A.D. 1224, sentenced heretics of every description, alive, to the flames, their property to confiscation, and their posterity, unless they became persecutors, to infamy. Louis, king of France, A.D. 1228, published laws for the extirpation of heresy, and enforced their execution. He forced Raymond, Count of Toulouse, to undertake the extermination of heresy from his dominions without sparing friend or vassal.” (B333)

**6:9-11** – “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 fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.”

On the opening of the fifth seal, John beheld **an altar**, probably not in heaven, but on earth, for as **he looked beneath it**, it was as though he were peering into the tombs of **those who had been slain** (actually or figuratively) **for their witness and testimony for the truth and the Word of God**. These –

“... the martyrs of the past, the ‘souls **under the altar**,’ are represented symbolically as crying out for the vindication of justice, saying, ‘**How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood upon them that dwell on the earth!**’ They were bidden to wait until others of their brethren should be similarly killed, when the guilt of all will be avenged. (Rev. 6:9-11)” (R5462:6)

#### **The Saints and the Cry for Vengeance**

“In one sense of the word the fears and sufferings of the Lord’s people and their trials and difficulties ascend to the Lord in prayer and call to divine justice for vengeance, recompense, punishments, without any word from his people to this effect. Rather their petition should be in line with Stephen’s prayer ... ‘Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.’ Nevertheless, as Abel’s blood is said to have

cried to the Lord for vengeance, so the blood of his saints is said to cry unto him day and night, 'How long, O Lord, dost thou not judge and avenge?' (Rev. 6:10)" (R4347:2)

"The cry is, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?' The message for all these martyrs of Jesus was, Wait a little season, the vengeance will come, but not until all of this class shall have experienced their share of 'the sufferings of Christ.'

"To these martyrs the sufferings brought polishings of character, testings of faith, Divine approval and an increased glory on the spirit plane as members of the Bride of Christ – the blessings to be given them in the First Resurrection – the chief Resurrection, referred to by the Lord in Rev. 20:6." (OV346)

John says that "**white robes**" were given unto every one of them. This is indicative of the fact that though they were still dead, and awaiting their resurrection, in God's sight, they had already been "found worthy!" No longer was theirs to be an imputed righteousness – the righteousness of Jesus – but their own righteousness: the "white raiment" in which the Bride is to be arrayed. (Rev. 19:8)

"... it is not sufficient that we have the imputation of our Savior's righteousness. This imputation is only a temporary arrangement. **We need to come to the place where we shall have a righteousness of our own.** Our flesh is imperfect; as St. Paul says, we cannot do the things which we would. In spite of our best endeavors things are bound to go more or less wrong. But we are to prove ourselves overcomers 'more than conquerors.' The Lord has arranged that at the conclusion of our trial, at the end of the present life, all the overcomers shall receive the new body. This new body will be a body of actual purity. Thus, the Apostle says, we shall 'be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.' So our raiment will be changed from a garment of imputed perfection, our justification by faith, to that which represents actual perfection. At the resurrection we shall receive that body of inherent purity, without blemish, without spot, which is here pictured as 'white raiment'." (RS669:3)

However, those referred to in this text were to wait until the time of the first resurrection; and maybe the "**little season**" (Rev. 6:11) extends beyond A.D. 1878, to include the very consummation of the Gospel age, and the completion of the Church!

**6:12, 13** – "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."

Though the Book of Revelation is one of symbolisms, wherein the thing mentioned isn't really the thing that is meant; there are times when the events recorded seem to have had a literal as well as a figurative (spiritual) fulfillment. Thus the terrestrial and the celestial phenomena identified with the opening of the sixth seal, depicting, as it were, the shaking of the things that are, find a literal counterpart in:

**The Great Earthquake** of Lisbon, Portugal, on November 1, 1755, which according to the historian: "... extended over a tract of at least 4,000,000 square miles. Its effects were even extended to the waters in many places, where the shocks were not perceptible. It pervaded the greater portion of Europe, Africa, and America; but its extreme violence was exercised on the southwestern part of the former. In Africa, this earthquake was felt almost as severely as it had been in Europe. A great part of Algiers was destroyed. Many houses were thrown down at Fez and Mequinez, and multitudes were buried beneath the ruins. Similar effects were realized in Morocco. Its effects were likewise felt at Tangier, at Tetuan, at Funchal in the Island of Madeira. It is probable that all Africa was shaken. At the north, it extended to Norway and Sweden. Germany, Holland, France, Great Britain, and Ireland were all more or less agitated by the same great commotion of the elements. Lisbon (Portugal), previous to the earthquake in 1755, contained 150,000 inhabitants. Mr. Barretti says that 90,000 persons 'were lost on that fatal day'." (*Wonders of the World* – Sears, p. 50, 58, 381)

**The 'Dark Day'** of May 19, 1780: "... (still 'in those days,' the 1260 years of Papal power, but after that power had begun to wane and the brunt of the tribulation had passed) a phenomenal darkening of the sun occurred, for which scientists of that time and since have never been able to account." (DS85)

"Almost, if not altogether alone, as the most mysterious and as yet unexplained phenomena of its kind in nature's diversified range of events during the last century, stands the dark day of May 19, 1780; a most unaccountable darkening of the whole visible heavens and atmosphere in New England, which brought intense alarm and distress to multitudes of minds, as well as dismay to the brute creation – the fowls fleeing, bewildered, to their roosts, and the cattle to their stalls. Indeed, thousands of the good people of that day became fully convinced that the end of all things terrestrial had come, many gave up, for the time, their secular pursuits, and betook themselves to religious devotions. It was a wonderful dark day." (*Our First Century* – Devens; See also DS86)

**The Darkening of the Moon** – May 20, 1780: "The darkening of the moon at its full the night following



(after the dark day of May 19, 1780) seems to have been little less remarkable than this darkening of the sun; a witness, Judge Tenney, of Exeter, N.H., is quoted as follows:

“The darkness of the following evening was probably as gross as has ever been observed since the Almighty first gave birth to light. I could not help conceiving at the time, that if every luminous body in the universe had been shrouded in impenetrable darkness, or struck out of existence, the darkness could not have been more complete. A sheet of white paper held within a few inches of the eye was equally invisible with the blackest velvet’.” (D587)

**The Falling of the Stars**, November 13, 1833: “The year 1833 is memorable for the most magnificent display on record. This was on the night of November 13, and was visible over all the United States and over a part of Mexico and the West India Islands. Together with the smaller shooting stars which fell like snowflakes and produced phosphorescent lines along their course, there were intermingled large fireballs, which darted forth at intervals, describing in a few seconds an arc of 30° or 40°. These left behind luminous trains, which remained in view several minutes, and sometimes half an hour or more. One of them, seen in North Carolina, appeared of larger size and greater brilliancy than the moon. Some of the luminous bodies were of irregular form, and remained stationary for a considerable time, emitting streams of light. At Niagara the exhibition was especially brilliant, and probably no spectacle so terribly grand and sublime was ever before beheld by man as that of the firmament descending in fiery torrents over the dark and roaring cataract. It was observed that the lines of all the meteors, if traced back, converged in one quarter of the heavens, which was Leonis Majoris; and this point accompanied the stars in their apparent motion westward, instead of moving with the earth toward the east. The source whence the meteors came was thus shown to be independent of the earth’s relation, and exterior to our atmosphere.” (*The American Cyclopaedia* Vol. XI, p. 431; See also D589)

“The phenomenon was to a limited extent repeated in 1866, but the event of 1833 seems to have accomplished the purpose of the sign, and indeed, in connection with the preceding sign, it evidently had considerable to do with the first arousing of the Virgins to meet the Bridegroom, prophesied in Matt. 25:1-5.” (D590)

“While these literal signs served their designated purpose in drawing general attention to the time of the end, we believe that the symbolic fulfillments are no less striking and even more interesting to those whose mental and spiritual percepts are awakened so as to enable them to appreciate them.” (D590)

In symbolic vision, John was now nearing the “time of the end.” (Dan. 12:4) The 1260 “days” of the true Church’s wilderness experiences were about drawing to a close; thus it was that when the Lamb opened the sixth seal, John saw a “**great earthquake**”; which “earthquake” had much to do with the ending of the “wilderness” period. (Rev. 12:6) It was in A.D. 539 that the “Abomination of Desolation” was fully set up, and those 1260 “days” began, which were to end in A.D. 1799, with the breaking of Papacy’s power over the nations. On February 19, 1798, Napoleon’s general Berthier, having entered Rome, organized there a Republic; and five days later **carried the pope prisoner to France, where he died the following year.** “From that time to the present, Papal dominion over the kingdoms of earth has been merely a shadow of its former self.” (C42)

**The French Revolution** had started about ten years earlier, and was undoubtedly the “**earthquake**” which John beheld in vision.

“In the symbolic language of Revelation, the French Revolution was indeed a ‘great earthquake’ – a social shock so great that all ‘Christendom’ trembled until it was over; and that terrible and sudden outburst of a single nation’s wrath, only a century ago, may give some idea of the fury of the coming storm, when the wrath of all the angry nations will burst the bands of law and order and cause a reign of universal anarchy. It should be remembered that the calamity occurred in what was then the very heart of Christendom, in the midst of what was regarded as one of the most thoroughly Christian nations in the world, the nations which for a thousand years had been the chief support of Papacy. A nation, intoxicated with Babylon’s wine of false doctrines in church and state, and long bound by priestcraft and superstition, there vomited forth its pollution and spent force of its maddened rage. In fact, the French Revolution seems referred to by our Lord in his Revelation to John on Patmos as a prelude to, and an illustration of, the great crisis now approaching.” (D531)

### **The French Revolution**

“Taken as a whole the French Revolution was a convulsion in which the angry passions of men, set free from all restraint, manifested themselves with a force and fury unprecedented in the history of the world, against monarchical, aristocratic, ecclesiastical, and religious institutions. Let these things be considered in the light of a mighty and successful revolt against, and overthrow of absolute monarchical power, and Papal tyranny and usurpation, and it will at once be granted that nothing similar had ever occurred previously, in the history of the fourth great empire. Terribly iniquitous had been the career of the monarchical power thus rudely overthrown; and fearfully corrupt the priesthood and religion thus



utterly and with abhorrence rejected. A solemn character of retribution attaches to even the worst excesses of the French Revolution. The Papacy in the hour of its agony was exultingly reminded of its own similar cruelties against Protestants. Papists were treated according to the example set by Papists of other days, and the worst barbarities of revolutionary France could not out-Herod the previous barbarities of Papal France.” (Guinness, as quoted in the *Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 1, p. 329)

### The “Sun” and the “Moon”

“As the moon symbolized ‘THE LAW,’ so the sun symbolizes the GOSPEL LIGHT. The former was but a shadow or reflection of the latter, and the relationship of the two to the Church (the woman) is beautifully symbolized in Rev. 12:1.” (R499:4)

Next, John beheld, the **sun and the moon becoming dark**; and **the stars of heaven falling to the earth**. It is possible that John here recalled something he had heard Jesus say more than sixty years before, in response to a question put by his disciples with regard to his second Advent. He then foretold the great tribulations which would overtake his followers during the Gospel dispensation (Matt. 24:9); and that immediately after **those days** (the 1260 years of Papal persecution) the sun would be darkened; the moon would not give her light; and the stars of heaven would fall to the earth. (Matt. 24:29) Jesus added, that then there would appear “the sign of the Son of man in heaven.” (Matt. 24:30) Jesus at that time, seems not to have mentioned the “great earthquake,” probably because it belonged more particularly to the period immediately preceding the “time of the end.”

“The **sun** as a symbol represents the Gospel light, the truth – and thus Christ Jesus. The **moon** as a symbol represents the light of the Mosaic Law. As the moon is a reflection of the light of the sun, so the Law was the shadow or reflection beforehand of the Gospel. The stars as symbols represent the inspired teachers of the church – the apostles. The heavens ... represent Christendom ...

“Wherever we look we can recognize the fact that while God’s consecrated people are being specially fed and enlightened at the present time, yet with the nominal church it is not so. Its sun is being darkened; its moon is being turned into blood: and the stars are falling. The center of the Gospel light has from the first been the cross of Christ, the ransom; and however boldly Papacy set up the competitive sacrifice of the Mass, the saints of God have always held fast to this blessed center of all God’s promises and of all his people’s hopes. They have held to it, even though its philosophy has been almost entirely hidden from their view.

“Thus the sunlight of the gospel is daily becoming more and more obscure; and although this denial of

the value of the precious blood as our redemption price has not so generally extended from the pulpit to the pew, yet, false doctrines long held sacred, together with reverence for leaders and learning, have made the way so easy that a large majority of all who get sufficiently awake to consider the subject fall an easy prey to this doctrine of Evolution, which denies the Scriptural doctrine of a primal fall and of a ransom from it. The Scriptures variously forewarn us of this great falling away, as well as of this darkening of the faith of the Church at this time; so that the Son of Man when he cometh will find the faith very scarce on the earth. (Luke 18:8) A Psalm describing this period declares: – ‘A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee’ (the faithful saints, members of the body of Christ, whose elect members will now shortly be completed). (Psa. 91:7)

“As the sunlight of the ransom becomes obscured, so the moonlight of the Mosaic Law, which in its sacrifices foreshadowed the ransom, must of necessity become obscured also. It is no longer uncommon for public teachers to refer to the bloody sacrifices of Israel, required by their Law, as barbaric. Once, when they saw by the true light of the Word of God, they appreciated the Apostle’s statement that Israel’s sacrifices were foreshadowings of ‘better sacrifices’ for sin; but now, refusing the antitype, the ransom, and denying original sin, and all need therefore of sacrifices for it – the typical sacrifices are repudiated also and esteemed barbaric. **Thus the darkening of the gospel sunlight results in the darkening of the moonlight.** ‘The moon shall be turned into blood.’ And Joel, (Joel 2:10), adds that ‘the stars shall withdraw their shining,’ which signifies that when the gospel light is obscured, and the Law comes to be regarded merely as a meaningless and barbaric ceremony of blood, then the teachings of the God-ordained twelve stars of the Church (the apostles) will also fade from view, – cease to be recognized guides or lights.

“The word star (Greek *aster*) is not used respecting any of the faithful (outside the apostles) in referring to them in this present life; but it is used with reference to those who depart from the truth, and become ‘heady,’ false teachers, ‘vainly puffed up,’ aspiring to be considered authorities in the same sense as the apostles, and who are styled ‘wandering stars,’ ‘false apostles.’ (2 Cor. 11:13; Rev. 2:2; Jude 13)

“In our Lord’s prophecy these true stars (the apostles) are reckoned in as part of the gospel sunlight, darkened, withdrawn from shining; while **the false stars**, the worldly-wise, man-ordained lights of the present heavens are represented as making a great display **in coming down to earthly conditions**; – abandoning their once somewhat

spiritual eminence, and **in their teachings coming down to the level of earthly moralists and philosophers** – to the Christian-citizenship-politics level.

“The shaking of the symbolic heavens mentioned in the same connection has somewhat to do with these lights of Christendom coming to a lower plane of public teaching. The shaking would signify just what we see on every hand – a shaking up of the creeds and dogmas of Christendom, which, because of their admixture of errors, produce confusion whenever referred to – as, for instance the doctrine of elect and non-elect infants; the doctrine of eternal torment of all who are not saints, overcomers, etc.” (D590-595)

John says that this falling of the stars from heaven to the earth was **“as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken by a mighty wind.”** What a metaphor is this! Surely, the adverse winds of the higher criticism, evolutionary sciences, secularism, agnosticism, infidelity, etc., have been blowing for some time; and one does not have to have very keen vision to note the devastation they have wrought throughout Christendom. “Untimely [unripe] figs” are scattered hither and thither!

**6:14** – “And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together: and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.”

“... the ‘sure word of prophecy’ indicates very clearly that the various Protestant sects will form a cooperative union or federacy, and that Catholicism and Protestantism will affiliate, neither losing its identity. These are the two ends of the ecclesiastical **heavens** which, as their confusion increases, **shall roll together as a scroll** (Isa. 34:4., Rev. 6:14) for self-protection, as distinct and separate rolls, yet in close proximity to each other.” (D258)

From the *Staten Island Advance* 1/21/74:

“Terrence Cardinal Cooke, **Roman Catholic** Archbishop of New York, blessed and dedicated a stained glass window in **St. Thomas Episcopal Church**. The window contained a portrait of the late Pope John XXIII. The service marked the city’s formal observance of the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which began last Thursday.”

#### “Rolling together ... like a scroll”

Isa. 34:4 – “And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be **rolled together as a scroll**: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree.”

#### The “Rolling Together ... Scroll”

“It will be of little consequence ... that the ecclesiastical heavens (the religious powers, Papal and Protestant) will have rolled together as a scroll. (Isa. 34:4; Rev. 6:14) The combined religious power of Christendom will be utterly futile against the rising

tide of anarchy when the dread crisis is reached. Before that great army ‘all the host of heaven [the church nominal] shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll [The two great bodies which constitute the ecclesiastical heavens; viz., Papacy and Protestantism, as the two distinct ends of the scroll are even now rapidly approaching each other, rolling together, as we have shown]: and all their host shall fall down [fall off, drop out; not all at once, but gradually, yet rapidly] as the leaf falleth from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree’ (Isa. 34:4); and finally these ‘heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements [of which they are composed] shall melt with fervent heat.’ (2 Pet. 3:12)” (D551)

#### The Battle Unprecedented!

“According to the predictions of the prophets the conditions of this battle will be without historic precedent. As already suggested, this final struggle is graphically portrayed in symbols in the forty-sixth Psalm. (Compare also Psa. 97:2-6; Isa. 24:19-21; 2 Pet. 3:10) The hills (the less high, less autocratic governments) are already melting like wax; they still retain their form, but as the earth (society) gets hot they will yield to its requirements, little by little coming down to the level of popular demand. Great Britain is a good illustration of this class. High mountains (representing autocratic governments) will be ‘shaken’ by revolutions, and ultimately ‘carried into the midst of the sea’ – lost utterly in anarchy. Already ‘the sea and the waves roar’ against bulwarks of the present social system: ere long the earth (the present social structure) will reel and totter as a drunken man, vainly endeavoring to right itself, maintain a footing and reestablish itself: by and by it will be utterly ‘removed,’ to give place to the ‘new earth’ (the new social order) wherein righteousness, justice, will prevail.” (D551)

Every **mountain and island were moved out of their places!** Undoubtedly this bespeaks the great “time of trouble” (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21) which is to bring the present order of things to an end! The “mountains” seem to represent autocratic governments which will be “shaken” by revolutions and ultimately “carried into the midst of the sea” – lost utterly in anarchy. (Psa. 46:2; See D551) And the “islands” seem to represent the less autocratic republics, also to be removed; for John later in his Revelation says, “every island had fled away.” (Rev. 16:20) (RS11:3, 4)

**6:15-17** – “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?”

“Rev. 6:15 figuratively describes that time of falling of kingdoms when every mountain (kingdom) and island shall be moved. The kings and chief ones as well as bondsmen will recognize in this trouble that ‘The great day of his wrath is come,’ and will seek to make alliances and to hide themselves from the surely destructive storm. They will seek to be covered and protected by the great mountains (kingdoms) of earth, and to be hid in the great rocks of this world (secret societies). But they shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord’s anger, for all the kingdoms of the world shall be thrown down, and instead of these mountains (kingdoms) ‘the kingdom of the Lord becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth.’ (Dan. 2:35, 45)” (R409:6)

### The “Rocks”

“As the trouble increases, men will seek, but in vain, for protection in the ‘dens’ and caves, the great rocks and fortresses of society (Free Masonry, Odd Fellowship, and Trades Unions, Guilds, Trusts, and all societies secular and ecclesiastical), and in the mountains (governments) of earth; saying ‘Fall over (cover, protect) 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.’ (Rev. 6:15-17)” (B139)

**7:1-3** — “And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”

“... these symbolic winds represent strife, anarchy, the great time of trouble which is held in check by divine power until the completion of the harvest work – the sealing of the living members of the elect class with present truth. We long ago pointed out that these four winds, let loose, coming together, will constitute a whirlwind, which is the symbolical figure used in the Bible to represent the great time of trouble approaching ...

“The additional thought is that these winds or powers of the air, held in restraint, represent the fallen angels, whose prince is Satan, ‘the prince of the power of the air.’ Our thought is that the evil angels would long ago have done injury to the symbolical earth, sea and trees, had it not been for the restraint of divine power. Symbolically, the earth represents organized society; the sea represents the disorganized masses, and the trees represent the household of faith. The letting loose suddenly of the fallen angels will account well for the suddenness of the

coming trouble, which everywhere in the Scriptures is one of its particular features ‘in one hour’; ‘suddenly as travail upon a woman’; ‘as it was in the days of Noah,’ and ‘as it was in the days of Lot.’” (R4822:6)

### Loosing The Four Winds

“God is now letting loose the winds of strife. He is letting the nations take their own course, in order to prove to themselves and others that they are not what they claim to be, and to humble them into the dust. Thus they will be brought to realize their own helplessness and their dire need of God. (Rev. 7:1-3)

“As we look back over the past thousand years, we can see that God has been holding the peoples of the earth more or less under restraint, permitting them to go only so far at any time. Otherwise they would have destroyed themselves long ago. The hearts of fallen humanity are so selfish that, had mankind been permitted to go their full length, the race would have been annihilated long before now. But God’s due time has come to let loose the winds of strife, with the result that the long-expected storm has burst in fury upon the world. The trouble is spreading from nation to nation; and it looks as if ultimately every nation will become involved – surely every one which formed part of the old Roman Empire. (Dan. 2:44) Whether the strife will extend beyond the boundaries of the Roman rule we do not know – nor whether it will involve America.

“There is much of Christian profession here, an outward form of godliness devoid of its power. Consequently it seems hardly possible that America will fail to escape full share in the judgment of the nations.” (OV433)

“This symbolical passage speaks of the four angels which stand at the four corners of the earth and hold the four winds that they should not blow upon the earth or upon the sea ‘until we shall have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.’ To our understanding we are in that very time when the servants of God are being sealed in their foreheads. The forehead represents the intellect; and to be ‘sealed in the forehead’ is to be intellectually marked.

“The intimation is that at this time, in the conclusion of this Gospel age, God will grant some intellectual mark upon his servants that no others will have; that there will be a great work of sealing; and those in perfect harmony with God are to be his servants in the work of sealing. The seal is the truth. ‘Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.’ (John 8:32) The truth will mark in their foreheads those who receive it, branding them in a way that others of mankind are not marked or branded.” (R4880:5)

### Anent This “Sealing”

“While the glorified members of the Kingdom beyond the veil are doing a work in shaping the current of present events and preparing for the glorious reign, **those on this side the veil have also an important work. It is their mission to gather together the elect and to seal them in the forehead (intellectually) with the knowledge of the truth** (Rev. 7:3); to separate the wheat from the tares with the sickle of present truth; and to proclaim unto Zion this important message – ‘Thy God reigneth!’ This work too, is going rapidly forward, **and all the faithful, sealed ones are in turn busily engaged in sealing others**; and soon the great work will be accomplished – the elect all gathered and glorified.” (C303)

### The “Sealing”

#### Who are the “Angels” or “Messengers?”

“... the sealing progresses. Daily and hourly the saints of God are being searched out and sealed ‘in their foreheads’ (intellectually) with a clear appreciation of the ‘mystery of God’ which has been kept secret in part hitherto, but is now made manifest unto the saints, according to the will of God – the mystery of God being about finished. (Rev. 10:7; Rom. 16:25, 26) **The ‘angels’ or messengers** doing this sealing (Rev. 7:1) are the same messengers referred to by our Lord when he declared that in the harvest or end of this age he would send forth his messengers with the sound of a great trumpet (the seventh trumpet), to gather together his elect from one end of heaven to the other. Every consecrated child of God who receives the truth realizes at once his duty and privilege of imparting it to others. He hears the commission, ‘Go ye into the vineyard’; and ‘He that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto eternal life.’ These are the Lord’s ‘angels’ – messengers or servants. The sealing and the gathering we understand to refer to the same thing. And the heavens through which these messengers go sealing and gathering is not the heaven of God’s throne, but the symbolic heavens so often referred to in the book of Revelation, namely, the nominal church.” (R1279:2)

#### “Sealing” – (of the Holy Spirit)

#### All Down through the Gospel Age!

“The sealing of the elect has been in progress for nearly nineteen centuries. Altogether, gathered from Jews and Gentiles, there will be 144,000 kings and priests unto God, followers of the Lamb, and his joint-heirs in the kingdom.” (R5232:1)

#### Sealing in Heart and Forehead

“The Scriptures refer to the sealing of the holy Spirit as necessarily essential to membership in the Lord’s family at all. Whoever does not receive the seal, the

impress of the holy Spirit, will not be a copy of God’s dear Son in heart, in character, and cannot be associated with him in the kingdom. The sealing is a gradual one, the impression becoming more permanent daily. **We are not to understand sealing in the forehead to be identical with this sealing in the heart, although the two are closely related.** Many of the Lord’s dear people throughout the past have had the seal of the Lord upon their hearts and characters but not upon their foreheads – they did not have that intellectual knowledge of God and his glorious plan which he has provided for all of his faithful of the present time, and which now becomes a test, a proof, an evidence to us that we are in the Lord’s favor and that he is showing us his deep things.” (R3991:6)

### A Special Note on The Sealing in the Forehead

From R5231:5 it will have been noted that Bro. Russell applied this “sealing in the forehead” to **all** of the 144,000 – not merely to those who would be living in the end of the Gospel Age. He said:

“... we are given the picture of 144,000 sealed in the forehead. These are the same that are elsewhere represented as standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion.”

However, in R3991:6 he applied it to merely those living in the end of the Gospel age. Thus:

“... We are not to understand sealing in the forehead to be identical with this sealing in the heart, although the two are closely related. Many of the Lord’s people throughout the past have had the seal of the Lord upon their hearts and characters, but not upon their foreheads.”

This is not necessarily a contradiction, but rather the identical matter viewed from two different standpoints. (Similar to the matter of Nadab and Abihu, as suggested in the T40 footnote)

The 144,000, who will make their “calling and election sure,” will all, in one sense of the word, have been sealed with a knowledge of the deeper elements of the Truth – as may have been “present truth” at any time during the Gospel age. On the other hand, as suggested in the earlier Article (1907), only such of the 144,000, as lived in the end of the Age will have had –

“... that intellectual knowledge of God and his glorious plan – which he has provided for all the faithful **of the present time**, and which now becomes a test, a proof, an evidence to us that we are in the Lord’s favor and that he is showing us his deep things.” (R3991:6)

**7:4-8** – “And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand.  
 Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand.  
 Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.  
 Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand.  
 Of the tribe of Nephtalim were sealed twelve thousand.  
 Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.  
 Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand.  
 Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand.  
 Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.  
 Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand.  
 Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand.  
 Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.”

“... we are given the picture of 144,000, sealed in their foreheads. These are the same that are elsewhere represented as standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion, and singing the song which none but themselves could learn to sing. (Rev. 14:1-3) Again, these are represented as being with the Lamb, standing upon the sea of glass. (Rev. 15:2, 3) Thus in various ways this group seems to represent the very elect, the saintly few, the little flock, to whom it will be the Father’s good pleasure to give the Millennial Kingdom, as joint-heirs with their Lord and Redeemer.

“In Rev. 7:4, we read that these are from the twelve tribes of Israel – 12,000 from each tribe. This is understood by Bible students to signify that God originally arranged for the full number of the elect to be taken from natural Israel, as though he did not know that natural Israel would reject the Lord and crucify him. The plan was laid out on the Israelitish basis, even though God knew in advance that Israel would not obtain that which he sought (the chief blessing), but that the election would obtain it, and the remainder of that nation would be temporarily blinded, until the completion of the gathering of the elect. (Rom. 11:7, 25-33)” (R5231:6)

### “The Seed” = The 12,000 of each of the Twelve Tribes!

Jehovah-God foreknew that fleshly Israel would prove itself unworthy of becoming **that** “seed” of Abraham, which was in due time to bless all the nations (families) of the earth. (Gen. 22:18)

Nevertheless, Jehovah-God loved Abraham, and promised him that **his** seed would be that blesser! But how, under these circumstances? Here, again, is Jehovah’s foreknowledge reflected, for did he not also tell Abraham, that his seed was to be as the “sands” of the sea shore, and also as the “stars” of heaven? Perhaps to Abraham this promise (Gen. 22:17) would have reference to his fleshly descendants only. How could he have known of any other? Yet Abraham was also to be the “father” of the “spiritual seed!” In fact, the natural seed, because of its lack of the faith of Abraham, was really unworthy of being called the children of Abraham, (John 8:39) at all!

It is true, Abraham’s progeny – the nation of Israel, were the first to be honored with the privilege of becoming identified with the “seed” of promise. It is this that is implied by Jehovah’s words to them at Mt. Sinai:

Exod. 19:5, 6 – “... if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a **peculiar treasure** unto me **above all people**: ... and ye shall be unto me a **kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.**”

To this, they, of course, agreed. (Exod. 19:8) However, little by little, they drifted further and further away from this ideal! And, so that there might be at least some of Abraham’s fleshly descendants ready for identification with this “seed,” God gave them the Law at Mt. Sinai; which Law, together with its covenant, was to afford them added inspiration unto worthiness. Paul put it this way:

Gal. 3:19 – “... it was added because of transgressions, **until the seed should come** to whom the promise was made.”

And so it was that when Jesus came, there were a few of Abraham’s natural seed – the disciples, etc., – who responded; but so few that the record declares:

John 1:11 – “He came to his own, and his own received him not.”

It will be recalled that originally, there were to be 144,000 – 12,000 of each of the 12 tribes of Israel as stated in Rev. 7:4-8 to make up this so-called ‘seed’ of Abraham. And since but a very few of the natural seed of Abraham proved to be worthy, the Gentiles were called upon to make up the deficiency.

“But there were not enough of the saintly ones to complete the election. Hence by divine favor the message was carried to the Gentiles ... During the intervening centuries the Gentiles who had responded to God’s call have been accepted and begotten of the holy Spirit, have been reckoned in as Israelites indeed, as spiritual members of the seed of Abraham, as heirs, together with the elect Jews, to the first resurrection, according to God’s promise made to Abraham – natural Israel being still heir to God’s secondary promises.” (R5231:6)

That natural Israel – the Jewish nation would fail to attain membership in “the seed” which was to be as the “stars” of heaven, was already indicated, when the Prophet Hosea declared unto them:

Hosea 4:6 – “My people [Israel] are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that **thou shalt be no priest to me**: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”

But it was not until Jesus himself declared unto them that their “house” was left unto them desolate

(Matt. 23:38) that they were finally cut off! Here it was that the ancient Israel was replaced by another Israel – a nation, as it were, that God raised up to provoke natural Israel to jealousy (Deut. 32:21); a nation that had not previously been called by His name. (Isa. 65:1) This is the nation addressed by Peter when he wrote:

1 Pet. 2:5, 9 – “Ye ... are ... **an holy priesthood ... a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people ...**”

And these are also those who are referred to in Rev. 5:10, as having been made “unto our God, **kings and priests**” to reign on the earth.

Thus it is clear that the 144,000 of Rev. 7:4-8 are “the seed” of Abraham, who will eventually bless all the nations (families) of the earth, and of whom the Apostle Paul says:

Gal. 3:29 – “... **If ye be Christ’s** [members of his body] **then are ye** [together with Jesus, the Head] **Abraham’s seed and heirs** according to the promise.” (Gen. 22:18)

“Although many of the Israelites were dispersed amongst the surrounding nations, it is evident from the Scriptural records that the entire nation – every tribe – was represented in Palestine after the return from Babylonian captivity. Thus, Jesus referred to his work as being for the twelve tribes of Israel, and the apostles did so also. As a matter of fact, the saintly ones of the Jews who heard the call, and who responded, and who were begotten of the holy Spirit, and who thus became spiritual Israelites and sons of God – were from all the various tribes, of some more and of some less. These constituted so many of the foreordained 144,000.

“But there were not enough of the saintly ones to complete the election. Hence by divine favor the message was carried to the Gentiles.” (R5231:6)

### **The 144,000 (12,000 of each Tribe)**

“The little flock in this symbolization of Revelation are pictured as 144,000, 12,000 out of each tribe of Israel. Natural Israel ... was a typical people. The real Israel of God is Spiritual Israel. The promises and opportunities, however, went first to Natural Israel; and as many out of all the tribes who were of right condition of heart and received the Master were granted the liberty to become members of the House of Sons. (John 1:12) The remainder of that nation were cast off from participation in the chiefest blessing – to subsequently have an opportunity in the Millennial Age of attaining to an inferior blessing. Their casting off left vacancies in the appointed numbers of the twelve tribes; and it is those vacancies that the Lord during this Gospel Age has been inviting those who have an ear to hear the Truth and who have earnest desires of accepting it. Many more will be called than will be chosen to this place. The

world in general is not called, but only those who have an ear to hear.” (SM727)

“Now when he came to Israel to select there were not enough, and they were mostly out of one tribe. They nearly all came out of Judah. Our Lord sprang from Judah, and most of the others also, so far as we know. Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin, and we do not know what the others were of; there were a certain number there received, but not enough to fill up the one hundred and forty-four thousand. We might suppose there were not more than ten or twelve thousand of those Israelites who ever became members of the Body of Christ. Would the Lord break up that arrangement? No; the Lord says, These are the Spiritual Israelites I had in mind, these natural tribes were merely the outward shell, as it were, and the real kernel of the matter from my standpoint was Spiritual Israel. I will still preserve this method of speaking of them as the twelve tribes. Now we have some from each of these tribes, and I will fill them up from all nations, kindreds, and peoples, and tongues; and it has taken all of this Gospel Age to do this. I do not know to which tribe I am assigned, and I do not care; it is merely an outward figure, and what difference does it make? It is all one company ...” (Q606)

“We understand the Scriptures to teach that this elect number is 144,000.” (R3834:2)

### **The Twelve Tribes – Jews and Gentiles**

“This adoption, as the apostle informs us, **primarily was the inheritance of Israel**, but since there was not sufficient number in Israel ready to complete the predestinated number to be adopted, therefore, after accepting Israel’s remnant, ‘God did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name,’ to be the sons of God, joint-heirs with Christ, and this was foreknown and foretold through the prophets. (Rom. 9:4, 29-33; Acts 15:14)” (E177)

### **More Anent the 144,000 12,000 of Each Tribe**

“Christian baptism to the Gentiles was a new thing. It symbolized the grafting of wild olive branches into the Israelitish olive tree. It was an immersion of aliens into the body of Messiah making them fellow members with the Jews of the twelve tribes of spiritual Israel, whose entire number was to be 144,000 – twelve thousand from each tribe. (Rev. 2:9; 3:9; 7:1-8; 14:1-5) Those taken from among the Gentiles were the wild olive branches grafted into the good olive tree, making up the number which lacked to complete this body of Christ.” (R5964:6)

### **Ephraim & Dan!**

Antotypically, at least, Dan has lost his place among the 12 tribes! But “Why?” Jacob’s deathbed prophecy, and the subsequent history of the ancient tribe, are quite revealing.

“Jacob prophesied that it would be Dan ‘that biteth the horses heels, so that the rider shall fall backward.’ (Gen. 49:17) Horses are symbols of doctrines.<sup>1</sup> Dan evidently represents a class tampering with doctrines, resulting in the overthrow of the New Creature. A study of the history of the tribe of Dan confirms this. Originally Dan was given one of the choicest parts of Palestine, one of the most fertile and the most secure. It was completely embraced by its two brother tribes, Ephraim and Benjamin, while on the southeast and south it joined Judah, and was thus surrounded by the three most powerful states of the whole confederacy. The Danites, however, failed to conquer the land originally assigned them (representing the failure of the New Creature to gain the victory over the mind of the flesh) and chose another inheritance to the far north (Judges 18:1-31). This selection of the farthest north resembles Satan’s similar choice (Isa. 14:13), and suggests that the Danite New Creatures are led away from their original inheritance by ambition. The context shows an unreasonably high valuation of their own judgment and a wilful interference with the priestly office, and this we may judge has been a frequent offence of those who commit the great sin that lies just beyond the sin of presumption. (Psa. 19:13; 2 Sam. 6:6, 7)” (*The Finished Mystery*, p. 133)

Ephraim is frequently a type of nominal Christendom; but we believe here he may be a type of the Great Company, who though “called” in the one hope of their calling (Eph. 4:4), and having been “accepted” in the Beloved (Eph. 1:6), fail to make their “election” sure. (1 Thes. 1:4; 2 Pet. 1:10) Because in many respects they are like the worldly church with whom they are frequently identified – they “mix” with the people of the land (Hosea 7:8a) and imbibe of a spirit which soon intoxicates them. (Isa. 28:1) The result is that even though they love righteousness, they do not hate iniquity sufficiently, to separate themselves completely unto the Lord. Their “vision” is soon blurred, and they stumble because of errors in judgement (Isa. 28:7) ... What good is a cake that is only half-baked? Well, the Prophet likens Ephraim unto a cake that is not turned. (Hosea 7:8b)

<sup>2</sup> Thus Dan represents those of the consecrated who sin the “sin unto death” – the Second Death Class; and Ephraim those who will be called upon to go through the great tribulation (Rev. 7:14), for the destruction of the flesh, so that their spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. 5:5) Both classes lose their place amongst the very elect (tribes) – engraved “stones” on the shoulder pieces and in the breastplate of the great World’s High Priest.

### “A lion’s whelp”

The TRUE – Judah (Gen. 49:8)

The COUNTERFEIT – Dan (Deut. 33:22; Gen. 49:17)

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

“After telling of the sealing of the elect class, the spiritual Israel, the peculiar people, zealous of good works, the little flock, the bride, the overcomers, a definite number, ‘a hundred and forty and four thousand,’ gathered out of Babylon before the winds of the great tribulation are let loose upon the world, all of them bearing the seal or mark of God’s favor in their foreheads – a noticeable intellectual evidence of divine favor, the impress of the spirit of the truth as well as the word of truth, our Lord shows us the ‘great multitude’ of his followers, **‘whose number no man is able to tell’** (that is, it is not a fore-ordained or fixed number – none were called to be of this company), who will eventually stand before the Lord **‘clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands,’** crying, **‘Salvation to our God which sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb.’** Who are these who are not the bride, the elect class, the overcomers, is the question? The answer is ‘These are they which come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, are they **before the throne of God** and serve him day and night in his temple.’ (Rev. 7:9, 10, 13-15)

“The marks of distinction between this ‘great company’ and the ‘little flock’ are very pronounced, both as respects their present course and their future blessing. The faithful overcomers watch and keep their garments unspotted from the world. And this is given as one of the special conditions of acceptance as ‘overcomers’ to joint-heirship with the Lord – ‘they have not defiled their garments.’ (Rev. 3:4) They have kept ‘their garments unspotted from the world.’ They have not been willing to permit sin to contaminate them and to separate them from the Lord, but have quickly applied for and obtained the precious blood to remove every stain. They are so heartily opposed to sin and so earnest about keeping of this garment unspotted that the adversary gets no hold upon them – ‘the wicked one catcheth them not.’ (1 John 5:18) All of this indicates a full submission of their wills to the will of Christ – they are

<sup>1</sup> See C316

<sup>2</sup> See T40; also footnote on T119



‘dead with him,’ and hence could not willingly practice sin. Their reward is the crown of life, immortality, to be seated in the throne, and to constitute the temple of which our Lord is the cap-stone, the chief corner-stone. Now contrast with these the ‘great company:’ lacking the intense love and zeal of the overcomers, they do not keep their garment with sufficient care, and as a result they lose all the rewards promised the overcomers; and, having failed in the race, they would get nothing, if it were not for our Lord’s grace.” (R2160:6-2161:2)

### **The Great Company (Unfaithful Servants)!**

“We refer to Rev. 7:9-17. There we see the unfaithful servants after they have passed with weeping and gnashing of teeth through the great tribulation which marks the full end of the Age. We see that their severe experiences will work with many of them such a change that they will gladly acclaim their Lord, and rejoice to be servants in His Temple and before His throne.

“Faithfulness in the use of their talents would have given this class a place with their Lord in His Throne, even as He promised. (Rev. 3:21) But in His great mercy, while rejecting them from association in the Throne, and while causing them to pass through merited tribulation for their unfaithfulness, He will nevertheless permit them to come up through that tribulation, washing their robes in the merit of His sacrifice. To those who are rightly exercised by these experiences He will give the palm of victory, but not the crown; for this is reserved for the faithful servants alone.” (SM514)

### **The “Great Company”**

“The ... class who allow spots to accumulate upon their robes, is the ‘great multitude, whose number no man knoweth.’ (Rev. 7:9) that is, they are not an ordained or fixed number as is the bride class. These must go through great tribulation, wash their robes, all spotted and soiled, in the blood of the Lamb. **These will then stand before the throne**, will serve God day and night in his temple. The bride class will be The Temple: or, in another figure, they will be seated upon the Messianic Throne with their Lord and Bridegroom. These different figures give different phases of the honored position and work of the Body of Christ in glory. These are spoken of as wearing crowns, the others as merely carrying palm branches, indicating final victory.

“How glad we are that our dear heavenly Father has mercifully provided for those who through lack of sufficient zeal and faithfulness lose the ‘Prize of the high calling’! We rejoice that even the ‘foolish virgins’ do not lose all, but will through tears and travail of soul yet come wholly back to the Lord. They will finish their course in death. Theirs is an enforced

destruction of the flesh. Although they covenanted to sacrifice it willingly, yet they failed to do so. They love the Lord and love righteousness, but not sufficiently to be thoroughly loyal and faithful; and so they must be severely scourged, that their spirits may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” (R5924:5)

“They let slip their opportunity for becoming members of the Bride; but they are, nevertheless, virgins, pure in their heart-intentions. They miss the prize, but gain, later, through severe testings, a share at the nuptial feast with the Bridegroom and Bride as ‘the virgins her companions that follow her’; they also shall be brought near before the King.” (F127)

It is interesting to note that Weymouth renders Rev. 7:12, as follows: “To our God seated on the throne, and the Lamb, we owe our salvation!”

**7:11, 12** – “And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and 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.”

### **The Angels “Sons of God”**

“The angelic sons of God ‘shouted for joy’ (Job. 38:7) in the dawn of earth’s creative week, and after witnessing step after step in the development, finally saw man, its king, made in the divine image. Then came the fall by disobedience into sin and death, and the frightful experiences of fallen angels who kept not their primary estate, and man’s selfish and bloody history under the reign of Sin and Death. Then successively follow the redemption, the selection of the Anointed One (head and body) through sacrifice, and the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom with its wonderful restitution of all things spoken by God through the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. No wonder indeed that there should be a Jubilation in heaven and in earth when all of Jehovah’s intelligent creatures shall thus behold the lengths, heights and breadths and depths, not only of God’s Love, but also of his Justice and Wisdom and Power.” (FS1)

Perhaps **the angels** here referred to – who would now honor and glorify God – are the same “sons of God” that shouted for joy, at the dawn of earth’s great creative week. (Job. 38:7; See also FS1) **First they stood round about the throne; then they fell on their faces before the throne**, to pay homage to our God.

They were now able to take in, as it were, the full scope of God’s plan, and the revelation of his character. This is implied by the fact that the throne scene – representing the authority and sovereignty of God, before which they fell – here included **the “elders”** and the **“four living ones.”**

It is no wonder then, that these angels cried out: “Amen” – so be it; and  
 “The blessing and the glory,  
 And the wisdom and the thanks,  
 And the honor and the power, and the might,  
**Be ascribed to our God,  
 For ever and ever!”**

(Rev. 7:12 – Weymouth)

**7:13-17** – “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. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. 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.”

Perhaps the “elder” who now speaks, is the Mosaic testimony, with regard to the “great company,” given us prophetically, in connection with the birth of Benjamin, the brother of Joseph. This reads:

Gen. 35:16-19 – “... and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labor. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; **thou shalt have this son also.** And it came to pass, as her soul was departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni; but his father called him Benjamin. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.”

“Bible students, realizing that Joseph was a type of The Messiah, are of the opinion that Benjamin, Joseph’s younger brother by the same mother, was also a type. As Abraham’s wives were typical of different covenants, so Bible students seem to see that Rachel, the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, typified a special covenant – the covenant of sacrifice, which has operated during this Gospel age, and which brings two distinctly separate classes of saints. These two classes of saints seem to be typified by Joseph and Benjamin.

“The highest class is represented in Joseph – The Messiah – the class that includes the specially faithful people during this Gospel age – Jesus and all of his footstep followers. This class, eventually, as typified by Joseph, will reach the throne of empire, becoming the King or Ruler of the universe, next to the

Almighty Creator, typified by Pharaoh, who took Joseph out of the prison-house of death and highly exalted him to be next to himself in power and great glory.

“It has evidently escaped the attention of many Bible students, until recently, that two classes of saintly Christians are being developed during this Gospel age – a superior class, represented by Joseph, **and an inferior class, represented by Benjamin.** The word Benjamin signifies ‘son of my right hand.’ **The name Benoni ‘son of my pain’ – was given to him by his mother, who died in giving him birth.**

“The antitypical lesson here would be that this special covenant, typified by Rachel, gives birth to the elect church, The Messiah, of which Jesus is the Head, **and will also give birth to another class, and then cease – expire – giving birth to no more.** The secondary class are Scripturally designated as tribulation saints, the declaration being made that they shall ‘come up out of great tribulation’ to the blessing which they will inherit. Moreover, this class is represented as being much more numerous than the still more honored class, typified by Joseph.” (RS231:3, 5)

“There is ... reason for considering **Benjamin a prefigure of the ‘great company.’** It is this: his name, Benjamin signifies ‘son of my pain.’<sup>1</sup> He was born in sorrow and travail, even as the ‘great company’ will ‘come up out of great tribulation.’ His mother died in giving him birth – as we expect the spiritual feature of the Abrahamic Covenant to pass away entirely with the change of those who will constitute the ‘great company.’” (R4437:1)

### The Great Company – its Tribulation

“This little flock by no means constitutes the whole house of God. No, the house of God – the household of faith – is a large class, the majority of whom are still in the nominal Church, fettered by its creeds and dwarfed by its worldly conformity. **For their sake that they may be brought into the liberty of the sons of God, even through great tribulation** (Rev. 7:14) – we are told that **‘judgment must begin at the house of God.’** They must be liberated first, and the overcoming class shall be instruments in striking off the shackles of error.” (R498:3)

### The Great Company – They Might Have Been

“... these of this second company have no separate and distinct call. **They might as easily, and with much more satisfaction, have attained to the glories of the divine nature** had they rendered prompt and hearty obedience. They do come off victors in the end, as is shown by the fact that to

<sup>1</sup> See Gen. 35:18 – margin; evidently, this is *lapsus linguae*, for it is “Benoni” and not “Benjamin” that means, son of my pain.

them are granted the palm branches; but their lack of zeal hindered them from being accepted as of the overcoming class, thus preventing their eternal joint-heirship and glory as participants in the New Creation, as well as depriving them of much of the joy and peace and satisfaction which belongs to the overcomers and is enjoyed by them even in this present life. The place to which they will attain ... will apparently be one similar in many respects to the state or plane of the angels.” (F93)

**The Great Company = Tribulation Saints**

Isa. 34:6 – “The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea (Edom).”

“As all the land of Edom symbolizes all of ‘Christendom,’ so its capital city, Bozra, represented Ecclesiasticism, the chief citadel of Christendom. The prophet represents the Lord as a victorious warrior who makes a great slaughter in Edom, and especially in Bozra. The name Bozra signifies ‘sheep-fold.’ Bozrah is even yet noted for its goats, and the slaughter of this day of vengeance is said to be of the ‘lambs and goats.’ (Isa. 34:6) The goats would correspond to the ‘tares,’ while the lambs would represent **the tribulation saints** (Rev. 7:14; 1 Cor. 3:1) who neglected to use the opportunities granted them, and did not so run as to obtain the prize of their high calling; and who therefore, although not rejected of the Lord, were not accounted worthy to escape the trouble as matured ‘sheep’ – called, chosen and faithful.” (D17)

(See also Rev. 19:11-16)

**The Washing – NOT The Suffering**

“Not that their sufferings will wash their robes, but that 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 cleansing.” (R4036:6)

Thus do we find that the “great multitude” of Rev. 7:9, is identified for us, with those of Rev. 7:14, who must of necessity be brought “out of great tribulation,” washing their bespotted robes white in the blood of the Lamb.

“God’s grace cannot admit to heavenly perfection those who have not robes of spotless righteousness; and hence we are shown that these who have not cared for their garment and kept them white must be put through a severe experience before they can in any sense of the word be sharers of heavenly favors. These severe experiences are shown in symbol as washing their robes in a great tribulation. But to show that not the penances or sufferings would

cleans the robes, that these might be necessary as proper punishments and disciplines, it is particularly stated that the efficacy for the cleansing is the ‘blood of the Lamb.’ Many will thus be purged, purified, and their garment, now sullied by contact with the world, often in the garb of nominal Christianity, will be cleansed of every guilty stain, when they, realizing the folly of their course shall repentantly appeal to the Lord and use his help.” (R2161:2)

“The Great Company ... will be overcomers; else they would never get any part in the everlasting blessings which the Lord is about to dispense now, at his second advent, when all of his faithful will be received to the heavenly home, the Father’s House. They will be overcomers, or conquerors, in the end, because the Lord will help them through by forcing those of this class who will be living in the end of the present age to come to a positive decision – to banish their fears and courageously count not their lives dear unto them in the great tribulation with which this age will end. The fact that when the test does come, when the crisis is reached, these will die rather than deny the Lord will constitute them overcomers and secure for them the blessing described in our text. (R5865:1)

“... rightly exercised by the discipline, they will finally be received into the spiritual condition. They will have everlasting, spiritual life as angels have it, but will lose the prize of immortality. **They will serve God in his temple, and stand before the throne,** having palms in their hands (Rev. 7:9-17); but though that will be glorious, it will not be so glorious as the position of the ‘little flock’ of overcomers, who will be kings and priests unto God, seated with Jesus in the throne as his bride and joint-heir and with him crowned with immortality.” (A214)

**“Shall dwell among them”**

- A.V. .... “shall dwell among them”
- A.S.V. .... “shall spread his tabernacle over them”
- E.D. .... “will tabernacle over them”
- Rotherham .... “shall spread his tent over them”
- Young’s .... “shall tabernacle over them”
- R.S.V. .... “will shelter them with his presence”
- Lamsa .... “shall shelter them”
- Knox .... “shall overshadow them”
- Moffatt .... “shall overshadow them with his care”
- Berkeley .... “spreads his tent over them”
- A.Tr. .... “will shelter them”
- 20th Century .... “will shelter them”

**“They shall hunger no more ...”**

Isa. 49:10 – “They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he shall lead them, even by springs of water shall he guide them.”

As the Great Company, in their “scapegoat” experiences are –

“sent into the **Wilderness condition of separation** from the world, forced thither by the ‘man of opportunity’ – unfavorable circumstances – there to be buffeted by adversity until they learn the vanity, deceitfulness and utter worthlessness of the world’s approval, and until all human hopes and ambitions die, and they are ready to say, God’s will, not mine be done!” (T70)

They will undoubtedly often have felt a **hunger and thirst** in their souls for both the fellowship of true saints, and the pure and unadulterated truth itself. Not only this, but the heat and severity of their tribulations, like the **light and heat of the noonday sun**, will also have made their lot a most unpleasant one. Yet all of this will have ceased, when cleansed, purged and purified, “he that sitteth in the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them’ (shall associate them with himself and his glorified Bride in the spiritual condition and its services).” (F127) “**They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them into living fountains of water.**” (Rev. 7:16, 17)

Evidently, for this Great Company, there will be a moment for reflection upon that which was, and that which is. In this reflection on the past, they will recall those opportunities which had been afforded them, in which they might have striven more faithfully, but didn’t; then, on reflecting on the immediate present, they will realize what they have missed – joint-heirship in the glorified Body of the Christ. Figuratively, this will cause their eyes to fill with “tears.” However, in the contemplation of the future, they will be enabled to forget that which is in the past, and to think upon that which is being made theirs by the grace of the Lord! Thus will their “tears” (the momentary reflection on past unfaithfulness and the failure to attain the highest honor) be wiped away from their eyes. Thus will God “wipe away all tears from their eyes.” (Rev. 7:17)

**8:1, 2** – “And when he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given trumpets.”

It will have been observed that while John’s Revelation appears to be one connected whole in which events seemingly follow one another consecutively; historically, this is really not so. The same period of church history is covered a number of times in the vision, but from differing viewpoints. Thus the churches of Rev 2 and 3 cover the full period of the church’s development, from Ephesus at the beginning of the Gospel age, through Laodicea at its close; but this same period is also covered by the seals we have subsequently brought to our attention (Rev. 6),

though the churches are not again mentioned. The sixth seal even brings us to the end of the Gospel age and the beginning of the Millennial age; yet the seventh seal not only reviews the period covered by all the preceding six seals, but goes beyond them, extending to the end of the Millennial age.

“Some seem to be under the impression that in view of the fact that the seventh seal is described as being opened after the first six, therefore the events of the seventh must necessarily follow those of the preceding six seals. The incorrectness of this reasoning, however, is discerned at once, when we bear in mind that the transactions and occurrences of the six seals bring us down to the introduction of the Millennial reign, while the nature and character of many of the events of the seventh seal are such that we must find their fulfillment somewhere during the reign of Satan and evil, and before the opening of the New Dispensation. In other words, the unavoidable conclusion is that the events under the seventh seal cover much the same period as the preceding six seals, namely the period of the Gospel Age, and that they have their fulfillment in the order given.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, p. 362)

“The chief difference between the events portrayed under the symbols of the first six seals and those of the seventh is that under the seventh, the rise and activities of the anti-Christian systems, and the eventful career of the true Church are described more in detail. The six seals are more in the nature of a general outline or picture; the seventh sets forth many details, and is a more complete view, in which we have revealed to us the various activities of the Church, her triumphs and victories in giving her testimony to the Truth, and its effect upon the various systems of error. Several very prominent epochs are described, particularly those of the ‘time of the end’ and the ‘harvest’ period. It will, therefore, be seen that the fulfillment of the first recorded visions of chapter 8, which are stated to be under the seventh seal, are to be looked for at the beginning of the Gospel Age, and not its close.

“In view of all the facts and circumstances, the logical conclusion is that the breaking of this seventh seal by Christ, signified that He had disclosed to Him at this time all the various features of the Divine plans and purposes. The fulfillment of this scene in which the Lamb breaks the seventh seal must have occurred at or soon after His resurrection. The fact that on the occasion of His last conference with His disciples on the mountain in Galilee, just before His ascension, He told them that all authority and power was given to Him, implies also that a perfect understanding of all matters in connection with which that power was to be exercised, was committed to Him.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, p. 363)

It is quite evident that Jehovah God himself, carried on a “heavenly,” i.e., a “**kingdom of heaven**” work upon this earth while Jesus was here among men. We are even told that Jesus commenced his ministry preaching, “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matt. 4:17) Mark says he preached “the kingdom of God.” (Mark 1:15) In the name of Jesus, the disciples too, engaged in this work for Jehovah God, when they went forth to preach, “The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matt. 10:7, 20)

In a sense, this “kingdom work” continued as long as Jesus was present among them. It ceased, however, when forty days after his death and resurrection, he left them, to ascend up on high to make intercession for them. At the time, he said unto them “... tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.” (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-9) The promise of the Father was in due time fulfilled, when the holy Spirit was poured out upon them ten days later. (Acts 2:1-4) Immediately, they continued the “kingdom work” by way of preaching! (Acts 2:6-17) Let it be carefully noted what it was that Peter preached about on this memorable occasion: it was the same as Jesus had preached – “Repent.” But Peter added this; “be baptized ... in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38) Surely, that was “kingdom work.”

It seems to us, that the “**silence in heaven**” which followed the opening of the seventh seal, corresponds to this ten day period – when the “kingdom work” was suspended in obedience to Jesus’ enjoinder, “tarry – until” – between Jesus’ ascension, and the baptism of the holy Spirit at Pentecost. Since this “**half an hour**” is symbolic time, it is undoubtedly based on the Scriptural premise that a “day” stands for a year, i.e., 360 days! (Ezek. 4:6) Thus, an “hour” would be 1/24th of 360 days, or 15 days; and “half an hour” would be 7-1/2 days. The difference between 7-1/2 days and 10 days, we believe, is covered by the use of the word “about” in the text.

If this conjecture is correct, then the opening of the seventh seal begins at a point in historic time, immediately after Jesus, by his faithfulness unto death, had won the right to look upon the scroll and open the seals thereof, which was even before his ascension, and definitely before the sounding of the seven trumpets!

### **The “Silence in Heaven”**

“The very fact that a half hour is mentioned implies that symbolic time is referred to.

“That while the expression, half an hour, would of itself refer to an exact definite period of time, yet the fact that the word ‘about’ is used, meaning ‘a little more or a little less,’ changes the complexion of the matter somewhat and leaves us to look for something that would be either a little more or a little less than a half hour of symbolic time. When symbolic time is employed in the Scriptures, a year of 360 days invariably

ably is represented by a ‘day’, an hour being one twenty-fourth part of a day would therefore, represent fifteen days; a half hour would be seven and a half days; and ‘about’ a half hour would be either a little more or a little less than seven and a half days.” (The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Streeter, p. 364)

### **Anent: “The Silence in Heaven”**

“Our Lord’s message to his disciples when leaving them was, that they should return from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem and tarry there until endued with power from on high. To many the ten days of tarrying would be considered a serious waste of valuable consecrated time. Think of it! One hundred and twenty of the Lord’s consecrated people idle for ten days – not preaching, nor healing, nor engaging in any special religious work – neglecting business and money making, and all earthly interests as well. What were they doing? The record implies that their special employment during those ten days was prayer and supplication to God. What did they want? They already were in relationship to God through faith, and permitted to pray to him as their Father. They already knew of Jesus and had already been blessed by him in various ways, some of them having been his mouthpieces. Why tarry? Why pray? Why not get out at once into the vineyard and labor? If they had been left to guide their own steps, doubtless they would have been at work, but they were following their Master’s Word, remembering the testimony, ‘Obedience is better than sacrifice.’ They knew not what qualifications they needed for their future service. They were merely trusting all to their Lord and obediently waiting for the promised blessing and preparation.

“The necessity for their tarrying was threefold:

(1) They were incompetent for the work designed for them until empowered for it.

(2) They could not receive the blessed anointing until first the Redeemer had ascended into heaven, ‘There to appear in the presence of God on our behalf – on behalf of believers. Members of the fallen race, they had already been privileged, like their father Abraham, to return to favor with God as his friends, being ‘Justified by faith.’ They could, as justified ones, address him in prayer, ‘Our Father, which art in heaven.’ They were not enemies at heart, but loyal, even though, to use the Apostle’s language, they had been ‘enemies through wicked works,’ through inability to keep perfectly the divine law ...

(3) These ten days of prayer were necessary also to fit and prepare the Lord’s disciples for the reception of the holy Spirit. The human mind resembles a room, the door of which must be opened before treasures can be put therein. The door in this picture would symbolize the will which must first give

consent to whatever enters the mind, the heart, the life. Furthermore, a room that is already stocked and overcrowded has little space wherein to place new valuables – the old must be removed that place may be found for the new. Our hearts need to be emptied of their earthly hopes, aims and ambitions in order to make place for the new riches of God’s grace. The ten days were probably none too long for the testing of the faith and loving obedience and zeal for the Lord and his cause, which they had undertaken to serve. As they prayed and fasted and waited expectantly for the promised blessing from on high, doubtless worldly ambitions, hopes and aims dissolved and vanished from their hearts, leaving them ready for the blessing the Lord intended, and which he poured out.” (R4306:1-3)

### Seals and Trumpets

The seven seals should not be confounded with the seven trumpets! It is only **after the opening of the seventh seal** that the seven trumpets begin to sound. (Rev. 8:1, 2)

“... the **symbol** merely shows in the midst of the throne ‘a Lamb, as it had been slain:’ how forceful the illustration to those whose eyes are anointed that they may discern its meaning. And now the symbolic panorama proceeds, and shows us the Lamb approaching Jehovah and receiving from him ‘the mystery of his will,’ the great plan of the ages, as mapped out in the divine purpose from before the foundation of the world. As soon as the ‘mystery of God’ was committed to ‘the Lamb of God,’ who had already fulfilled an important part of that plan by redeeming the world with his own precious blood, he receives homage, as it is written: ‘Him hath God highly exalted, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things on earth,’ and ‘that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father’.

“Then came the opening of the seals: the disclosing of one after another of the various features connected with the divine purpose.<sup>1</sup> Each seal as it was loosed permitted the scroll as a whole to open a little wider, and a little wider, thus permitting ‘the mystery of God’ to be a little more clearly discerned. And so God’s people down through this Gospel age have been privileged to know something of the ‘secret of the Lord’; the divine plan. But not until the last seal was broken did the scroll fly wide open, permitting the ‘mystery of God’ to be fully disclosed; as it is written:

<sup>1</sup> The opening of the seals is undoubtedly to reflect for the Church, the progressive development of God’s plan. It is, however, not necessary to assume that Jesus himself had to wait for the respective periods to arrive for the unsealing of the “scroll.” As a partaker of the divine nature he was privileged to “see” (or know) what the opening of each seal would signify for the Church, from the beginning: for is this not what is implied in the introduction to the Revelation to John: **“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants, things which must surely come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.”** (Rev. 1:1) However, the revelation to the Church would only be made as it came due, as if these seals were not really “opened” until such specific times!

‘In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.’ (Rev. 5:1; 10:7)” (R2208:6; 2209:1)

### The Trumpets – Not Literal Trumpets

“... the seven trumpets of Revelation are symbolical and not literal – indeed ... this entire book is a book of symbols, and that so far it has been symbolically fulfilled. Christian people in general understand that five of these trumpets have already ‘sounded’ and are in the past; – **we would say six.**” (R2992:5)

The “**trumpets**,” of course, are also symbolic.

“The seven trumpets of Revelation are all symbolic, and represent seven great periods of time and their events. ... Suffice it here to say that we find ourselves today in the midst of the very events which mark the sounding of the seventh trumpet. The great voices, the increase of knowledge, the angry nations, etc., taken in connection with time-prophecies, establish this as a fact. Many events are yet to transpire before this seventh or last trumpet ceases to sound; as for instance, the rewarding of the saints and prophets, the resurrection of all the dead, etc. In fact, it covers the entire period of the Millennial reign of Christ, as indicated by the events which are to transpire under it. (Rev. 10:7; 11:15, 18)” (B148)

The “**angels**” referred to in connection with the seven trumpets, while seven in number, seem **not** to be the same as the seven special “angels” or messengers of the seven churches. Perhaps all that we can say about them is that:

“The ‘mighty angels,’ messengers, or agents of his (God’s) power, are various, and may properly be understood as applying to and including all the various agencies, animate and inanimate, which shall be used by our Lord in the overthrow of the evil systems of the present, and in the chastisement of evil doers.” (B151)

**8:3-5** – “And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.”



In the typical Tabernacle, the golden altar stood in front of the second veil (Exod. 30:6), in the Tabernacle of the Congregation (Lev. 4:7), just outside the Most Holy. It was there that the High Priest on Israel's great Day of Atonement, offered his incense, before entering into the presence of God in the Most Holy, to there present the blood of atonement.

There is nothing in the account which even remotely suggests that the incense was offered in connection with the sacrifice of any other than the High Priest's own bullock (Lev. 16:11-13); and at that time the incense was offered from the High Priest's own copper censer. The Revelation scene, while featuring both the altar of burnt-offering (Rev. 8:5), and the altar of incense (Rev. 8:3), has the incense offered from a golden censer. It is quite evident, therefore, that these two pictures (Lev. 16:11-13 and Rev. 8:3-5) do not bear the relationship of type and antitype to each other!

### **Incense in Type of Leviticus 16 Offered but Once!**

"Since there is nothing in the account of Leviticus that says that the incense was offered a second time, it is rather improbable that it was offered twice.

"... we might say that the incense which He (Christ) offered up, in a certain sense and to a certain degree, represented the whole church, which is his body; for in harmony with the divine intention, before the foundation of the world, he was to be the Forerunner, the Representative and the Advocate of those who would be accepted as his members. Hence **in offering up his own perfections, he was offering up that which would, by imputation, be our perfection as his members.**" (R4922:2)

It seems, though, that the Revelation scene is laid at the very beginning of the Gospel age; perhaps even in those 40 days which preceded Jesus' ascension, and which ushered in the "silence in heaven about the space of half an hour."

### **Christ Jesus – "The Angel" of Rev. 8:3-5**

"We believe that it will be observed by the careful consecrated reader that we have set before us in this scene the most important matter connected with God's great Plan of Salvation. Those familiar with the typical atonement day services of ancient Israel will recognize at once the very evident correspondence. In those typical services the High Priest alone was permitted to do what this angel is represented as doing. No imperfect human being or agency can possibly be represented by this angel with the censer. Indeed, it would be blasphemous to think of this angel and his work as representing any imperfect human being or agency. The High Priest in Israel's arrangement represented Christ." (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, p. 367)

Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, had by faithfulness (obedience) unto death, won – as it were, for himself, the

right to open the seals of the "book written within and on the backside" (Rev. 5:2, 7); i.e., he was found worthy to execute all the remainder of the plan of God. (R2208:5) One feature of this plan involved his intercession on behalf of those who were to be called to jointheirship with him. As the "High Priest" of their order or profession (Heb. 3:1), he is here represented as "**the angel**" who "**came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer,**" and to whom "**there was given**" "**much incense, that he should offer it with** [add it to] **the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar**" before the throne of God. (Rev. 8:3) The seven angels referred to in Rev. 8:2, are not the same as the special messengers to the seven churches; and it should be noted that, they did not prepare to sound their respective trumpets until after "the angel" had taken **the golden censer filled with fire from the altar** (of burnt-offering) **and cast it upon the earth.** (Rev. 5:5, 6)

Since "the angel" with the censer **stood by the altar "before the veil,"** we assume that, the time here is, as already suggested, that period of 40 days during which Jesus, the New Creature, though already in possession of his new (spiritual) body – the "golden censer," but having not yet ascended up on high into the presence of God (in a sense he had not yet "passed beyond the second veil") to make intercession for his disciples and the Church.

We are told that to this "angel" there was given much incense, for the specific purpose of offering it with the prayers of the saints. (Rev. 8:3) At this time, Jesus having made his own calling and election sure, was given back, as it were, the merits of the perfect man Christ Jesus, which he no longer needed for himself, and which he now, with the heavenly Father's approval, might impute to the disciples and all the saints. The prayers of these saints, we understand, do not represent merely their audible prayers, but their hearts' desires to live acceptable lives before God, which in their imperfect bodies they would find themselves unable to do. However, when these desires (prayers) are augmented by the imputed merits of the man Christ Jesus (the incense), through the intercession of their "high priest," they do reach the very heart of God! Perhaps this is the reason why, in the Tabernacle type, the high priest's offering of incense occurred just once, and that in connection with the sacrifice of the bullock, "**for himself and his house.**" (Lev. 16:11)

The fact that this "angel" took the golden censer and filled it with the **fire of the altar** (of burnt-offering), and then cast it upon the earth, after he had offered the "much incense" with the prayers of the saints, seems to signify that, those who of the earth are to share the divine nature – membership in the glorified Body of the Christ (the Church "beyond the veil"), would first have to share the identical trials and afflictions of Christ which were left behind for the body's sake (Col. 1:24); for only if they "suffer with him" can they ever "reign with him." (2 Tim. 2:12;



Rom. 8:17) This picture in the Revelation clearly sets forth that fact that Jesus could not offer the privilege of jointheirship with him in the Kingdom – nor could he even succor them, his disciples, until he himself had been given his own glorified body (the golden censer); **and the merit of the man Christ Jesus** (the incense) to be used on their behalf. Thus does the “incense” to be added to our prayers, come, as it were, from the “hand” (Rev. 8:4) of our “High Priest,” making our sacrifices and consecrations acceptable to his God and Father.

The voices, the thunderings, lightnings, and the earthquake, which followed (Rev. 8:5) undoubtedly represent the events and controversies, etc., that marked the Church’s beginning. We suggest that **the voices** represent the Apostolic teachings – such as Jesus had prophetically referred to before his crucifixion (Matt. 18:18), and confirmed thereafter (John 20:23); **the thunderings**, such controversies as would quite naturally be associated with the transition from the old order to the new – from Moses to Christ – and among these thunderings were such as were precipitated by the Judaisers who continually plagued the Apostle Paul; **the lightnings** would represent the dissemination of the truth – perhaps more particularly its deeper aspects as were brought to light by Paul; and **the earthquake** may have reference to the earth-shaking doctrines that the Gentiles were also acceptable to the Lord God – Jehovah!

#### “Thunderings”

“The synagogue was crowded. (Acts 13:44) Multitudes of Gentiles were there in addition to the Proselytes. This was more than the Jews could bear. Their spiritual pride and exclusive bigotry was immediately aroused. They could not endure the notion of others being freely admitted to the same religious privileges with themselves. Instead of realizing their position in the world as the prophetic nation, for the good of the whole earth, they indulged the self-exalting opinion, that God’s highest blessings were only for themselves. Their oppressions and dispersions had not destroyed this deeply-rooted prejudice; but they rather found comfort under the yoke, in brooding over their religious isolation; and even in their remote and scattered settlements, they clung with utmost tenacity to the feeling of their exclusive nationality. Thus, in Pisidian Antioch, they who on one Sabbath had listened with breathless interest to the teachers who spoke to them of the promised Messiah, were on the next Sabbath filled with the most excited indignation, when they found that this Messiah was ‘a light to lighten the Gentiles,’ as well as ‘the glory of His people Israel.’ **They made an uproar**, and opposed the words of Paul with all manner of calumnious expressions, ‘contradicting and blaspheming’.” (*The Life & The Epistle of Paul* – Conybeare & Howson, p. 143)

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

These **seven angels**, and their **trumpets**, represent circumstances or agencies, which in certain periods or epochs, will bring about the fulfillment of Jehovah’s purposes in the overthrow of all that is inimical to his perfect will; and the ultimate establishment of his own glorious kingdom in which truth and righteousness shall prevail. (2 Pet. 3:13; See B148; 151)

#### Angels = Agencies, etc.

“The ‘mighty angels’ or agents of his power are various, and may properly be understood as applying to and including all the various agencies, animate and inanimate, which shall be used of the Lord in the overthrow of the evil systems of the present, and in the chastisement of evil doers.” (B151)

**8:7** – “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.”

Perhaps the first of the trumpets sounded immediately after Pentecost, when the disciples started again to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom; but now, under, and in the power, of the holy Spirit sent in Jesus’ name. The “seventy weeks” of special favor for Israel (Dan. 9:24-27) had not yet come to an end; it was still the “one week” (the seventieth), in which the covenant was to be confirmed with many. (Dan. 9:27) And so it was that the message of the Kingdom, for the time at least, was being directed to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (Matt. 10:6; 15:24) Even Paul, though ordained a special minister to the Gentiles (Acts 9:23) began first to declare his message in the synagogues of his own people. Finding them unwilling to receive it, he took it to the Gentiles. (Acts 13:45-49)

The particular part of the message of truth (water) which became “**hail**,” (hard, cutting truth), and was accompanied with “**fire**” – (perhaps this has reference to **lightning**, which might very naturally accompany a hailstorm; if so, its significance here would be that of enlightenment, rather than destruction) – we believe, was that which declared that they, the Jews, had killed their Messiah (Acts 5:33; 7:54); and that Gentiles too, now were called to jointheirship in Messiah’s Kingdom. (Acts 11:2) John says that the **hail and the fire were mingled with blood**. “Blood” in this sense is a strong symbolism for **death**. Does this possibly mean that Israel’s noblest (the **trees**), by virtue of their rejection of the Gospel message then proclaimed, were now cut-off from all the privileges previously extended to them, of jointheirship in Messiah’s Kingdom; and, that less than forty years later, they as a nation (the **grass**), would suffer the baptism of fire (Matt. 3:11) which in A. D. 70 destroyed their national polity, when Titus destroyed the city of Jerusalem and its Temple? Thus was the judgment of God upon Israel reflected in the sounding of the first trumpet!

### The Siege of Jerusalem

“... the Judeans, desperate in their death agonies, closed wildly with their assailants. The shouts of victory, the shrieks of despair, the fierce hissing of the flames, making the very earth tremble and the air vibrate, rose in one hideous din, which echoed from the tottering walls of the Sanctuary to the mountain heights of Judea. There were congregated clusters of trembling people from all the country round, who beheld **in the ascending flames the sign that the glory of their nation had departed forever.** Many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, unwilling to outlive their beloved Temple, cast themselves headlong into the burning mass ... they fell but an easier prey to the Romans, who slew some six thousand on the spot. The Temple was burned to the ground, and only a few smouldering ruins were left, rising like gigantic ghosts from the ashes ... Titus ordered their instant execution, saying ‘Priests must fall with their Temple.’ The conquering legions raised their standards in the midst of the ruins, sacrificed to their gods in the Holy Place, and saluted Titus as emperor. “... the Judean warriors were exhausted by their superhuman resistance and by their long famine, and the Romans were at last able to scale the walls and to seize the fortress, a prelude to their spreading through the city, plundering the last of the wretched inhabitants. **On the 8th of Elul, they set fire to all that remained of Jerusalem, the upper city known by the name of Zion. The walls were entirely leveled ... Under the ruins of Jerusalem and her Temple lay buried the last remnant of Judea’s independence ...**” (*The World’s Great Events*, Vol. 1, p. 494-496 Heinrich Gras)

Another version:

“It was on the **ninth of Ab** that the defenders made their final stand. They made two last-ditch sorties, but both times they were driven back. Then a Roman soldier hurled a firebrand through the Golden Window of the Temple and the great wooden beams inside began to burn.

“At the sight of the burning Sanctuary the defenders were frantic. A desperate hand-to-hand struggle followed. Rather than fall into the hands of the Romans many chose to die in the flames. Thousands perished that day. The survivors who were identified by informers as rebels were promptly crucified. The flower of the country’s youth was sent to work in the Roman mines. Others were sold into slavery, including many women.

“**Jerusalem was utterly destroyed. It was now a wilderness of burned houses and desolation.** According to the Roman historian Tacitus, six hundred thousand Jews were killed or had died from starvation and disease during the siege of Jerusalem,

which had lasted one year and a half. Almost the same number were led away as captives or slaves to Rome.” (*Pictorial History of the Jewish People* – Nathan Ausubel)

**8:8, 9** – “And the second angel sounded, as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.”

The second trumpet sounded some little time after the first, when “**as it were, a mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea ...**” This “mountain,” we believe, was ancient Rome – the fourth of the great universal empires of Daniel’s prophecy. (Dan. 2:40) It was “strong as iron,” and “cruel as the grave.” It was still very much intact when Jesus came to live here among men; and it was at the time the very stronghold of Paganism.

The followers of Jesus, by the Jews were regarded as heretics, and they would have stoned them all to death (Acts 7:57, 58; 8:1); but to the Romans, they were rank unbelievers – atheists, and they persecuted and tortured them to death.

“The charges brought against Christians were atheism and anarchy. Their rejection of the old gods seemed atheism; their refusal to join in emperor-worship appeared treasonable. Popular credulity, made possible by the degree to which the Christians held aloof from ordinary civil society, charged them with crimes as revolting as they were preposterous.” (*A History of the Christian Church* – Walker, p. 49)

“The punishment of those alleged to have been found guilty followed in the most ignominious manner, some being used for fighting with beasts, sewed up in skins, thrown to the dogs, others being crucified. On the occasion of the ghastly games in the Garden of Caligula, while Nero circled about as a charioteer, Christians flamed as torches, dressed in tow and pitch in the so-called *tunica molesta* attached by the neck to stakes of fir.” (*History of the Christian Church* – Moeller, Vol. 1, p. 78)

“Fire broke out in the imperial palace and Galerius blamed the Christians for the fire, and also charged them with a conspiracy against the life of the Emperor. A persecution then began to rage throughout the whole Roman empire... All conceivable tortures and modes of death were practiced, and new and more horrible devices were invented from day to day.” (*Church History*, Kurtz, Vol. 1, p. 84)

Nor did the conversion (?) of Constantine the Great, really change matters much, for while he did influence the populace by his example, neither he, nor they, became true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Concerning Constantine, the historian has this to say:

“When we strip away the tinsel with which Eusebius and similar writers have decked the character of this man, we are forced to believe that there was little grand or heroic about him except his military skill. He slew his father-in-law; and, in later days, meanly jealous of justly-won laurels, he hurried his eldest son, the gallant Crispus, from a gay feast in Rome to die by a secret and sudden death. Many of his strokes of policy were terrible blunders, full of future ruin; and **his boasted profession of Christianity seems to have been scarcely better than a mere pretence, made to serve the aims of an unresting and unscrupulous ambition.**” (*The World’s Great Events*, Vol. 2, p. 528 – W. F. Collier)

By moving his Capital to Byzantium (Constantinople) he weakened the empire, preparing, as it were, for the eventual exaltation of the bishop of Rome. There were other things, however, which fanned small fires already burning within the realm, into greater conflagrations: and these, together with the onslaughts of the Goths under Alaric in A.D. 410; the Huns under Attila in A.D. 452; and the Vandals under Genseric in A.D. 455; all helped to bring about the complete destruction of this most renowned division of the Roman Empire, when in A.D. 476, the last of its emperors was dethroned by Odoacer.

### The Christianity of Constantine

“Whatever advantages might be derived from the acquisition of an Imperial proselyte, he was distinguished by the splendor of his purple, rather than by the superiority of wisdom or virtue, from the many thousands of his subjects who had embraced the doctrines of Christianity ... the same year of his reign in which he convened the council of Nice was polluted by the execution, or rather murder, of his eldest son ... The gratitude of the church has exalted the virtues and excused the failings of a generous patron, who seated Christianity on the throne of the Roman world.” (*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* – Gibbon, Vol. 1, p. 651 & 654; B290)

At the time when this “mountain” was cast into the sea, there were in the Roman Empire three different groups or classes of religious peoples: (1) the Christians; (2) the Jews; and (3) the Pagans. As the judgments of God associated with the sounding of the first trumpet affected only the Jews (the trees and grass); so the judgments associated with the sounding of the second trumpet affected only **the “third part”** of the Empire the Pagan (the sea, those therein, and the ships upon it).

John says, **“the third part of the sea became blood.”** This seems to signify that with the destruction of the Roman Empire as such, the pagan people virtually “died” as pagans, for John continues, **“and the third [the pagan] part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died.”** They had life in the sense that they were sustained in their religious life, by the superstitions and

tenets of Paganism. Yet, not only were the peoples as pagans thus figuratively “destroyed,” but the “ships” also, that sailed upon this “sea” – the pagan priests, as well as the rulers of the people. Thus were the judgments of God visited upon the Roman Empire, that had so cruelly mistreated the saints of the Most High God!

### The Fall of the Roman Empire

“The throne of the persecuting Decius was filled by a succession of Christian and orthodox princes, who had extirpated the fabulous gods of antiquity: and the public devotion of the age was impatient to exalt the saints and martyrs of the catholic church on the altars of Diana and Hercules. The union of the Roman empire was dissolved; its genius was humbled in the dust; and armies of unknown barbarians issuing from the frozen regions of the North, had established their victorious reign over the fairest provinces of Europe and Africa.” (*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* – Gibbon, Vol. 1, p. 243, Modern Library Edition)

**8:10, 11** – “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.”

The sounding of the third trumpet was identified with the exaltation of the bishop of Rome – the “man of sin.” (2 Thes. 2:3) Ever since the days of the Apostles there had been those in the church, who, while professing kinship unto Jesus, had a “form of godliness,” but lacked the power thereof in their lives. (2 Tim. 3:5; F248) In the ecclesiastical “heavens” of the time, some of these had exalted themselves to the position of “stars.”

“The stars as symbols represent the inspired teachers of the church – the apostles. The heavens ... represent the ecclesiastical powers of Christendom.” (DS91) “... God has recognized or appointed twelve apostolic stars for the Church ... from these the true light, which has blessed the true Church, has proceeded. But Papacy, assuming ecclesiastical lordship of earth, has placed or ‘ordained’ various stars, lights, ‘authorities,’ ‘Theologians,’ in her firmament; and the various Protestant denominations have done likewise, until the whole number is innumerable. But God, while providing helps, evangelists and teachers to his true Church has not ordained them with the authority of lights or stars ...

“God’s people are during this age to be burning and shining lamps, and are not to put their lamps under a bushel, but to so shine as to glorify their Father in heaven. The word star (Greek: *aster*) is not used respecting any of the faithful (outside the apostles) in referring to them in this present life; but it is used

with reference to those who depart from the truth, 'vainly puffed up,' aspiring to be considered authorities in the same sense as the apostles, and who are styled 'Wandering stars,' 'false apostles.' (2 Cor. 11:13; Rev. 2:2; Jude 13)" (DS93)

There is, of course, a difference between "fixed stars," and so-called "shooting stars" (meteors). The fixed stars can not be moved from their appointed places in the heavens; but it is different with meteors, which being attracted by the earth's gravitational field, soon fall in upon it.

"Those inclined to quibble by urging that 'the fixed stars did not fall' are reminded that our Lord said nothing about fixed stars falling, and that fixed stars could not fall: their falling would prove that they were not fixed. The Scriptures do not distinguish between stars and meteors as is commonly done in our day.

"Shooting stars, and even meteoric showers are not uncommon every year, and some years more than others." (DS88)

Thus, the stars which are fixed in the Church's firmament – the Apostles, are not, and never can be, moved or displaced; but it is different with the meteoric stars – the false apostles, false teachers, hireling shepherds, etc., which, being attracted by what the earth has to offer of glory, honor, pomp and circumstance, "fall" as it were, for it! This latter, is the story of Wormwood. The selfsame "inertia" which placed him in the earth's celestial sphere, continued to drive him on until he fell a ready prey to the earth's gravitational "pull." In other words, his exaltation was also his downfall!

### Wormwood

"It is our conviction that the Roman Catholic Bishop, the Pope, and his successors are represented by the notable 'star' of this third trumpet symbol. The Prophet Daniel was caused in prophetic vision to see the rise of this great ecclesiastical Bishop, the Pope.

"The fountain or source of all truth is the ransom sacrifice of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a positive fact that the so-called doctrine of the Mass has so polluted or poisoned this great fountain truth that it no longer has any effective power to cleanse the conscience of those who are deceived by it from dead works to serve the living God. 'Christ's continual sacrifice was not actually cancelled or abolished by Papacy, but it was set aside by a false doctrine advanced by that system – which gradually, but in the end fully and completely, set aside the merit of Christ's sacrifice as a continual and ever-efficacious one. This false doctrine is known as the Mass, or Sacrifice of the Mass.'" (The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Streeter, Vol. 1, p. 398; C98)

"The 'mystery of iniquity' (2 Thes. 2:7) the desire to lord it over God's heritage, began to work in the Church as early as the Apostle Paul's day. This evil

continued to develop amongst the elders or bishops of the Church for two centuries. It at last culminated in a rivalry between four prominent bishops (stars) in the Church – those of Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, and Alexandria. This contention for rulership was finally settled in 533 A.D. by a decree of Justinian, the emperor of Eastern Rome, declaring that the Bishop of Rome was the one to be recognized by all Christians, as the sole divinely appointed ruler in the Church." (The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Streeter, Vol. 1, p. 401)

### The Establishment of the Papacy

"These pleas for supremacy were not readily conceded, however. The spirit of rivalry was abroad, and other bishops in other large cities claimed supremacy also, some upon one and some upon another ground. It was not until A.D. 533 that the bishop of Rome was thus recognized by the emperor, Justinian I. This was in connection with a warm religious discussion in which the emperor took sides with the bishop of Rome, recognizing the Virgin Mary's worthiness of adoration, and disputing with the Eutychians and Nestorians regarding distinctions and blendings of natures in our Lord Jesus. The emperor feared that the discussion might divide the church, and thus divide the empire which he was desirous of more firmly uniting; for even at that early day the nominal church and the empire were one and the same – 'Christendom.' And desiring to have some authority as a standard to settle the dispute, and to tell the people what to believe and what to disbelieve, and finding the bishop of Rome already the most popular of the claimants to primacy (popehood or headship), as well as the most 'orthodox' – the one most nearly in harmony with the emperor's views on the questions – Justinian, by documents, not only condemned the doctrines of the Eutychians and Nestorians, but, addressing the bishop of Rome as the Head of all the holy churches, and of all the holy priests of God, thus acknowledged him, and desired to assist the Pope in putting down the heresy and in establishing the unity of the church.

"But even after being recognized as a ruler, a sacerdotal emperor, for the time it was of no special advantage to Papacy, beyond the empty name; for Justinian was far from Rome, and Italy in general, was under the sway of another kingdom – the Ostrogoths – who did not recognize the bishop of Rome as supreme pontiff; for they were mainly Arians in faith. Papacy, therefore, was exalted and advantaged in name only, by the emperor's recognition, until the fall of the Ostrogothic Monarchy, when its exaltation became an actual fact. Indeed, as if by a preconcerted arrangement, the emperor at once (A.D. 534) sent Belisarius and an army into Italy, and in six years after the pope's recognition by

the emperor, the Ostrogothic power was vanquished, and their king Vitiges and the flower of his army were taken with other trophies to Justinian's feet. This was in A.D. 539, which is therefore the point of time from which we should reckon the 'Desolating Abomination set up.' Papacy there had its small beginning." (C70)

To the time of Constantinople the Great, the three major divisions of the Empire's religious population, consisted of the Christians, the Jews, and the Pagans. This was now changed, inasmuch as the Pagan division, virtually dead, had been superseded by the pseudo-Christian – the nominally Christian church; and this was now the "third part."

When **Wormwood** fell in upon the earth, it was not the truly Christian "part" nor the Jewish "part" that was directly affected; but rather this nominally Christian sector of the populace: and its "**rivers**" (channels of the truth), its "**fountains**" (sources of the truth), in fact, all its "**waters**" (truth) became contaminated, so that "**many men died**" because of the bitterness (poisonousness) of these "**waters**."

"The many men who died because of drinking the poisoned waters, represent the many who have been influenced to accept the teachings and claims of this great false church system, and who thus suffer spiritually, losing all appreciation of and desire for the pure truth that comes from the true fountain, the Word of God, and the unpolluted, divinely appointed channels, the Apostles and Prophets." (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 1, p. 402)

Out of the pure fountain of truth – the Word of God, there flowed the refreshing, revitalizing water of life: the doctrine of the ransom sacrifice of Christ Jesus, which teaches that the blood of Jesus, shed on Calvary's cross, is the only means whereby the sinner can be cleansed from sin, and brought back into favor and fellowship with God. Accordingly, the sacrifice of Jesus replaced yearly and daily sacrifices – the typical sacrifices of ancient Israel; and brought in a "once for all" full and complete redemption. Therefore, this sacrifice was never again to be repeated. (Heb. 10:1-10) The Papacy, however, in the so-called doctrine of the Mass, has polluted this great truth; and taken away from Christ, the effectiveness of his sacrifice (Dan. 8:11), substituting for it the daily sacrifices offered by its priests. The doctrine seems to have had some popularity before the Papacy came fully into power; but it was the Papacy that foisted it upon the church. Transubstantiation, which is but one feature of this doctrine, though practiced for centuries, became a dogma to this church by the decree of the 4th Lateran Council in A.D. 1215. The binding (blinding?) effect of the doctrine of the Mass upon all Christians was set forth by the Council of Trent which met from Dec. 13th, 1545 to December 4, 1563, as follows:

"If any one shall say that the Mass is only a service of praise and thanksgiving, or a bare commemoration of the sacrifice made on the Cross, and not (in itself) a propitiatory offering (i.e., a sacrifice which itself makes satisfaction for sins); or that it only benefits him who receives it, and ought not to be offered for the living and the dead, for sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities: let him (who so denies the power of this sacrifice) be accursed." (*Concil Trid. Sess. 22, De Sacrificio Massae, Canon 3.*)

And when the great fountainhead of the truth became thus contaminated, could it possibly have been otherwise than that the "rivers" and "waters" should likewise suffer?

May we not consider that this too, was a judgment of God visited upon the false church? As God turned the human race over to a reprobate mind because it refused to take him into its thoughts (Rom. 1:28); so too, he seems to have left the nominal church – the church which refused to receive the truth in the love of it – similarly, to its own devices (2 Thes. 2:7-10), and the papacy was one of these!

"So we see it today. Many are preaching themselves rather than preaching the Gospel, the good tidings of the Kingdom; they are attracting disciples after themselves and their denominations, rather than attracting them to and uniting them only with the Lord, as members of his body. They are seeking to be the heads of churches, instead of having all the members of the body looking directly to the Lord as the Head. From all such we should turn away – the true sheep should give them no encouragement in their wrong course. The Apostle Paul speaks of these as having a form of godliness but denying its power. (2 Tim. 3:5) They are great sticklers for days, forms, ceremonies, ecclesiastical authorities, etc., and are highly esteemed amongst men, but an abomination in the sight of the Lord, saith the Apostle. The true sheep must not only be careful to recognize the voice of the true Shepherd and to follow him ... not to support, not to encourage those who are self seeking." (F248)

#### **Daniel's Prophecy concerning the Papacy (Dan. 8:10-12)**

"And it became great even unto [controlling] the host of heaven [the entire Church], and it caused some of the host and of the shining lights to fall to the earth, and trod them under foot. Yea, it magnified itself even up to the Prince of the host. [It assumed to itself honors and dignities, and applied to itself prophecies and titles, which belong to Christ Jesus, the true Chief or Prince or Head of the Church.] **And it took away from him [Christ] the CONTINUAL SACRIFICE**, and the **BASE OF HIS SANCTUARY** was overthrown. And the host [people] was given over to it against the continual sacrifice, through transgression; and it cast down truth to the ground, and its doings prospered." (C96)

### **The Continual Sacrifice vs. the Mass**

“Christ’s continual sacrifice was not actually canceled or abolished by Papacy, but it was set aside by a false doctrine advanced by that system – which gradually, but in the end fully and completely, set aside the merit of Christ’s sacrifice as a continual and ever-efficacious one. This false doctrine is known as the Mass, or Sacrifice of the Mass.” (C98)

“Romanists claim that the Mass was instituted by Christ and the Apostles; but the earliest mention of it we have been able to find was at the Council of Constantinople, A.D. 381. However, the date of the introduction of this defiling error is not particularly referred to in the prophecy, except that by reason of this fundamental error Papacy became the ‘Abomination of Desolation,’ before it was, as such, ‘set up’ in power, which, we have seen, was in A.D. 539.” (C103)

### **The False Church – The Apostate Church**

“... it is a mistake to suppose, as many do, that the Church at this time was a pure (virgin) church, suddenly lifted into dignity and power which became her snare. Quite the contrary is true ... a great falling away had occurred, from primitive purity and simplicity and freedom into creed-bound, ambitious factions, whose errors and ceremonies, resembling those of the pagan philosophies, garnished with some truths and enforced and clinched with the doctrine of everlasting torment, had drawn into the church a vast horde, whose numbers and influence became valuable to Constantine and were respected and used accordingly. No such worldly man ever thought seriously of espousing the cause of the humble, Christ-like ‘little flock,’ – the truly consecrated Church, whose names are written in heaven. The popularity with his soldiers, mentioned by the historians, is very different from popularity with real soldiers of the cross.” (B291)

### **God’s Rejected Counsels ... His Judgments! Wrath!**

“God’s counsel to mankind has been continually rejected, except by the few; and ... he permitted them to have their own way and to drop him and his counsels from their hearts. (Rom. 1:28) He then confined his special care to Abraham and his seed, who professed to desire his way and his service. Their hardness of heart as a people, and the insincerity of their hearts toward God, not only naturally prevented them from receiving Messiah, but just as naturally prepared them for and led them into the trouble which terminated their national existence.

“And so the light borne in the world during the Gospel age by the true Church of Christ (the class whose names are written in heaven) has borne witness to the civilized world of the difference between right and wrong, good and evil, and of the

coming time in which the one will be rewarded and the other punished. (John 16:8-11; Acts 24:25) This would have had a wide influence upon men had they heeded the Lord’s instruction, but wilful as ever, they have profited little by the advice of the Scriptures, and the trouble of the Day of the Lord will come as a consequence of the neglect. Again, it may be said to be the wrath of God inasmuch as it comes through disregard of his counsels, and as a reward of unrighteousness.” (A308)

### **As The Historian Sees It**

“Through Charlemagne the tradition of the Roman Caesar was revived in Europe.... Official Christianity had long overlaid and accustomed itself to ignore those strange teachings of Jesus of Nazareth from which it had arisen. The Roman Church, clinging tenaciously to its possession of the title of Pontifex Maximus, had long since abandoned its appointed task of achieving the Kingdom of Heaven. It was preoccupied with the revival of Roman ascendancy on earth which it conceived of as its inheritance. It had become a political body, using the faith and needs of simple men to forward its schemes.” (H. G. Wells in *The Outline of History*, p. 619)

**8:12, 13** – “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. And I beheld, and heard an angel 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!”

After the fall of the western Roman Empire, and with the exaltation of the bishop of Rome, we are ushered into what has universally been called, the “Dark Ages.” It is interesting to note that the events of this period do well accord with what is prophetically foretold in connection with the sounding forth of the fourth trumpet; viz., the partial eclipse of the light of the “sun,” “moon,” and the “stars.” (Rev. 8:12)

Aside from astronomical eclipses (when the light of the sun, or the moon, is cut-off by virtue of the occultation caused by some other celestial body), the darkening of the heavenly lights is generally occasioned by earth-born clouds. It is just such “earth-born” clouds that during these ages, as it were, have darkened the “sunlight” of the Gospel; the “moonlight” of the Law (its types and shadows, etc.); and the “starlight” of the Apostles (their inspired writings and teachings); making the “day” quite dark, and the “night” darker.

Contrary to the love of God as manifested in Christ Jesus; contrary to the testimony of the Law and the Prophets; contrary to the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles, the bishop of Rome:

“... claimed to represent our Lord Jesus to the church and to the world. The pope sat upon a throne of glory and became an autocrat in power; commanding kings, and ruling as both a spiritual and temporal prince. The pagan doctrine of the immortality of the soul, combined with the idea, also imbibed from paganism, of the torture of the wicked after death, was made the basis of the doctrine of eternal torture of heretics and of the Purgatorial sufferings after death of practically all Catholics to fit them for heaven.

“It was claimed of the Papacy that the thousand years of Christ’s reign, the Millennium, promised in the Scriptures to follow Christ’s second advent, began in the year 800 A.D., under Pope Leo III, who claimed to be the representative of Christ, his vicegerent, to begin Christ’s reign in his stead. In that year the ‘Papal states’ were ceded to the church by Emperor Charlemagne ...

“This Papal Millennium is known in history as **the ‘Dark Ages.’** During that time many were the erroneous doctrines and practices brought in and forced upon the peoples of Europe by the Papacy. Their theory was that they might conquer the world. They endeavored to do this by force, which led to great persecutions, notable among them being the Inquisition. During those **dark centuries** millions were tortured, exiled, and murdered in multitudinous ways, for refusing to bow to the mandates of the apostate church, under the leadership of popes, bishops and priests. Agents and spies were employed to apprehend and bring to punishment any who were found to express sentiments contrary to the Papal hierarchy, or who failed to bow in abject submission to their authority.

“Yea, these pseudo-apostles of God, as declared in the prophecy of Dan. 7:25, thought to ‘change times and laws.’ They presumed to have authority to alter the laws of God when it seemed advisable for them to do so. They sought to change the time for the reign of Christ.” (R5911:1-3)

In a sense, the Dark Ages ended when the power of the Papacy was broken – when the Papal “Millennium” came to a close in A.D. 1799: Napoleon had confiscated the territories once granted to the church and took the Pope, Pius VI, a captive to France, where the latter died. (See R5911:2, 3)

Almost immediately thereafter, “pestiferous Bible Societies” – so Rome called them – began springing up: the British and Foreign Bible Society was established in 1803; the New York Bible Society in 1804; the Berlin-Prussian Bible Society in 1805; the Philadelphia Bible

Society in 1808; and the American Bible Society in 1817. (See C50)

<sup>1</sup> One of the four “living ones” brought to our attention in the throne scene of Rev. 4:6, was “like a flying eagle.” (Rev. 4:7) As already set forth, the **keen visioned, far-sighted**, flying eagle, is a most apt symbolism for the Wisdom of God, which is able to “see” the end from the beginning (Isa. 46:10); is able to foretell events long, long before they are due to happen. This is why our God is –

“... never confused, bewildered, perplexed, anxious or careworn, nor in the least fearful that his plans will miscarry or his purposes fail; because all power and **wisdom** inhere in him. The scope of his mighty intellect reaches to the utmost bounds of possibility, comprehends all causes and discerns with precision all effects; consequently he knows the end from the beginning, and that, not only upon philosophical principles, but also by intuition.” (R1832:6)

It is for this reason that we here suggest that the “**eagle flying in the midst of heaven** [the ecclesiastical or spiritual world]” (Rev. 8:13), is again a symbolism for the Wisdom of God! Yet not here, merely in the abstract sense, but rather in the concrete form – the now “liberated” Bible, whose strong, i.e., “loud voice,” of prophecy began foretelling the “woes” that were yet to fall upon “**the inhabitants of the earth.**”

### Napoleon and the French Revolution

“Napoleon’s work, together with the French Revolution, broke the spell of religious superstition, humbled the pride of self-exalted religious lords, awakened the world to a fuller sense of the powers and prerogatives of manhood and broke the Papal dominion against which the religious Reformation had previously struck a death-blow, but which its after course had healed. (Rev. 13:3) The era closing with A.D. 1799, marked by Napoleon’s Egyptian campaign, sealed and defined the limit of Papal dominion over the nations. There, the time appointed (1260 years of power) having expired, the predicted judgment against that system began, which must finally ‘consume and destroy it unto the end.’ (Dan. 7:26)

“This date also clearly marks the beginning of a new era of liberty of thought, and the realization of individual rights and privileges, and has already been distinguished by its rapid strides of progress toward the full accomplishment of the work mapped out for this Time of the End. As a single illustration, notice the rise and work of the various Bible Societies – ‘pestiferous Bible Societies,’ Rome calls them, though it cannot now hinder them. And the sacred volume which once she confined in

<sup>1</sup> The Sinaitic and Alexandrian MSS read “eagle” instead of “angel” in Rev. 8:13; and so it appears in the recensions of Griesbach, Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf, Alford and Wordsworth.



chains, kept covered in dead languages and forbade her deluded subjects to read, is now scattered by the million in every nation and language.” (C50)

Re: the three woes, see “The Ten Egyptian Plagues” page 165

**9:1-11** – “And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth; and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.”

### Trumpet Soundings Symbolical

“... we, in common with almost all expositors, recognize that the seven trumpets of Revelation are symbolical symbols, and that so far it has been symbolically fulfilled. Christian people in general understand that five of these trumpets have already ‘sounded’ and are in the past – we would say six. It is admitted that those that have already ‘sounded’ have not been literal blasts of a bugle on the air, but divine decrees and their fulfillments; and we esteem that it is reasonable to expect that the seventh trumpet will

be similar in this respect to the preceding six. But literal things are so much more easily received by the natural man that, even though absurd they commend themselves as instead of the truth – until our minds are guided of the holy spirit into the proper channel by ‘comparing spiritual things with spiritual’ – by comparing the seventh trumpet with the preceding six trumpets, and not with a natural blast upon the air. So firmly entrenched is the error that many advanced Christians, Bible students and ministers are really expecting some day to hear what is sometimes denominated ‘Gabriel’s horn,’ shrill enough and loud enough to awaken the dead. It is both proper and necessary that we exercise great patience with Christian brethren, who thus display their infantile development of knowledge in respect to spiritual things, while we point out to them that the seventh trumpet – ‘The Last Trumpet’ – ‘The Trump of God,’ is as much symbolic as were its predecessors, and marks a much larger and more important fulfillment than any of them. Its fulfillment extends through a period of 1,000 years; its events mark and coincide with all the various features of the Millennial reign of Christ. Its beginning, we understand, was in 1878<sup>1</sup> and its termination will be a thousand years future from that date. It will be ‘sounding’ for all that time – during which its events will be in process of accomplishment.” (R2992:5)

The “trumpets” of the Revelation are markers in the progressive development of the Plan of God. The last three of these – the fifth (Rev. 9:1); the sixth (Rev. 9:13); and the seventh (Rev. 11:15); are the “woe” trumpets (Rev. 8:13), and seem to be identified with the “time of the end,” and perhaps more particularly with the great “time of trouble” with which the Gospel age is to end! Writing in 1902, Bro. Russell expressed the thought that the fifth and sixth trumpets had already sounded; and that we are now living in the days of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, whose fulfillment will extend through a period of a thousand years; and that its events will mark and coincide with all the various features of the Millennial reign of Christ, beginning in 1878. (See R2992:5)

Bro. Russell believed that the plagues which came upon the land of Egypt, and which finally brought about the emancipation of the Israelites, were typical and would find their counterpart in the great time of trouble.

<sup>1</sup> Also in R2982 Bro. Russell suggested that the reign began in 1878. However, he seems to have modified this view for in 1914, he said that the reign over his saints had begun, but that the mediatorial reign would not begin until all of the 144,000 had been glorified. We quote: “So Christ in glory is not a man, not an earthly being, not the sacrificing one, as before. **He is the glorified kingly priest, in power and glory now as king of the saints**, able and willing to succor them in all their trials and difficulties. **And by and by, after he shall have accepted all of his under-priests – after he shall have changed them to his own glorious likeness in the first resurrection, beyond the veil – then he will become the King and priest in glory to the world, and for a thousand years will reign** to bless and to uplift all the willing and obedient who, under the enlightenment then afforded, will draw nigh to God.” (R5472)

He identified the first three plagues to come upon the world of mankind with the three “woe” trumpets of the Revelation:

“... the plagues that came upon Egypt and which forced the deliverance of the Israelites typified the great time of trouble coming upon the world in the end of this age, by means of which ultimately the power of the oppressor will be broken, and all who desire full liberty to worship and serve the Lord will be granted the opportunity; and as Pharaoh and his hosts, in seeking to interfere with the divine program were destroyed, so Satan and all sympathizers and co-laborers with him, seeking to restrain and interfere with the labors of those who would serve the Lord, will ultimately be overwhelmed and destroyed in the second death.

“Noting that **these ten plagues prefigured the time of trouble in the end of this age**, we are not surprised to find similarly ten plagues mentioned in connection with the time of trouble portrayed in Revelation as constituting the consummation of this present age and this present evil world. There **the first three trumpets** are called **the woe trumpets** and following them come the ‘seven last plagues’!<sup>1</sup> The first three apparently affecting all, the last seven are restricted to those who are in opposition to the Lord.” (R3994:4)

“... the first plague which came upon the Egyptians was the turning of all the water of Egypt into blood – the river, ponds, etc., so that the Egyptians could not drink the water, but digged for themselves near the river. (Exod. 7:24) As the water represents truth, the thought here conveyed would be that from the worldly standpoint very soon all truth will become repulsive, every feature of truth connected with the divine plan as represented in the Word of God, will become abhorrent; and the digging of the wells would seem to imply that, rejecting the Word of God, the world (Christendom – Churchianity) will seek for truth in various ways of their own.” (R4060:4)

In order to appreciate the sounding of the fifth “trumpet” and the events associated with it, it will be necessary to imagine how the Adversary must have gloated over the fact that he had succeeded in setting-up the bishop of Rome as head over the Church. Until the end of the Papal Millennium, the Bible was no real threat to him; but immediately thereafter, after the coming into existence of the various Bible Societies, etc., he found it necessary to

change his strategy completely. He well knew that the knowledge of the Truth would set people free from the bondage to superstition and the like; and, that he would thus lose his hold upon them (See John 8:32); and since the Bible was the source of this Truth, he determined to undermine faith in its inspiration. Thus the time for the sounding of the fifth – the first of the “woe” trumpets, had arrived!

### The “Fifth & Sixth Trumpets”

Bro. Russell (R2992:5) indicated his belief that the fifth and sixth trumpets had already sounded, and that we are living in that of the seventh, which began sounding in 1874. He did not say specifically just when those trumpets did sound; but it stands to reason, it must have been before 1874.<sup>2</sup>

The fifth trumpet (Rev. 9:1-12) is identified with a plague of “locusts” and their destructive work. Seemingly, this has reference to the destructive work of the “higher critics” in undermining the benign influences of the Bible! The “seed” of this undermining was spawned by that rationalistic school of protestant clergy<sup>3</sup>, in the early part of the 19th century.

The sixth trumpet (Rev. 9:13-19) is identified with what might be termed the “boot-training” of the Lord’s great army, which is in due course of time to overthrow all present governments and institutions which shall prove themselves inimical to the establishment of the Lord’s Kingdom on this earth. The “seed” giving rise to those socialistic ideas, was brought forth by Karl Marx and his friend Friedrich Engels, by way of the Communist Manifesto (1848) and Das Kapital (1867), **later** in the 19th century.

It will be noted that both of these trumpets, the fifth and the sixth, thus in point of time, preceded the seventh.

### The Seven Last Plagues

“... so, now the wheat of the Gospel church is addressed by the Spirit ‘Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues’ – the seven last. (Rev. 18:4)” (R189:6)

John says, “I saw a star fall” – or more correctly, “I saw a star fallen,” (R.S.V.); for at the time of the sounding of the fifth “trumpet” he merely witnessed that this “star” had already fallen! This is, of course, significant, for here it would seem that the Apostle John, represented the Church in the end of the Gospel age, looking back upon **certain events which had already taken place**. John says, that “to it” (*Marshall’s Translation*) – the “star” which he

<sup>1</sup> In the Article, this word reads “trumpets,” which quite evidently is erroneous. We have altered it to read “plagues” to agree with Rev. 15:1.

<sup>2</sup> “It has been symbolically sounding since 1874, and will continue.” (D601)

<sup>3</sup> “Higher Critics”: Semler (1725-1791); Paulus (1761-1851); de Wett (1780-1849); Baur (1792-1860); Strauss (1808-1874); Wellhausen (1841-1918)

beheld had fallen – was given the key to the “bottomless pit” (the pit of abyss). The question arises as to just Who?, or What? was this “star.” It is suggested, that since the “24 elders” of Revelation (Rev. 4:4; 5:8, 14; 11:16; 19:4) do not necessarily represent the prophets who testified concerning the Kingdom, but more particularly the **personification of their testimonies** (RS29:4); so too, the “star” here referred to does not necessarily represent any individual or group of individuals, but more particularly it is the **identification of the teachings of the higher critical** school of Christian (?) theologians, concerning the Bible. By this teaching, the erstwhile position of exaltation accorded the Bible as the divinely inspired and infallible Word of God, was exchanged for that of an ordinary, humanly contrived novel, of only limited and questionable worth to the Church of God. Such were the teachings of Semler, Paulus, de Wette, Baur, Strauss, Graf, Kuenen, Wellhausen, etc. ecclesiastics, theologians all!!! And thus did Satan seek to undermine the Scriptures, and to rob God’s people, as it were, of the comforts of faith which the Bible afforded such as were wearied and tired, opening up for them the “bottomless pit” from whence arose doubts, fears, and utter despair! The “sun” (Gospel light) became darkened, and the “air” (ecclesiastical atmosphere) polluted by reason of the “smoke” (confusion and fog) which emerged from that “pit.”

“Few realize that the Bible has been in the hands of the public for only about a century. When our oldest Bible Societies were organized, Bibles were possessed by the rich alone. Now they are to be found in every house and can be obtained free of cost by the destitute. Additionally, many helps to Scripture Study are in print and people are learning the value of some of these and the usefulness of Bible concordances.

“Furthermore, we are prone to forget that general knowledge has just begun to reach the masses. It is not more than a dozen years since education has been compulsory in all the most civilized lands. Thus God has favored our day in a twofold manner – by giving us the Bible and by giving the intelligence necessary to its study.

“But just as these most precious opportunities are in the hands of the masses, just as these blessings of increased knowledge are being given to humanity, just as Christendom is prepared for Bible Study, the Lord has allowed the Adversary to bring forward the most subtle influence in opposition to the Scriptures. The foul-mouthed infidelity of the past has been supplemented by a far more dangerous enemy to Christian faith – the infidelity generally known as ‘**Higher Criticism**,’ especially dangerous because of its insidious character.

“**Higher Criticism** has entrenched itself in nearly all the colleges and theological seminaries of Christen-

dom. While all the churches of all denominations ostensibly stand as defenders of the Bible, yet the citadel of faith is being captured by the great Adversary of God and the Truth—Satan – who is deceiving, estranging and misleading the hosts of Christendom through the very theological professors and doctors of divinity to whom they have been led to look for spiritual light and direction and whom they had supposed to be staunch defenders of the Bible as the inspired Word of God.” (RS104:3, 6)

There is, of course, a sense in which water bespeaks refreshment; and, the Truth being put forth by the Bible Societies, and more particularly the tracts, etc., published by the old *Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society*, and intended for the refreshment of God’s people, because of the higher criticism, etc., became, as it were, “bloody,” i.e., “undrinkable.”

“... we suggest that water is ... a symbol of the Truth; and that the earth is ... a symbol of society. The pouring of the water upon the earth would ordinarily mean refreshment of the earth, a blessing; and the pouring of the truth upon society would ordinarily be expected to mean a blessing to society; but in the symbol the water turned to blood, repulsive, abhorrent, symbolizing death; and this, in the antitype, would signify that in the present time the pouring out upon society will produce an effect contrary to what might ordinarily have been expected. Society, civilization, has been claiming, especially within the last century, to be searching high and low for the truth. But this type says that the time has come when these professed truth-seekers (the word science signifies truth) will reject the truth, disdain it, and to them it will seem obnoxious, loathsome, intolerable ... the Gospel message will become darkness to the eyes of society in general **through the sophistries of Higher Criticism**, Evolution theories, etc., of this boastful day; while **the Law**, represented by the moon, **will be viewed as bloody** – that its sacrifices will not be esteemed as types nor appreciated as such, but regarded as the work of misguided Jews, who slaughtered their animals by the thousands because of their ignorance and superstition, and that the commands which they obeyed were not of God, but of their own conjecture and priestly connivance. The same thought attaches to this sign or testimony of the water of truth being poured upon the earth. It will be represented as bloody instead of being absorbed as truth.” (R4059:5)

Let it be noted that the “**star**” which **had fallen from the ecclesiastical heaven** – the teachings of the Higher Criticism – opened, as it were, with a “key” the “bottomless pit” **of a modernism**, from whence there then belched forth a beclouding “smoke” – **an agnostic theology!**

And as if this were not enough of an evil, out of the “smoke” emerged a swarm of “**locusts**” – preachers and teachers of this new-fangled theology, bent upon a course of destructive indoctrination of the “**inhabiters of the earth.**” (Rev. 8:13)

These “locusts” are described as to their “shape,” their “crowns,” and their “faces” (Rev. 9:7); their “hair,” and their “teeth” (Rev. 9:8); and their “breastplates,” and the sound of their “wings” (Rev. 9:9); and their “tails,” “stings,” and the period of their effectiveness. (Rev. 9:10)

The expression as it occurs in the *Authorized Version* – “the shapes ... were like horses ...” is not a very good one; and most modern translators have rendered the Greek text something like this: “the **appearance** was like unto horses ...” It is not the **shape or form** that is referred to, but rather that their **likeness** was like unto horses prepared for battle! As if to say, these preachers and teachers of the Higher Criticism, would come forth like an host equipped for an offensive warfare. And, of course, they have carried the battle right into the midst of the “conservative’s” camp! For this purpose the respective colleges and seminaries had equipped them with “tails” and “stings” like unto scorpions (Rev. 9:3, 5, 10), so that they might be able not only to inflict the tormenting “sting” of disappointment, but also to leave behind in their victims the irritating poison of an unhappy scepticism. It is no wonder then, that “men” should seek death, and not finding it (Rev. 9:6) probably wish that they had never lived (believed), and might thus now be free from all their conscientious scruples regarding the Bible and its divine inspiration. Such is the “torment” that hurts; and the scourge of these “locusts” is to last “five months.” (Rev. 9:10) Does this mean for a symbolic period of 150 years?

But these “locusts” were restrained. (Rev. 9:4) The natural objects for locust attacks are the green things – the grasses and the trees. But these “locusts” were commanded not to “hurt” such, but only those “**men which had not the seal of God in their foreheads.**” Perhaps the “green things” – those likened here to the grass and trees, are intended to represent all of the faith-justified, the consecrated, who shall be living in the end of the Gospel dispensation. Surely, “green” is a most apt symbolism for restitution – the faith-restitution accounted to those saints who because of their knowledge of the plan of God, will be left unmolested by this “woe,” even as were the typical Israelites by the locust scourge which came upon the ancient land of Egypt. (See Exod. 10:12-15; R3995:2)

Since “green things” seem here to represent the saints living in the end of the Gospel age, one might ask as to what the difference between the “grass” and the “trees” is intended to signify; we suggest, the “great company” and the “little flock” respectively. As there is always more grass than there are trees, so also in the end of the age, the number of the “great company” will far exceed that of the “little flock.” It is also interesting to note that the

roots of the grasses are comparatively more tender, more easily broken than those of trees, suggesting perhaps that the faith of the “great company” is never quite as strong as that of the “little flock,” nor does it run as deep! Grass does have a certain beauty, yet it never is as transcendent as that of the blossoming and fruit-bearing trees. Just so is it also in the matter of the character development of these two classes. Grass also has a fragrance, yet it is seldom noticeable except when it is bruised or cut, but that of the blossoming and fruit-bearing trees is yielded freely, even as a “sweet savor” unto the Lord. How beautifully, then, is the difference between these two classes of the justified, faith-restituted saints – those who shall be spared of the evils of the “locust” scourge – here represented in the “green things”!

John tells us that these “locusts” wore **upon their heads “as it were crowns of gold.”** (Rev. 9:7) It will be granted that to this time, the one thing which had set the Bible apart from all other books – its crowning feature, was its divinely inspired infallibility. Now, these new Bible exegetes, surreptitiously have removed that crown: by way of their teaching and preaching they have virtually transferred it unto themselves!

“Wounded in the house of its friends,’ is certainly true of the Bible today: for it has no outside foes one-half so antagonistic, so injurious. But it is not the Bible’s friends who attack it – but enemies, who under guise of being its friends have received honored positions in the household of faith – who, from the vantage point of its pulpits and colleges and editorial chairs, insidiously stab the Bible, while professing to love and reverence it.

“Three volumes have just issued from the press, each one calculated **to undermine, shake and overthrow the faith of many of God’s people**, who could not be reached or shaken by the same testimony if it reached them from disreputable or infidel sources. The first of these is volume three of the series being **published by the higher critics.** The second is by Rev. Lyman Abbott, D.D., successor to Henry Ward Beecher in Plymouth pulpit, but now editor of the *Outlook*. The third is by Judge Charles B. Waite. It is not for us to judge that these essayists are dishonest; nor that they are seeking rewards of fame as leaders of thought, in a direction toward which all but the very few will shortly follow them, ‘as sheep having no shepherd.’ Rather, we will suppose these writers to be thoroughly honest – intent upon telling the truth as it appears to them. Indeed, we see in this movement a fulfillment of the Bible’s predictions respecting our day, the ending of the present age.

“We may not state the matter too strongly when we declare that God is back of the many present-day movements which are ensnaring many and making shipwreck of their faith, in the sense that

he designedly does not hinder such erroneous presentations, but, on the contrary, permits circumstances to foster and prosper them. Thus the Lord declares through the Apostle, 'God shall send them strong delusions that they may believe a lie; that they all might be damned (condemned, as unworthy a place in the Bride of Christ) who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness – because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.' (2 Thes. 2:10-12)

"The very men who are thus becoming blind leaders of the blind into the ditch of unbelief are men who have had first-class opportunities as respects education and opportunities for Bible study; men who, had they loved the truth and sought it, would have found it clear, convincing, precious; but who, rejecting the Lord's leading, and leaning to **their own understanding**, have become vain in their imaginations; have cut loose from their faith-anchorage, and are helplessly drifting they know not whither." (R2813:2, 3)

"The fact that the first named is gotten out by the **higher critics**, tells in a word of its **antagonism to the Bible as a divine revelation**, and it will probably circulate chiefly among theologians already saturated with doubts, and too conservative to circulate such books among their people to arouse doubts and questions they could never hope to answer. But the other two books are of a different caste – intended for the people, and likely to be well advertised, and 'pushed' upon public attention by their publishers, and will work havoc among those resting their faith upon sects and creeds." (R2814:4)

The "crowns" of glory and honor which God intends for his saints, are not such as can be arbitrarily appropriated by them; nor is the salvation of these saints one that rests upon the infallibility of their teachers; but upon the infallibility of the Word of God! Through that Word these saints are admonished to meekness and lowliness (Psa. 25:9; Matt. 11:28-30); and upon their faithfulness to their covenant of sacrifice will receive the "crown of life" – immortality. (2 Tim. 4:8; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 2:10)

Their "**faces**" "**were as the faces of men**," (Rev. 9:7), for they were men; yet men who had never been begotten of God's holy Spirit, and therefore were not able to discern spiritual things, and could ill afford to set themselves up as "lords" (rulers, as it were) over God's heritage. True, they were educated; had degrees from colleges and seminaries; were teachers in the renowned schools of learning; and preachers in the most influential pulpits of Christendom. They represented all that might seem glorious and honorable to men; but in God's sight they were but **blind men**, leading others together with themselves, into the ditch! (Matt. 15:14)

Their "**hair**" was "as the hair of women." (Rev. 9:8) We believe, reference is here, not to its texture, but rather to its length. If so, let it be noted that the Apostle Paul declared this feature of woman's hair to have been given to her as a "glory," instead of a vail. (1 Cor. 11:15) The relationship between Adam and Eve was undoubtedly to reflect the relationship which was subsequently to subsist between Christ (the heavenly Bridegroom), and the Church (the espoused virgin, the "Bride of Christ," the "Lamb's Wife.") Mother Eve undoubtedly had long hair; and this in contrast to Adam's shorter hair, we believe, was intended to show that Eve was not the "head" but that Adam was; very much as in later years the under-priesthood wore bonnets to signify that they were not the Chief, or High Priest, and the latter went "with uncovered head." (F271) The Apostle adds that for a man to wear his hair long "it is a shame unto him." (1 Cor. 11:14)

Perhaps a woman's long hair was intended to signify or symbolize, not merely a subserviency, but also that honor, reverence and esteem, in which the Church was to regard her "Head" – Christ Jesus, and the Word of God which he proclaimed; and which he would continue to teach by way of the "brethren" (elders, etc.,) who, for the Church would be His representatives, or "angels." (F272)

The incongruity of these "locusts" in their having "men's" faces, and "women's" hair, seems to signify that these preachers and teachers of the Higher Criticism, having, contrary to the divine will, arrogated unto themselves the right to be the teachers of the Church, would by the same token fail to "hold" (honor, reverence and esteem) "the head." (Col. 2:19) St. Paul had warned the early Church against submitting to any such as these! (Col. 2:8, 18) For in the pride of knowledge they revered their own intellects, instead of the Word of God; and honored their own erudition and scholarship with esteem, rather than Christlikeness of character. In truth, these preachers and teachers of the Higher Criticism **are neither the Church nor its God-given teachers!**

Their "**teeth**" were "as the teeth of lions." (Rev. 9:8) Lions' teeth are specially adapted to biting and tearing apart their prey. The fact that teeth are necessarily identified with the mouth (though this is not here mentioned), seems to suggest the ruthless manner in which these "locusts" tear apart and destroy, whoever and whatsoever challenges them; impugning the intelligence of all who might seek to defend the Bible as the inspired and infallible Word of God.

Their "**breastplates**" were "as it were breastplates of iron." (Rev. 9:9) Evidently, this bespeaks a defensive shield to protect them against any harm; surely, not a breastplate of righteousness! This protective shield, we believe, is the impunity afforded them by the synods, conferences, etc., in not removing them from their positions of preachers and teachers within the church institutions.



John's attention was directed also to the "wings" of these "locusts;" yet not so much to them as a means of locomotion, as to the "sound" of them when they were in motion; which latter was like unto that of "**chariots of many horses running to battle.**" (Rev. 9:9) Perhaps this was intended to be indicative of the zeal with which these preachers and teachers of the "higher criticism" move about to carry on their nefarious work, often accompanied with controversy!

These "locusts" unlike those of Prov. 30:27, "have" (R.S.V.) a "**king**" over them; none other than "**the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon [destruction], but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon [destroyer].**" (Rev. 9:11) Is there any better way in which Satan could have been identified with the work of these "locusts" – the higher critics?

"... the Word of God not only describes at length the person and power of the devil, but it also acquaints us with his purposes, which may be summed up under two heads, namely, **to deny the Word of God and to destroy the work of Jesus Christ.** It would be apart from our present purpose were we to turn aside and show at length how every available weapon was employed in the first centuries of the Christian era to destroy the Bible, and how **in these last days Satan is using the pens of the 'higher critics' to destroy the authority of the Holy Scriptures.** Suffice it to say that, from the day when he repudiated the words of Jehovah to Eve, until the moment when he is cast into the Abyss, his untiring energies will be devoted **to the work of denying the Oracles of God.**" (R5847:6<sup>1</sup>)

#### **Anent: the "Higher Criticism," etc.**

"... tens of thousands – include many of the most learned of our day, just as the falling at the First Advent of our Lord included the Doctors of the Law, the Chief Priests and the members of the Sanhedrin. The fall in this case is not a moral defection, not a falling into vulgar sin, but the falling away from 'the faith once delivered to the saints' – a falling into Evolution theories, into Higher Criticism, Infidelity, into Theosophy, into New Thought, Christian Science, etc., – away from the teachings of God's Word respecting the fall of the race into sin and under Divine sentence, respecting the redemption of Adam and all his race by the precious blood of Jesus, respecting the deliverance of the Church and ultimately as many as will receive Divine favor at the hands of Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood. – (Jude 3; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19)" (SM245)

#### **Anent: the "Higher Criticism"**

"Beyond any question some unknown writer gathered up the legends of his time and used them to describe a hero, whom he named Abraham. A later writer used the same legends, but he called his hero Isaac. Without doubt all these stories were invented to account for the supremacy of Israel over Edom.' So said a Rev. Doctor in his 'lecture' to some fifty ladies of his church a few days since – in a Congregational church not far from Boston! At the close of the lecture, among others, this question was asked: 'Doctor, do you believe that any such person as Abraham and Isaac ever lived?' 'Well, I don't know,' replied the Doctor. 'It is quite possible that persons bearing those names have lived, but probably these names represent nations or tribes. I should say that the weight of best modern scholarship is against the theory that any such person as Abraham and Isaac actually lived'."

Bro. Russell comments on this as follows:

"What a pity that Isaiah could not have heard a course of lectures like these before he prophesied! Then he would have been spared the mortification of making such a reference as we find in his prophecy – (Isa. 41:8) 'But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.' And another blunder worse than the first: 'Look unto Abraham your father, and not Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him and increased him!' But it may be that 'the best modern scholarship' will discover, if indeed it has not already proven, that no such prophet as Isaiah ever prophesied or lived even. This would do much in clearing the way for a solid foundation for our faith.

"It is a great pity also that Matthew could not have heard or read a few lectures concerning the 'higher criticism' before he wrote his book; for he would have omitted the first chapter which has deceived so many ignorant souls since his time! A great many people have lived in times past and 'fell on sleep' believing that in some way Jesus was descended from Abraham! Alas, what ignorance! Why could not the wise men of the East have discovered the new knowledge ages ago?

"Moreover, what help it would have been to Jesus if he could have known the 'last word of our best scholarship!' He would not have been deceived, nor would he have deceived others by quoting from those 'old legends,' as He did in Matt. 22:32: 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the

<sup>1</sup> This quote was not made directly by Bro. Russell himself, but by an Arthur Pink. However, since Bro. Russell made no adverse comment, it undoubtedly means that he was in fullest accord with **all** the thoughts expressed in the article: "*Satan's Counterfeit of True Religion.*"

God of Jacob! Nor would He have said: 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad. I say unto you before Abraham was I am.' (John 8:56, 58) Then think of the unfortunate Stephen! Had he only known the results of 'the best modern scholarship' he never would have spoken as he did in Acts 7:5 – and so might have saved his life! If he was ignorant or so foolish as to rehearse as true a lot of 'legends' about people who never lived, why should not the multitude gnash on him with their teeth, stop their ears, run upon him with one accord, cast him out of the city and stone him to death! James too, was deceived and quoted as a fact a passage from these same 'old legends.' (Jas. 2:23)

"But the most deluded of all those poor, ignorant men, who lived and worked in the first century was Paul! How unhappy he must be even in heaven (if there is any heaven), if he now knows the 'last word of best modern scholarship!' His ignorance first appears in quoting the same 'old legend' that fooled James, in his letter to the Galatians. (Gal. 3:6) He repeats the myth in his letter to the Romans. (Rom. 4:1-4) But worse than this, in the ninth chapter he digs up and palms off onto the innocent and unsuspecting Romans a whole string of 'legends'!

"Ah me! Four years of preaching and working does not seem to have brought any more light into his benighted mind! for then he wrote that strange epistle to the Hebrews! Who can read the eleventh chapter of that epistle in the light of 'the best modern scholarship,' with any degree of allowance for the ignorant writer?

"Poor Paul! – To think of the sermons written and spoken from the 'legends' quoted by Paul in that chapter is enough to give a man spiritual nightmare! And the preachers have believed those stories to be true, and so have deceived their flocks. 'The blind leading the blind!' These deluded preachers have cited Abraham for an example of faith, living, saving faith, lo, these centuries past! And yet Abraham never lived! To buttress their sermons on prayer, these same preachers have quoted again and again Abraham's petitions as found in the 'legends' recorded in Gen. 15:17, 18! What a debt of gratitude we owe to the 'higher criticism,' that our eyes have been opened and that with the very beginning of this glad new century 'the best modern scholarship' has brushed away the myths and 'legends' of the ages and given us a 'new theology' founded upon the latest researches of 'the higher criticism!'" (R2875:4)

"For this deplorable result the unwise, and often really unscholarly, destructive criticism of the Bible is largely responsible. In former times the enemies of divine revelation were called infidels; now they are called churchmen of various creeds. Formerly they stood outside the temple of truth which they wished

to destroy; now they stand in its holy places, wearing its honors and titles, while they are vigorously but vainly striving to undermine its eternal foundations." (*The Old Book and the Old Faith* – R. S. MacArthur – Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, New York)

### Higher Criticism and Lawlessness!

"Higher criticism has much responsibility in connection with the growing lawlessness of the world. 'The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul' – transforming the being. The higher critics in all of our colleges and seminaries are doing a terribly destructive work, in comparison to which the work of Voltaire, Thomas Paine, and Robert Ingersoll were as nothing. It is safe to say that three-fourths of all the graduates of all colleges within the last thirty years have been unbelievers in the Bible, and that their influence has been used persistently to undermine the faith of others. The errors which led them to infidelity are liable to influence others. The Bible itself is a study, and only what it teaches should be believed whether favorable to or contrary to our former creeds." (R4923:5)

### Our Colleges and the Higher Criticism

"Our richly endowed colleges are undermining faith in the Bible, which means faith in a personal God, and are substituting a scant recognition of the laws of nature, devoid of sympathy or mercy. Practically every minister graduated during the last twelve years has been **an agnostic** and a believer in human evolution. Disbelief in the Bible account of man's creation in God's image, means disbelief also in the fall from that image, disbelief in the need of redemption and reconciliation, and disbelief in the necessity for the Restitution to be accomplished by Messiah's Kingdom. (Acts. 3:19-21)

"We do not question the sincerity of the Higher Critics. However, it is not honorable for those who have abandoned the creeds to pose before the public as supporters of the creeds, and to draw salaries and receive honorary titles for undermining the faith of the people, while posing as the representatives of Christ and the Bible. Such a course is dishonest and dishonorable." (*Bible Students Monthly*, Vol. V, No. 10 "Philosophy of The Deluge")

### The Water of Truth vs. the Higher Criticism

"The people in general have lost their taste and appreciation for the water of life, the truth; and false teachers warn them against it, as poison. The wine of false doctrines now being manufactured at all the Theological Seminaries is the wine of evolution and **higher criticism**, which does not satisfy the thirst but increases the confusion of mind, and makes null every attempt to appreciate and comprehend the divine plan, as set forth in God's Word.



Even Babylon's notables are dissatisfied, famished. (Amos 8:11)" (R2904:6)

### **Anent: The "Higher Criticism"!**

The following, are gleanings taken from – "New Discoveries in Babylonia About Genesis" by P. J. Wiseman, C.B.E.

"Their fundamental mistake was that they attempted a literary analysis of the Book of Genesis, based on differences of style and the use of special words and phrases, at a time when ancient literary methods were unknown. And competent estimate of either age, composition, or authorship of a book implies a wide and adequate knowledge of the literary method in use during the period covered by the book. But the higher critical theories were decided before they were in possession of a single document of the Patriarchal age and were thus wholly ignorant of the manner in which records of that age were written." (p. 98)

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"With such scanty critical apparatus, and without a single piece of writing of the age of Genesis to assist them, they commenced their analysis, finally dissecting Genesis into a series of unknown writers and editors all of whom they allege could be detected by their 'style' or 'editorial comments.' Although nothing was known at this time, apart from Genesis, of early civilizations, the critics assumed that the times must be excessively crude, yet they committed the fallacy of subjecting Genesis to a type of literary analysis, which was supposed to be modern, just as if it was a piece of modern writing.

"This lack of knowledge regarding early history prevailing at the time the critical campaign began, made it possible for the critics to assume that civilization was primitive, and writing almost unknown to the Patriarchs. So unenlightened were men at this time that it was imagined that the wedge-shaped writing which had been found, was only a form of pottery decoration. Until the mounds of Babylon gave up their tens of thousands of tablets, and these, together with the inscriptions from the land of Egypt, had been deciphered, it was customary for commentators on Genesis, to write a special introduction which defensively suggested that writing was sufficiently prevalent to enable Moses to write! Thus the conservative Speakers' Commentary issued in 1871 says on Page 2, 'The first question then which naturally occurs is, was the art of writing known so early as Moses? and especially was it known to the Egyptians and the Jews.' Yet recently I have seen tablets dug up, and myself possess some, which were written 1,000 years before Moses, and the great museums now possess thousands of tablets inscribed with cuneiform writing, which were ancient when Moses

lived. It is now known that writing was so common a thousand years before the great Lawgiver was born, as to be used for ordinary commercial transactions, for civilization had already reached an advanced stage. (p. 99)

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"A personal incident regarding the application of the 'Accommodation' and 'Kenosis' theories may be permitted here. Some years ago a young chaplain called on me; we were complete strangers, but seeing on a shelf in my room a book entitled *Daniel the Prophet*, he remarked, 'You don't believe that kind of thing do you, that Daniel was a prophet? I had all that knocked out of me during the years I was at my theological college.' 'But,' I said, 'our Lord spoke of Daniel as a prophet.' My visitor replied, 'He did not know any more about that than he could learn from the people around him. Professor – says that Daniel never wrote it, that it is not prophecy, but history, it was written after the events, and made to look like prophecy.' I asked him whether he preferred to believe the Lord Jesus Christ or Professor – (I omit his name for he is still living, and I think would be pained that anyone should take him so literally and logically); he replied, 'I would rather believe Professor – for living in a more modern and critical age, obviously he is more accurately informed about these things.' In this way criticism has to rid itself of the testimony of the 'Faithful and True Witness' in order to support its theories. It cannot be difficult to the Christian and logical mind to decide between the critics and Christ." (p. 134)

### **The "Higher Criticism" in general**

"When men accept the position of Wellhausen respecting the date and origin of the books of the Old Testament, how can they arrive at a truly biblical theology? If the Pentateuch is not the work of Moses, but rather a compilation of conflicting documents which are not infallible in their statements, how can a trustworthy picture of the early history of Israel be derived therefrom? If the book of Isaiah is not the work of the great eighth century prophet, but rather is a compilation of oracles written by a number of authors under differing circumstances and conditions over a period of many years, how can we derive therefrom any dependable picture of the Messiah? ...

**"If one begins with the presupposition that the unaided mind of man is capable of submitting the Word of God to its own judgment, and so placing itself above the plain statement of that Word, one cannot conclude with the teachings of an evangelical Christianity..."**

"The greatest mistake that a present-day evangelical scholarship can make is to become confused as to the nature of modern thought, and to conclude that

modern thought, since it employs Christian terminology, has suddenly become Christian. It has nothing of the sort ...” (“*The Old Testament*” – Edward J. Young, quoted from *Contemporary Evangelical Thought*, F. H. Henry)

The Rev. R. Heber Newton, a Protestant Episcopal clergyman, declared:

“If the dear Christ’s throne stood on any such flimsy basis of prophecy as men have built up under it, then, when the underpinnings (of faith, which he has been actively engaged in removing) come tumbling out, as today they are doing, we might fear that his authority was dropping in with them; that no longer we were to call him Master and King; that criticism had pronounced his *decheance*. But his throne really rests on a nation’s (the Jews) growth of the human ideal and divine image. And since this nation’s growth was on the same general basis as the religious and ethical processes of other races (i.e., there was nothing peculiar about the Jews religion – nothing better than that of other nations, except that they were more religiously inclined, as the writer elsewhere claims – although on the contrary, the Scriptures claim and show by their history that the Jews were a ‘stiffnecked’ and idolatrously inclined people), his throne rests on no less secure foundation than humanity’s evolution of the human ideal and divine image.”

After quoting this in *R1418:4*, Bro. Russell goes on to say:

“Here is a repudiation of all that Christ taught on the subject of the ‘things written’ which ‘must be fulfilled,’ a repudiation of all his quotations from the Law and the Prophets; a repudiation of his repeated statements of God’s choice of that nation and the house of David and seed of Abraham as heirs of the promises that of these should come the predicted Messiah; a repudiation of his statement of the necessity of his death; that thus it was written, and thus ‘it was necessary’ that the Son of Man should suffer and rise from the dead in order that salvation and remission of sins, and consequently restitution from the penalty of sins, should be preached in his name unto all people. But whilst showing Christ to have been a wonderful Jew, and the great exemplar for both Jews and Gentiles, he utterly repudiates him as a Saviour in the sense that the Master taught – that he ‘gave his life a ransom for many’ – ‘to say (recover) that which was lost.’ Then, fearing to break the idol of our hearts too suddenly, and a little shocked by his own boldness as an iconoclast – he for the moment pacifies his own and his hearers’ hearts by (so to speak, saying, Hail, Master! and kissing the very one whose teachings he, as a ‘higher critic,’ is betraying) saying, ‘The dear Christ.’”

Commenting upon the Apostle Paul and his teachings, this same Rev. R. Heber Newton, had this to say:

“Against his (Paul’s) modest, cautious discriminations, our doctors (of divinity) set up their theory of the Bible, clothe all his utterances with the divine authority, and honor him with an infallibility which he explicitly disclaims.

“His intensely speculative mind had furnished a system of thought into which he built such ideas as these: The pre-existence of Christ, as in some mystic, undefined way the head of Humanity; the sacrificial nature of his death; the justification of the sinner through faith; ... the speedy return of Christ to reign on earth; the resurrection of the pious dead; the translation of the living believers; the final victory of goodness over evil; and the ending of the mediatorship of Christ, God then becoming all in all. ... With the incoming of a more rational, ethical and spiritual age, we may surely expect a finer fashioning of the forms of thought.”

After quoting the foregoing in *R1419:4*, Bro. Russell remarked:

“As this higher critic philosophizes that Peter and James and Paul and especially Jesus were the developments of the Jewish age, by processes of moral and physical evolution, what wonder if he concludes that himself and his co-critics, as the developments of this Brain-age, are much better able than they to teach the world – and to doctor divinity. The fact that Christ and the apostles taught the doctrines of justification by faith in the great sacrifice for sins, of a second coming of Christ, and of the resurrection of the dead, would, of course, be the best reasons for the repudiation of all those doctrines by the new lights of higher criticism; for, disbelieving in a plenary inspiration, they ask, How could any one get the true light eighteen centuries ago?

“So far from regarding our Lord Jesus as the one and only true Light of the world which sooner or later, in this or the next age, shall enlighten every man that cometh into the world, this ‘higher criticism’ asserts that the heathen ‘Bibles’ as well as ours, though mostly error, were rays of the light which is now, as a result of their ‘higher criticism’ about to burst upon the world with electrical brilliancy. But, lo! we perceive that what they offer is only a rehash of the old heathen doctrine of evolution – the wisdom of the East – which has done so little for its votaries, whilst the Word of God, even misinterpreted, has carried blessings to every land.” (See *R1418:4; 1419:5*)

### **Another Locust at Work!**

“Man Elects God Now, and Not God Man” Declares Dean Of Chicago Divinity School.

“In an address on ‘The Gospel and the New Age,’ Shaler Matthews, dean of the divinity school of the University of Chicago, noted for his commentaries on the Bible, before Haverford College students recently traced the decline of Christian faith and showed by a reconstructive process it can still be made to meet the spiritual needs of the age.

“Man elects God now, not God man,’ said the speaker. ‘We have outgrown conceptions of God as a king and a father. Our deity is a personality endowed with the qualities the god of an advanced people must have. We think in terms of scientific progress, and since Darwin propounded his theories on evolution we have been living under their controlling concepts, and come to look at Christianity in this light.’

“The church must modernize the gospel, restate the Testament teachings, or it will incur in the future the hostility of labor and science, and find in its diminished ranks only the mediocre.

“Dr. Matthews ridiculed the religious attitude which accepts outworn beliefs because ‘they were good enough for a sainted mother or father,’ saying that in the natural order of things children must break with traditions and get away from the religious decadence due to sentiment. He depicted the two factions at work trying to mold the religion of college men. On the one hand, old school teachers telling the youth to stop thinking and accept blindly their crude faiths and intellectual inheritance; on the other, strong men trying to adjust their faith to their judgment.”  
(*The North American*)

A very rich man, whom we have every reason to regard as a Christian in the ordinary sense of that title, even if not a “saint,” endowed the college whose teachings are represented by the head of its faculty in the above address. That rich man, already paying his employees liberally, gave liberally of his surplus to enlighten them or others of his fellow-creatures. Not vastly learned himself, he supposed that he was acting wisely, for the good of all mankind, when he entrusted so vast a fortune to the care of the learned ministers and professors of theology of his own (Baptist) denomination. Alas! he probably did not suspect that under the name of Christian influence and education his millions would be used to propagate Evolution doctrines contrary to the Bible, and to instill Higher Criticism of the Bible to utterly destroy the Bible’s influence. The size of his generous gift and the size of the resultant college give increased weight and influence to the infidel doctrines which are flooding Christendom.

We do not blame Mr. Rockefeller, but concede his good intentions; neither do we condemn the professor whose words we quote above. Ensnared of the Adversary, he is probably honest in the utterance of his convictions.

The point we do make is that the wealth and learning of Christendom have for the past thirty years been carrying forward the adversary’s work – destroying faith in a personal God and in the Bible as a revelation from him.

Now the fruit of their “sowing to the wind” is appearing and shortly they with others will reap the whirlwind of anarchy. Yet they are so blind to this as to fancy that the education they are giving the rising generation is the antidote for anarchy. Alas! they cannot see that “The reverence of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom.” Their educational program ignores this foundation and hence is proving injurious to the race. Discontent and not happiness is the result of such education, and its influence extends to the uneducated. (*R4114:6; 4145:1, 4*)

### A “Locust” and his Work Henry Ward Beecher

“The infidelity of the present age, under the seductive names of ‘science,’ ‘the higher criticism,’ ‘evolution,’ etc., is making not a few notable converts. As typical cases, we may mention such men as the late Henry Ward Beecher, and such papers as *The Outlook*, formerly the *Christian Union*. Mr. Beecher was considered a leader of thought in the religious world, and his fame and influence were not confined to one hemisphere. He became very outspoken in his denial of the doctrines which have been considered by all believers in the Bible as among the fundamental truths of revelation. As an illustration, we quote the following from the *National Baptist* of Sept. 6, 1883. It is from a reply by Mr. Beecher to J. S. Kennard, D.D., who had criticized some of Mr. Beecher’s views and utterances. He says:

“I am a cordial Christian evolutionist. I do not agree, by any means, with all of Spencer – his agnosticism – nor all of Huxley, Tyndall, and their school. They are agnostic; I am not, emphatically. But **I am an evolutionist; and that strikes at the root of all medieval and orthodox modern theology – the fall of man in Adam, and the inheritance by his posterity of his guilt, and, by consequence, any such views of atonement as has been constructed to meet this fabulous disaster. Men have not fallen as a race; men have come up. No great disaster met the race at the start. The creative decree of God was fulfilled, and any theory of atonement must be one which shall meet the fact that man was created at the lowest point, and, as I believe, is, as to his physical being, evolved from the animal race below him, but as to his moral and spiritual nature, is a son of God, a new element having come in, in the great movement of evolution at the point of man’s appearance.**” (Quoted from Uriah Smith’s *Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation*, p. 668)

### The Locusts at Work (?)

“*Zion’s Herald* publishes the results of an investigation respecting the number of ‘conversions’ made by two hundred M. E. ministers, educated in the Boston Seminary since Higher Criticism and Evolution began to be taught there fifteen years ago. The results are reported with great satisfaction as giving evidence that Methodism is prospering under the diet which repudiates the doctrine of the ransom and makes void the Word of God.” (R2647:4)

#### The Higher Critics vs. The Apostles

“... is it not a fact that certain of the so-called ‘higher critics’ regard themselves and are regarded by others as the equals or indeed the superiors of the apostles, as light-shiners, stars? And do not they and others show this, by preaching their own ideas, shining out of their own light on various subjects, without considering it necessary to consult or to give as proof the words of the inspired apostles? ... Indeed the light of these false stars, ‘wandering stars,’ is usually so opposed to that of the inspired twelve, that they can scarcely so much as find a suitable text from their writings.” (D594)

#### More Anent These “Locusts”

An excerpt from the “Sermon” book, in which Bro. Russell quotes from an Article in the “*Independent*” of New York City, being the confession of a “higher critical” preacher who preferred to remain anonymous; nor did he care to mention specifically, the church of which he was the Pastor.

“I have never won distinction by my heresy, nor even acquired a local reputation from violent departures from orthodoxy. If I should set about some Sunday morning to tell my congregation all my divergences from the accepted Christian belief I would shock them beyond measure. They understand in a general way that I am a liberally-minded person, and I take occasion not infrequently to hasten their heels in their movements from worn-out dogma to the truth that is to be. That they are engaged in such a journey I have no doubt; and most of them are willing to maintain a reasonable pace. My congregation is above normal in intelligence, information and sympathy with forward movements; but nevertheless I am fully persuaded that a complete revelation on my part of the beliefs to which my studies have forced me would set their ears a tingling, and not only awaken antagonism to me personally but also cause a turn of sentiment in the direction of conservatism and orthodoxy.

“So rapid is the advance in the religious opinion, at least as I experience it in my parish, that I would not hesitate for a moment now to give fullest utterance to views utterly condemnatory of the whole scheme of sacrificial atonement and imputed righteousness.

Devout saints who were wont to inquire anxiously why I did mention that Christ made full atonement for our sins every week or two, after a sermon on any subject from Dan to Beersheba now sit patiently under preaching which never refers to Christ as a Propitiatory Sacrifice.

“Experience has taught me not to be too rampant in my heresies. I have learned that if one keeps his doctrinal discoveries in his study drawer for about five years, and takes them out now and then to refresh his soul, allowing occasionally a delicate effluence from them to steal over a page or two of his next Sunday’s sermon, he will find at the end of the period that he may avow them as violently as he pleases, and they who aforesaid would have lit the torch for his burning will sit peacefully under his doctrine, and sing the last hymn lustily in satisfaction that they have heard once more the truth they have always believed.

“For this reason I am not shouting out every Sunday that I do not believe in the virgin birth of Jesus nor in the physical resurrection. Much as I honor and admire Doctor Cropsey, I am not scurrying to put myself in the pillory beside him. I let others do the talking, and I answer questions cautiously.

“I have hopes that before many years the heresies, as undoubtedly they are, of the miraculous origin and resurrection of Christ will become at least tolerated opinions. With patience, tact and perseverance I hope some day to bring out this deliverance of my soul, as I have already waited in patience for a time to declare my opinions of the atonement. To expose it now would endanger my real work, which is not to teach history, not even true history concerning Jesus, His Apostles, or His Church; but to enlarge lives with real religious faith, and induce some morals and gentle virtues through devotion to duty as God gives me to see it. One shrinks from being called a hypocrite, but it is encouraging to remember that in Jesus’ time they were not branded hypocrites who counted themselves still Jews and went to feasts while in utter contradiction with the prevailing opinion.” (SM296, 297, 299, 300)

Re: “The Sealing in Their Foreheads” – see special note on page 87.

#### The Five Months of Torments

“Whether the period of five months during which these locusts are said to commit their ravages is fixed on because the destruction caused by the natural insect lasts for that length of time, or for some other reason unknown to us, it is difficult to determine. There is want of proof that a locust-plague generally continues for the number of months thus specified, and it is otherwise more in accordance with the style of the Apocalypse to regard that particular period of

time as simply denoting that the judgment has definite limits.” (*The Expositor’s Bible*)

### **The End of Papal Domination and the Bible Societies**

“The era closing with A.D. 1799, marked by Napoleon’s Egyptian campaign, sealed and defined the limit of Papal dominion over the nations. There, the time appointed (1260 years of power) having expired, the predicted judgment against that system began, which must finally ‘consume and destroy it unto the end.’ (Dan. 7:26)

“This date also clearly marks the beginning of a new era of liberty of thought, and the realization of individual rights and privileges, and has already been distinguished by its rapid strides of progress toward the full accomplishment of the work mapped out for this Time of the End. As a single illustration, notice the rise and work of the various **Bible Societies** – ‘pestiferous Bible Societies,’ Rome calls them, though it cannot now hinder them. And the sacred volume which once she confined in chains, kept covered in dead languages, and forbade her deluded subjects to read, is now scattered by the million in every nation and language. The British and Foreign Bible Society was established in 1803; the New York Bible Society in 1804; the Berlin-Prussian Bible Society in 1805; the Philadelphia Bible Society in 1808; and the American Bible Society in 1817.” (C30)

“We remind you that it was between the years 1803 and 1813 that many of **our great Bible Societies** were organized. Only then the printing of the Bible in every language and in cheap form was commenced. The Bible was lifted up before the people – was exalted to heaven.... The Bible was greatly exalted in contrast to the degraded position which it had occupied during the dark ages. But several years were consumed in bringing it up to this high position.” (R5565:3)

### **Darkening of the Sun**

“... the sunlight of the gospel is daily becoming more and more obscure; and although this denial of the value of the precious blood as our redemption price has not so generally extended from the pulpit to the pew, yet, false doctrines long held sacred, together with reverence for leaders and learning, have made the way so easy that a large majority of all who get sufficiently awake to consider the subject fall an easy prey to this doctrine of Evolution, which denies the Scriptural doctrine of a primal fall and of a ransom from it. The Scriptures variously forewarn us of this great falling away, as well as of this **darkening of the faith** of the Church at this time; so that the Son of Man when he cometh will find the faith very scarce on the earth. (Luke 18:8) ...

“As the sunlight of the ransom becomes obscured, so the moonlight of the Mosaic Law, which in its sacrifices foreshadowed the ransom, must of necessity become obscured also. It is no longer uncommon for public teachers to refer to the bloody sacrifices of Israel, required by their Law, as barbaric. Once, when they saw by the true light of the Word of God, they appreciated the Apostle’s statement that Israel’s sacrifices were foreshadowings of ‘better sacrifices’ for sin; but now, refusing the antitype, the ransom, and denying original sin, and all need therefore of sacrifices for it – the typical sacrifices are repudiated also and esteemed barbaric. Thus **the darkening of the gospel sunlight results in the darkening of the moonlight**. ‘The moon shall be turned into blood.’ And Joel (2:10) adds that ‘the stars shall withdraw their shining,’ which signifies that when the gospel light is obscured, and the Law comes to be regarded merely as a meaningless and barbaric ceremony of blood, then the teachings of the God-ordained twelve stars of the Church (the apostles) will also fade from view – cease to be recognized guides or lights.” (D592)

### **Trees of Righteousness**

“St. Paul gives us the picture of a tree, the root of which goes downward and the trunk of which reaches upward, to obtain that nourishment which will give it strength and stability. As the roots of a tree push themselves downward and imbibe the nutriment of the soil, while at the same time the trunk and the branches reach up into the atmosphere to obtain through the leaves the necessary elements of growth, so the mentality of the Christian takes hold of the great and precious promises of the Word of God, while at the same time he is building character through his heart appreciation of these promises, in connection with the experiences of life. The roots of faith push down deep into the knowledge of the divine plan, while the tree of character grows higher and higher, developing and maturing the rich fruits of the holy Spirit of God; for instruction is a form of construction.

“While the Christian is thus growing up in character-likeness to our Redeemer, and his roots of faith are reaching deep down into the deep things of God, he is becoming established, settled. **A tree that is well rooted in the earth is hard to uproot**. It has a wonderful strength, a wonderful hold upon the earth.... So it is with the Christian whose faith has been properly established; he should be so fixed, so established in the promises of God’s Word, that no wind of doctrine could overturn his faith.” (R5557:6)

**9:12** – “One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.”

It is to be remembered that these woes are “upon the inhabitants of the earth” (Rev. 8:13); and are to culminate in the complete overthrow of the present order, making way for the establishment of God’s Kingdom, for which we have long prayed, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as in heaven.” (Matt. 6:10) And, while the nominal Church will be involved in these woes (as the Babylon which is to fall – Isa. 13:1-15; Rev. 17:18) the true Church – the saints of God, will look up, and lift up their hearts knowing that their redemption draweth nigh. (Luke 21:28)

**9:13-15** – “And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.”

The sounding of the sixth Trumpet, and the consequent release of the four angels, which to this time had been bound in the great river Euphrates, brings on the second woe!

The sixth angel represents the time; and the four angels represent the circumstances, prevailing in all parts of the world at the period involved.

The fact of John’s hearing at the time of the sounding of the sixth Trumpet, a “voice” coming from the direction of the golden altar which is before God, signifies that the release of this woe, is in full accord with the will of God, who has committed the carrying out of these features of the Divine Plan of the Ages, to his Son (Matt. 28:18; Rev. 4:11; 5:7-9), who is our High Priest, and as such he stands by the “golden altar” offering unto God, the “sweet incense” of the prayer-oriented lives (Rev. 8:4) of those few saints still remaining in the earth, and whom he intends shortly to glorify with himself.

The second woe, we believe, involves the movement amongst men that initiates the organization of the “Lord’s Great Army,” (Joel 2:11; Rev. 9:16) whose chief work will be the overthrow of everything in this earth that is inimical to the establishment of the Kingdom of God (Matt. 6:10; Rev. 11:15) – that glorious Kingdom – the “new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (2 Pet. 3:13; see also *B148, 152*)

Officially, “recruiting,” and “boot-training,” for service in this army, began with the sounding of this sixth Trumpet, when the time, and circumstances, were “ripe” – “the hour, day, month, and year” had arrived. We do not believe this time has reference to either the period during which this army is being prepared, or, to the length of time it will require it to do its task; but rather, to the specific time for this “release.”

## The Battalions Making Ready

“Unknown to men, he has for some time past been holding back the winds – preventing the conflict until the servants of God were sealed in their foreheads (Rev. 7:3) – given an intellectual knowledge **of the things coming** and their relation to the plan of God in the establishment of his kingdom. The Lord reserved until its due time that which he had previously declared through the prophet, the means and agency in the overturning of kingdoms – ‘knowledge shall be increased.’ When ready to have knowledge increased, and through knowledge liberty, the Lord brought to men the art of printing, to which, more than any other perhaps, the overturning of every form of evil and oppression among men is traceable.

**“We see the various battalions now making ready; the battle-line becomes more and more apparent, and the hosts are marching to their respective positions, and soon the engagement will be general.”** (R683:6; 684:1)

## The Euphrates

“Fleshly Israel was taken captive into literal Babylon, which was built upon the literal river Euphrates, while in the Gospel age Mystic or figurative Babylon, which carried away captive spiritual Israel, is portrayed as sitting upon the mystic Euphrates.... Literal Babylon being built upon **the river Euphrates**, which materially contributed to its wealth and resources, its overthrow was accomplished by the turning aside of those waters. So mystic Babylon sits upon, is supported by, many waters (peoples, nations), and its fall is predicted, through the turning aside of its supporters and sustainers, **the people**. (Rev. 16:12)” (*B208*)

**9:16** – “And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.”

And, while there have been some skirmishes fought along the line, through the years since, this army has not yet attained its full complement of warriors – 200,000,000 horsemen; and only when it does, will the real “offensive” begin. This number (200,000,000) is not to be taken literally; rather symbolically: it is so infinitely large, that it can only mean that virtually all mankind will one day be enlisted in its ranks! This means that there will be a time when virtually every man’s hand will be against his neighbor; when lawlessness and anarchy shall prevail! Concerning this army, we read:

“This army of the Lord must face the terrible conditions of the evil day, when the dread elements now preparing for the conflict, the fire, shall have reached the climax of readiness. This army it is that under the Lord’s overruling providence will overthrow the throne of kingdoms and destroy the strength of the

kingdoms of the nations. (Hag. 2:22)... So great an army as is here described by the Prophet, and one which is to accomplish such marvelous things, and that, as indicated ... is probably in existence at the present time, and under some course of preparation for the coming work of carnage. The description of the Prophet is not of an undisciplined mob, which might be easily dealt with by those educated in the arts of war; but it is of a mighty host under a high degree of discipline.

“Where, then, we inquire, is there such an army, under present instruction and training? – an army before which the earth (society) shall quake and the heavens (ecclesiasticism) shall tremble (Joel 2:10); which shall boldly array itself against the conservative forces of Christendom, both civil and ecclesiastical, and hope even to cope with its present strength? Where is the army that in the near future will dare deny Christendom’s time-honored doctrines, its statecraft and priestcraft? that will sullenly ignore all its anathemas, spurn its orders, and hurl back its thunderbolts of authority and organized power? that will face the roar of its Vesuvian artillery, defy its missiles of shot and shell, plow through its fleets of naval armaments, and, snatching the diadems from crowned heads, topple the kingdoms into the midst of the sea: that will set the heavens on fire, and melt the earth with fervent heat, thus as predicted by the prophets?

“That such an army is coming into existence and preparing for the desperate conflict we are none the less forcibly assured by the signs of the times than by ‘the sure word of prophecy.’ And it is the recognition of this fact (without any reference to or knowledge of the word of prophecy) that is now filling the heart of Christendom with fearful foreboding, and impelling statesmen everywhere to take extraordinary measures for protection and defence.

“But in these very measures for self-defence devised by ‘the powers that be,’ there is probably a snare which they do not realize. The armies upon which they depend for defence, be it remembered, are the armies of the common people: these millions of disciplined warriors have wives and sons and daughters and brothers and sisters and cousins and friends in the ranks of the common people, with whose interests their own are linked by nature’s strong ties; and their service of thrones and kingdoms is only secured by imperative orders, and made enduring by a remuneration which they are fast coming to consider as no satisfactory compensation for the hardships and privations which they and their families must undergo, not to mention perils to life and limb and health and fortune. Year by year these armed hosts are less and less infatuated with the ‘glory’ of war, more keenly alive to its sufferings and

privations, and less and less devoted to the sovereign powers that command their services, while the armies of toilers, of the common people at home, are becoming more and more irritated and dissatisfied with their lot, and more and more apprehensive of the future.

“Mankind in general is unconscious of the Lord’s interest in this battle: and almost all the contestants gird on the armor for personal and selfish interests in which they rightly realize the Lord could not share; and hence, while all on every side are ready to invoke the Lord’s blessing, few count on it – all seem to rely upon themselves – their organizations, numbers, etc. None will be more surprised than the ‘powers of the heavens’ the great ones of present ecclesiastical control, who going about to establish a plan of their own for the Lord, have neglected his plan as revealed in his Word. To these, the Lord’s work of the next few years will indeed be a ‘strange work.’ ...” (D544; 545; 547)

Were we to categorize this second woe, we would designate it “socialism” (including in the term, “communism” and latent “anarchy”). It is possible therefore, that the sounding of the sixth Trumpet coincides with the times of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels; and their presentation to the world of the “Communist Manifesto” (1848); and “Das Kapital” (1867-1895). Socialism, is a philosophical, or economic doctrine, that challenges the sanctity of private property; and favors its use for public (?) welfare; but it also sanctions rebellion, yea, even revolution, if its aims cannot be met in any other way! And, while on general principles, many, as yet, are averse to subscribing to these tenets – this philosophical and economic doctrine; just let laws be enacted which seemingly infringe upon their (?) rights; or let them be assessed taxes, which they feel are unreasonable, and therefore unjust; or let war be declared and some of their loved ones be drafted to serve therein; then see what their resentment may bring about – “demonstrations” – rebellion, and perhaps also revolution! The ultimate result of man’s innate selfishness, his self-centeredness, is always lawlessness and anarchy! It is this propensity in fallen man, that will cause practically all of mankind eventually to be enlisted in this “great army of the Lord” to accomplish the complete, and utter destruction of the present order.

### **The “Great Army” of the Lord**

“While the Lord forbids his people to fight with carnal weapons, and while he declares himself to be a God of peace, a God of order and of love, he also declares himself to be a God of justice, and shows that sin shall not forever triumph in the world, but that it shall be punished. ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.’ (Rom. 12:19; Deut. 32:35) And when he rises up to judgment against the nations, taking vengeance upon all the wicked, he



declares himself ‘a man of war’ and ‘mighty in battle,’ and having a ‘great army’ at his command. And who can give assurance that the multitudes who now compose the marshalled hosts of Christendom will not then constitute the great army that will throw its mighty force against the bulwarks of the present social order. (Exod. 15:3; Psa. 24:8; 45:3; Rev. 19:11; Isa. 11:4; Joel 2:11)

“The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea roar: he shall prevail against his enemies.’ The cry and roar of his **great army**, and their success in accomplishing his purpose of revolution, he thus attributes to himself; because they are accomplishing, though ignorantly, his work of destruction. He says: – ‘I have long time holden my peace; I have been still and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman: I will destroy and devour at once.’ (Isa. 42:13, 14)” (DS49)

### Every Man’s Hand Against His Neighbor

“... the time is not far distant when a still greater, more general and more terrible crisis will make manifest to the whole world that much of the politeness and gentleness of our day is only skin deep, and is not from the heart, the fruitage of the holy Spirit of love. In that great crisis, as the Scriptures show, **every man’s hand will be against his neighbor**. In that day of vengeance the masks of formal politeness will be discarded, and the world for a short time will get such a glimpse of its own hideous selfishness as will help prepare it for Millennial lessons in love and its grace, to be given them by the great Immanuel.” (R2203:6)

**9:17-19** – “And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.”

The “breastplates” for the protection of these “horsemen” is their legal status – the laws under which they are permitted to function as unions, guilds, etc., here likened unto “fire, jacinth, and brimstone,” by which they are able to resist all opposition, yea, even to destroy it.

“Horses” are symbols here of socialistic, communistic, and anarchistic, doctrines! Their “riders” – the “horsemen,” that control and direct them are indeed, the world of mankind, those represented by the “river,” upon which “mystic Babylon sits ... supported by, many waters [people, nations],” and (whose) “fall is predicted,

through the turning aside of its supporters and sustainers, the people. (Rev. 16:12)” (See B209)

The “horses” upon which they ride, have heads likened unto lions, that is, they are powerful for the tearing apart of their prey, and that is anything that may stand in their way. We are told that out of their mouths issue forth “fire, smoke, and brimstone,” – destructive agents all! And as if this wasn’t enough, their tails are like serpents, whose heads contain the deadly fangs by way of which they are able to inject poisons into the bodies of their enemies, and thus bring about their untimely death! This is what is represented in the legal right that unions, guilds, etc., have – their “striking” power (work-stoppage, boycotting, picketing, etc.,) by way of which “they do hurt.”

But it does not require a union of many individuals to inflict hurt and harm upon society. Even one man, is protected by the selfsame laws which enable the unions, etc., to function so powerfully – he has the right of free speech, and of the free press. We do not mean to suggest that these are evils in themselves. No! Quite to the contrary. But they can be corrupted by the unscrupulous. It is thus possible for one man to be so jealous and envious of another, whose social standing has been honestly attained and honestly maintained, that he will say things (not untrue, but surely, out of context), and thus, not only hurt, but often completely destroy the other’s reputation! And so do these socialistic (often most unsocial) philosophies and doctrines, like disease germs, find a most acceptable culture medium in the human heart!

“The battle of this great day of God Almighty will be the greatest revolution the world has ever seen because it will be one in which every principle of unrighteousness will be involved; for as truly in this judgment of the nations, as in the judgment of individuals, ‘there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hid that shall not be known.’ (Matt. 10:26) Behold, how, even now the search-light of general intelligence is discovering the secret springs of political intrigue, financial policies, religious claims, etc., and how all are brought to the bar of judgment, and by men, as well as by God, declared right or wrong as judged by the teachings of the Word of God – by the golden rule, the law of love, the examples of Christ, etc., all of which are coming into such remarkable prominence in the discussions of these times.

“The battle of the great day, like every other revolutionary war, has its stages of gradual development. Back of every indication of strife are the inspiring causes, the **real or fancied** national and individual wrongs; next comes a keen appreciation of those wrongs by those who suffer from them; then generally follow various attempts at reform, which, proving abortive, lead to great controversies, wars of words, divisions, strife of opinions, and finally to revenge and strife of arms. Such is the order of the Battle of

the Great Day of God Almighty. Its general character is that of a struggle of light against darkness, of liberty against oppression, of truth against error. Its extent will be world-wide, peasant against prince, pew against pulpit, labor against capital: the oppressed in arms against injustice and tyranny of every kind; and the oppressors in arms for the defense of what they have long considered to be their right, even when seen to be encroachments upon the rights of others." (D541)

### Conditions of this Battle Unprecedented

"According to the predictions of the prophets, the conditions of this battle will be without historic precedent. As already suggested, this final struggle is graphically portrayed in symbols in the forty-sixth Psalm. (Compare also Psa. 97:2-6; Isa. 24:19-21; 2 Pet. 3:10) The hills (the less high, less autocratic governments) are already melting like wax; they still retain their form, but as the earth (society) gets hot they yield to its requirements, little by little coming down to the level of popular demand. Great Britain is a good illustration of this class. High mountains (representing autocratic governments) will be 'shaken' by revolutions, and ultimately 'carried into the midst of the sea' – lost utterly in anarchy. Already 'the sea and the waves roar' against the bulwarks of the present social system: ere long the earth (the present social structure) will reel and totter as a drunken man, vainly endeavoring to right itself, maintain a footing and reestablish itself: by and by it will be utterly 'removed,' to give place to the 'new earth' (the new social order) wherein righteousness, justice, will prevail.

"It will be impossible to reestablish the present order, (1) because it has evidently outlived its usefulness, and is inequitable under present conditions; (2) because of the general diffusion of secular knowledge; (3) because the discovery that priestcraft has long blinded and fettered the masses with error and fear will lead to a general disrespect for all religious claims and teachings as of a piece with the discovered frauds; (4) because religious people in general, not discerning that God's time has come for a change of dispensation, will ignore reason, logic, justice and scripture in defending the present order of things.

"It will be of little consequence then that the ecclesiastical heavens (the religious powers, Papal and Protestant) will have rolled together as a scroll. (Isa. 34:4; Rev. 6:14) The combined religious power of Christendom will be utterly futile against the rising tide of anarchy when the dread crisis is reached. Before that **great army** 'all the host of heaven (the church nominal) shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll. (The two great bodies which constitute the ecclesiastical heavens;

viz., Papacy and Protestantism, as the two distinct ends of the scroll are even now rapidly approaching each other, rolling together, as we have shown); and all their host shall fall down (fall off, drop out; not all at once, but gradually, yet rapidly) as the leaf falleth from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree' (Isa. 34:4); and finally these 'heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements (of which they are composed) shall melt with fervent heat.' (2 Pet. 3:12)" (D551)

**9:20, 21** – "And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk. Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts."

With regard to those "killed," let it be noted that the death involved is not necessarily a literal death (though, of course, it could also be); but rather a figurative one resulting in one's inability to function for either good or evil, as one did before. Let it also be noted that those causing this kind of "death," are virtually murderers, sorcerers, fornicators and thieves, taking, as it were, that to which they had no right! Nor do such as these have much to fear of retribution from the gods which they worship – devils, idols of gold, silver, brass, stone and wood (stocks, bonds, wealth, position, etc.); gods which cannot "see" the wrongs and evils, which are being done; nor "hear" the lies which are being told; nor are they able to "walk" (i.e., move) to counteract these! It is for this reason that these "killers" do not repent, nor seek to make atonement for their sins!

**10:1-3** – "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices."

Since it is not until we reach Rev. 11:14, that we read about the third, the last woe, which was soon to follow the second, we shall have to regard what immediately follows, more or less, as a recording of certain details necessary to be comprehended, if the third woe, and the sounding of the seventh Trumpet are to be fully understood.

This, "another angel" came down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head; his face was like the sun; his feet like pillars of fire. In his hand he had a little book, open. He set his right foot upon the sea, his left foot on the earth, crying with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth; and when he ceased crying, there sounded seven thunders.

This “angel” represented the time (A.D. 1829 – the 1290 days of Dan. 12:11) for the Sanctuary Class **to be prepared** for its complete cleansing (A.D. 1846 – the 2300 days<sup>1</sup> of Dan. 8:14); and thus, for the second “presence” of the Lord among his people (A.D. 1874 – the 1335 days of Dan. 12:12). Note that this, another “angel,” is also “mighty”; as if to say that there have been other “angels” (times, circumstances, etc.,) but **this one** is as unique as was John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus at his first advent preparing, as it were, the way of the Lord. (Matt. 3:1-3)

This “angel’s” coming down from heaven, is indicative of the fact that these events too, were divinely set and ordained! “His” being clothed with a cloud, suggests that the prophecy (re: the 1290 days) could not be clearly understood at the time; and the rainbow on “his” head bespeaks the fact of the relationship to the covenant (the promise of Dan. 12:12); “his” face being as the sun, suggests that, despite the “cloud” it evidenced the brightness of a new era (for the Sanctuary Class); and “his” feet, being as pillars of fire, reflected the nature of the trials which were to come to this Sanctuary Class, by virtue of its complete cleansing, soon to be accomplished (A.D. 1846)!

“He” had in his hand, i.e., within his powers to give, “a little book, open,” – the fuller unfolding of the Divine Plan of the Ages – the message concerning Messiah’s Kingdom. (See C89) “His” setting his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, indicated that, the events then taking place would soon involve the “inhabitants of the earth” (Rev. 8:13) – the masses, society, “Christianism,” etc.

The “angel” cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth – a “voice” to be heard over much territory. The “movement” which commenced in A.D. 1829, and which would eventuate in the “cleansing of the sanctuary” by A.D. 1846, was not merely a local affair in the U.S.A., but in a certain sense universal. In America it was represented by Alexander Campbell and William Miller; in Europe, it was represented by J. A. Bengel of Germany; and in Asia, it was represented by Joseph Wolff.

“A religious movement culminated in 1844, the participants in which were then, and since, generally known as ‘Second Adventists’ and ‘Millerites,’ because they expected the second advent of the Lord to occur at that date and because Mr. William Miller was the leader and prime mover. The movement which began about 1829, had before 1844 (when they expected the Lord’s return) attracted the

attention of all classes of Christian people, especially in the Eastern and Middle States where it amounted to an excitement. A long while before this, Professor Bengel, in Tübingen, Germany, began to call attention to the prophecies and the coming Kingdom of Messiah, while the celebrated missionary Wolff did the same in Asia.” (C84, 85)

### Miller and Wolff Movements

“Then came the general announcement that the time of the second advent of Christ had come. This was sometimes called the Wolff movement and sometimes the Miller movement; for one was the leader in one part of the world, and the other in the other part. America at this time was representative of the advanced thought of the world. The proclamation of the Kingdom of Christ was a remarkable movement, which we believe is referred to by our Lord in the parable of the Ten Virgins, who awoke and trimmed their lamps. But it was a false alarm. The Bridegroom did not come.

“This disappointment caused a sifting among the professed people of God. Some became all the more interested in the Bible as the Word of God, and did not doubt, while others became haughty and skeptical, and declared that the Bible was a foolish old book, that anybody who paid any attention to these prophecies must be soft in the head, etc ...

“As a result the work of the Miller movement was a sort of separation, as between those who kept the Word of God with patience and those who lost their faith in his Word.” (R5718:1, 2)

### Joseph Wolff (1795-1862)

“... not inappropriately called a meteor or comet on the missionary heaven, was born of Jewish parentage, in 1795, in Bavaria. Endowed with almost unprecedented linguistic talent, a quick power of perception, lively temperament, and great prudence, he became acquainted at a very early age with the most prominent men in different countries of Europe. In 1812 he was baptized at Prague by a Benedictine monk. While at Vienna he was introduced to the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries; lived for some time with Count Stolberg in his castle of Tatenhausen, and went to Rome to be educated there as a missionary. His heart was filled with the desire to proclaim the glad tidings of the Gospel to both Jews and Mohammedans. Although he enjoyed the favor of the most prominent men in Rome, especially that of

**1 Re: The Period for the Cleansing of the Sanctuary** – “Another prophetic period mentioned by the Prophet Daniel was the 2300 days. This period was to mark certain things, and at the expiration of these days the sanctuary was to be cleansed. This work of cleansing the true church, the sanctuary class, from the defilements of the dark ages culminated, we believe, in 1846, the time of the fulfillment of the 2300 days. But the work of cleansing was not accomplished in a moment or a day or even a year; and the cleansing was but limited.” (R5565:6)

Pope Pius VII, and formed acquaintances which were of the greatest interest in his life, yet he could not reconcile himself to Romanism. While at Rome he spent his time in studying Oriental languages. Some liberal views which he had expressed on sundry occasions made him suspected in the eyes of the Inquisition, and he had to leave the college and the Eternal City. After many adventures he went to London, and here he joined the Church of England. Soon he became acquainted with men like Henry Drummond, Charles Simeon, Lewis Way – the founders of the London Society for the Jews. They, perceiving special fitness for missionary work, effected his entrance to Cambridge University, where he continued his Oriental studies.... After two years (in 1821) he gave up his studies, and commenced his adventurous life as a traveler. Amid the richest and most remarkable experiences, he travelled over Europe, Asia, America, and a part of Africa. In these journeys he became acquainted with kings and princes, as well as the most learned men of all ecclesiastical relations; **everywhere professing Jesus as the Christ**; and although ... often imprisoned, and his life had been endangered several times, yet in the greatest perils he showed an undaunted courage and presence of mind.... He preached everywhere – at one time in this language, at another time in a different one; distributed the Holy Scriptures in the various languages of the East.” (*McClintock & Strong’s Encyclopedia*)

There were **seven** “thunders” that uttered their voices. Thunders are always associated with lightning! Thus, with the sudden “flashes” of the divine truth, came the controversies. These concerned:

1. Apostolic simplicity in Church government; the abrogation of ecclesiastical titles, such as Reverend, Doctor of Divinity, etc. (See C114)
2. No creed; but the Bible. (See C114)
3. Baptism by immersion. (See C119)
4. Recognition of the “man of sin.” (See C118)
5. The Trinity. (See C119)
6. Life, Immortality, the Resurrection of the dead. (See C116, 117)
7. Prophecy, and the second Coming of Christ. (See C115)

**10:4-7** – “And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And swore by him that liveth forever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are [and

the sea and the things that are therein – these words are spurious], that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.”

### The “Thunderings” and “The Little Book”

On C89 Bro. Russell suggests that the “message concerning Michael’s Kingdom gradually opening from 1829 onward is symbolically represented in the book of Revelation (10:2, 8-10) as a ‘little book.’” \* It follows then, that certain specific elements of Truth began to flash forth as ‘lightning’ bringing a much clearer understanding to those constituting the Sanctuary class. But associated with these “flashes” were also “thunderings” (controversies), concerning which latter, John was instructed he was not to write. (Rev. 10:4) The reason for this is not given, so all that we are able to do is guess or conjecture as to why this was. Perhaps, it was because these “controversies” would in themselves bring no further edification to the Church? “**Light** is sown for the righteous, and **gladness** for the upright in heart.” (Psa. 97:11)

\*“This message concerning Michael’s Kingdom, gradually opening from 1829 onward, is symbolically represented in the book of Revelation (chapter 10:2, 8-10) as a ‘little book,’ which the ‘wise’ of the ‘holy people,’ represented by John, are instructed to eat. And John’s experience as expressed in verse 10, is the experience of all who receive these truths. They bring wondrous sweetness: Oh, the blessedness! But the after effects are always more or less a blending of the bitterness of persecution with the sweetness. And the effect upon those who patiently endure to the end is to purge, purify and refine, and thus to make the bride of Christ ready for the marriage and exaltation, due toward the close of the Day of Preparation.” (C89)

### The “Finished Mystery”

“In point of time, the mystery of God will be finished during the period of the sounding of the seventh (symbolic) trumpet. (Rev. 10:7) This applies to the mystery in both senses in which it is used: the mystery or secret features of God’s plan will then be made known and will be clearly seen; and also the ‘mystery of God,’ the Church, the embodiment of that plan. Both will then be finished. The secret, hidden plan will have sought out the full, complete number of the members of the body of Christ, and hence it, the BODY OF CHRIST, will be finished. The plan will cease to be a mystery, because there will be no further object in perpetuating its secrecy.” (A87)

John, of course, represents the Sanctuary class living at the time. (John 21:22; R4870:1) There were among them, such as would have written about these things, but were restrained (Rev. 10:4), for it was to be left for the

messenger to the Laodicean Church – Charles Taze Russell (born 1852), **later** the “mystery of God” would be finished; **after** the seventh Trumpet shall have begun to sound forth (in A.D. 1874)! – (Rev. 10:7) And thus, the matter was “sealed” for the time being. The “angel” figuratively lifted up his hand toward heaven (i.e., he assumed an attitude of taking an oath) declared, (for the Lord had so decreed) that “time” should be no longer! Reference here, undoubtedly, is to the time of the sounding of the seventh Trumpet, at the end of the 1335 days of Daniel’s prophecy, for the time involved in the 1260, 1290, and 1335 days would then be fulfilled: there would be no further “**waiting**” time, for “blessed is he that **waiteth**, and **cometh** to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.” (Dan. 12:12)

“The due time for the mystery of God’s plan to be finished had not yet come; and it was ‘sealed up,’ ‘hidden,’ until that due time. But now we are living in the time of ‘the cleansing of the Sanctuary,’ and particularly since the time of blessedness at the end of the 1335 days – in the present harvest, and in the beginning of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet – we have a very different experience from the saints of the past times. To us it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, which many prophets and many righteous persons of the past were not privileged to see. Thank God for the light of present truth.

“God, still our teacher, uses as heretofore instrumentalities, and has provided for his people’s instruction and use, the orderly presentations of *MILLENNIAL DAWN* to point out to them his plan of the ages, and the duties and privileges of this ‘harvest’ time: because the ‘due time’ has come for the ‘mystery’ to be finished. (Rev. 10:7)” (R1867:2, 3)

**10:8-10** – “And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel’s hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.”

John, here again, represents the Sanctuary Class; but just a little later in point of time, than when restrained from writing. (Rev. 10:4) The same overruling providences which had made restraint expedient, now counsel that “he” (the Sanctuary Class) take the open book (the fuller unfolding of the divine plan of the ages) from the hand of the “angel” and “eat it up.” During the interim between the “restraint” and the “counseling” the “one” ordained to become the “seventh star” or messenger (Rev. 1:16, 20; 3:14) was born (Feb. 16th, 1852). In due course of time, he obtained the “open book” and together

with all of the Sanctuary Class, proceeded to “eat it up.” He, and they, found these now unfolding “harvest truths,” sweet as honey; but soon also experienced the “bitterness” in the “belly.” The “sweetness” resulted from **tasting** and seeing that the Lord is good (Psa. 34:8); the “bitterness” from the assimilation of these truths, because of the trials and difficulties of consequent separation and dedication.

“This message concerning Michael’s Kingdom, gradually opening from 1829 onward, is symbolically represented in the book of Revelation (chap. 10:2, 8-10) as a ‘little book,’ which the ‘wise’ of the ‘holy people,’ represented by John, are instructed to eat. And John’s experience, as expressed in verse 10, is the experience of all who receive these truths. They bring wondrous sweetness: Oh, the blessedness! But the effects are always more or less a blending of the bitterness of persecution with the sweetness. And the effect upon those who faithfully endure to the end is to purge, purify and refine, and thus to make the bride of Christ ready for the marriage and exaltation, due toward the close of the Day of Preparation.” (C89)

**10:11** – “And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”

**This Sanctuary Class** has (since A.D. 1874 – the 1335 days) been busily engaged in prophesying, i.e., preaching, witnessing the Truth to all mankind, particularly concerning the second presence, and the near approach of the Kingdom of God upon this earth; even making “it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.” (Hab. 2:2)

“This command (Hab. 2:2) has been obeyed. By various means – Charts, Diagrams, Concordances and explanations, the vision or revelation of God’s word has been placed within the reach of the people.” (R621:1)

Under the sponsorship of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, during the years of Pastor C. T. Russell’s ministry (to Oct. 1916), the Sanctuary Class distributed millions of tracts in at least 33 different languages (see “*The Laodicean Messenger*” – p.102-105); and, since then, some have at their own personal expense continued to give just such a witness “before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings [the powers that be].”

**11:1, 2** – “And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.”

A reed is the stem of the tall-growing grasses: flexible, nevertheless, quite straight. And, it is important to note

that bending, flexing the reed, does not really shorten its length. This has a deep spiritual import!

The purpose for this reed, as expressed, is to measure the temple and the altar. Undoubtedly, we are to recognize this measuring reed (rod) as a symbol for the Word of God, and its measuring unit, love! Surely, it has been noted that God's Word decrees that those who would please the heavenly Father, must love Him, with all their heart, soul and might. (Deut. 6:5) The measuring is not to determine the size of any literal Temple, but really who, by this divine standard, constitute God's "sanctuary" class – those who love Him so fervently, as like Jesus, to delight in His will. (Psa. 1:1, 2; 40:8)

### Love – The Law of the New Creation

"Love is the fulfilling of the Law, and where Love reigns every item and **every feature of the divine arrangement will be sought after and heartily obeyed** to the best of the ability of the creature; not of constraint, but of joy, of love.

"Such love for God and his righteousness the New Creation professed at consecration; and Love there became its Law, and it is firmly bound by the Law of Love – even unto death." (F367)

The "altar" is not Christ Jesus, per se; though he did prove beyond any doubt, his great love for God, and THE WORD of God (Heb. 10:7; Phil. 2:7-9); but rather the ransom doctrine – the chief tenet of the faith of the justified believers. Are there not many who profess having the faith that justifies, yet have never really accepted the only true sacrifice for sin – that made on Calvary's cross? Thus will the use of this reed clearly show which is the true "sanctuary" class – those recognizing but this one "altar." (Heb. 13:10)

In passing, it is interesting to note that this "John" class, is specifically told **not** to measure the "court," "but the court which is without the temple leave out." (Rev. 11:2)

Note:

"The Tabernacle of old, had but a single court, known as the "holy place," where **only the Levites** had the right of access, save that any Israelite might enter it to bring his sacrifice to the priest to be offered for him. And, it is reasonable to suppose that Israel's first Temple (Solomon's) as well as its second Temple (Zerubbabel's – built to replace Solomon's after the latter's destruction), each had but the single court to correspond to that of the ancient Tabernacle. However, Israel's third Temple was built by Herod the Great, and it had a number of courts – the Court of the Gentiles, the Court of the Women, the court of the Israelites, and the Court of the Priests. It was in this latter, that the altar of burnt-offerings, and the laver stood. Gentiles, while permitted to enter the Court of the Gentiles, were

virtually forbidden to trespass even into the Court of the Women under penalty of death. Since there is no Scriptural basis for these other courts, we are considering the reference of Rev. 11:2, to the "court which is without the temple" to be to a "holy place" such as was identified with the Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple, which could be contaminated – desecrated by "Gentile" feet! This would not necessarily be true of the so-called "Court of the Gentiles" where it was quite in order for both Gentiles and unclean Jews to enter. (See Edersheim, *The Temple*, p. 22; also *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p. 244)

### The Court of the Gentiles

"Passing out of these 'colonnades,' or 'porches,' you entered the 'Court of the Gentiles,' or what the Rabbis called 'the Mount of the House.' ... This was called the *Chol*, or '**profane**' place, to which **Gentiles had access**. Here must have been the market for the sale of sacrificial animals, the tables of the money-changers, and place for the sale of other needful articles." (Edersheim – *Life & Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p. 244)

"The great Court of the Gentiles, which formed the lowest or outer enclosure of the Sanctuary, was paved with the finest variegated marble. According to Jewish tradition, it formed a square of 750 feet. Its name is derived from the fact that it was open to all – Jews or Gentiles – provided they observed the prescribed rules of decorum and reverence." (Edersheim – *The Temple*, p. 22)

It seems evident that this "John" class was here called upon to recognize that many who stand as "professors" in this "court" are not "Israelites indeed," but merely "Gentiles" (heathens, pagans, as it were); and since the "angel" spoke more particularly of the "abomination of desolation," these were to recognize it for just what it really is – that which for 42 months (1260 "days" – years, from A.D. 539 – A.D. 1799) stood "in the holy place" (Matt. 24:15) wearing down the saints (Rev. 13:5-7) – treading under foot, this "holy city" (the sanctuary class) where God was loved with all the heart, soul and might.

Thus, in measuring the "altar" by way of this "reed," the Sanctuary class has been able to see that any teaching (the Mass, or other) which detracts from, or makes less important to the atonement, **the one and only** sacrifice of Jesus, is contrary to the WORD of GOD! Thus –

"... the meaning of ransom began to be appreciated, as it was seen that he who knew no sin was treated as the accursed; that, being willingly substituted in our stead, he was made a curse for us, treated as a sinner for us, and died, the just for the unjust.

"Thus, finally, the great system and network of defiling error, which began with the taking away of the continual sacrifice, was removed; and, the Sanctuary being relieved or cleansed of it, the value of the



‘continual sacrifice’ of Jesus was seen in renewed freshness and beauty and power.

“... A company, a few, had been relieved from the defiling error; and to these few, God has been adding daily of those who are fully under his leading and taught of him.” (C118)

**11:3** – “And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth.”

### The Two Witnesses

“But we rejoice to know that – not withstanding the conflict of creeds and the unchristian conduct of multitudes of professed Christians, and of the so-called Christian nations, all Christian missionary effort among the heathen peoples has not been in vain, but that here and there the seeds of divine truth have dropped into good and honest hearts and brought forth the fruits of righteousness and true Christian character. Such fruits, however, cannot be credited to the creeds, but to the Word and spirit of God, despite the confusion of human creeds. The Lord refers to the Old and New Testament Scriptures as ‘**My two witnesses**’ (Rev. 11:3), and faithfully they have borne their testimony to every nation.” (D258)

Since this is a prophetic vision, given by the Lord unto his servant John (Rev. 1:1, 10, 19), the Lord now speaks to him of certain events, then, yet in the future: particularly of the period of Papal supremacy – the 42 months (Rev. 11:2), or 1260 days (Rev. 11:3), corresponding to the 3-1/2 years of Daniel’s prophecy (Dan. 12:7). The Lord indicated, that despite the restraint, his Two Witnesses – the Old and the New Testaments, would be empowered to prophesy (teach), even though garbed in sackcloth (dead languages).

“Numbers and power were in the hands of the forsakers of the covenant, who became joined to the empire; and the faithful few were persecuted – hunted, imprisoned, racked, tortured, and put to death in hundreds of revolting forms, as the pages of history plainly attest, and as here foretold by the prophet, who said, ‘Yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity and by spoil – days.’ ... The length of time this persecution was to continue is not stated here (Dan. 11:34), except that it will be concluded, at the Time of the End. From other Scriptures we learn that it was a period of 1260 years, which ended with A.D. 1799, a date noted by Daniel and the Revelator as well as in history.

“Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help.’ The full period of the persecutor’s (Papacy’s) power, 1260 years, would not end until 1799; but before its end God granted a little help through the Reformation movement, which, though at first it rather increased persecution, afterward gave

comfort and protection to those falling because of fidelity to God’s Word. The Reformation prevented the complete crushing of the truth from the world. But, alas! with the little help came the ‘flatterers’ again. As soon as persecution began to abate the adversary resorted to the same device, by which he had formerly succeeded in corrupting and degrading the church, to now overcome the reform movements, Kings and princes began to give honors and titles to Protestants and to unite with Protestantism; and this led to serious results and deflection from the covenant, as we read: ‘But many shall cleave to them with flatteries; and some of them of understanding (leaders, reformers, teachers, who had been able to instruct many concerning Papacy’s errors) shall fall; to try them (the faithful few) and to purge and make them white.’” (C37)

“Poor souls! they had been trying to serve God faithfully in the midst of the lurid flames of persecution, clinging to the cross of Christ when almost every other truth had been swept away, and courageously endeavoring to emancipate God’s ‘Two Witnesses’ (the Old and New Testaments) which had so long been bound, and which prophesied only under the sackcloth of dead languages. (Rev. 11:3)” (C122)

Translations into living languages did appear during this period of Papal power: a copy of the Gospels in the **French** language, possibly about A.D. 1160, found its way into the hands of Peter Waldo; an **English** translation of the Bible appeared about A.D. 1380, and for which John Wycliffe was condemned as a heretic; and about A.D. 1534, Luther’s Bible in the **German** language appeared. Thus were God’s Two Witnesses empowered to prophesy, during the period in which the “abomination of desolation” (Dan. 11:31; 12:11) exercised its great power.

### The Bible (O.T. and N.T.) Proscribed

“In the days of Papal power, the possession or reading of the Bible was treated as a criminal offence. The art of printing and the general revival of learning resulting therefrom, about the sixteenth century, secured the resurrection of the Bible from the sepulcher of dead languages where Antichrist had long kept it hidden, forbidding the translating of it under severe penalties. And when an awakening spirit of independence began to scatter it in living languages among the people, Bible-burning was no uncommon thing; and long and loud were the merciless curses that issued from the Vatican against the presumptuous sinners who dared to translate, publish or read the Word of God.” (B319)

**11:4** – “These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.”

In Rev. 11:4 **two** “candlesticks” are mentioned, and nothing is said about lamps, their number, etc. Could it



be that reference here is to the two Israels of God – the typical (fleshly), and the antitypical (spiritual); both of which, in a sense, have been God’s light bearers by virtue of the Spirit of Truth imparted to them?

One olive tree, the Old Testament, has been the source of that Holy Spirit of Truth to the fleshly Israel; and the other olive tree, the New Testament, has been the source of that Holy Spirit of Truth to the spiritual Israel. Both Testaments were proscribed during the period of Papacy’s supremacy, the 42 months (the 1260 days), and both Israels were persecuted; but the Two Witnesses remained faithful, while the two Israels served as God’s channels of the enlightening influences of the Truth.

That both olive trees – the Old and the New Testaments are channels of the Spirit of the Truth to the “Sanctuary” class is reflected in the prophecy of Zechariah (Zech. 4:2, 3, 14), where one “candlestick” with seven lamps is described.<sup>1</sup> It had seven pipes and a single bowl, to the left and right of which stood the two olive trees. (Zech. 4:2, 3) Undoubtedly, this single “candlestick” represented **the Church** (made up of both Jews and Gentiles (Rom. 3:29; 9:24; Eph. 3:6) as light bearers in all its seven stages of development, whose source of enlightenment is the holy Spirit of God, issuing forth from the Old and the New Testaments, represented by the two olive trees.

“The golden candlestick (literally, lamp) with seven branches (or burners) is the same as that which, in the typical Tabernacle and Temple, shed the only light of ‘The Holy.’ The same seven lamps ... are brought to our attention in the book of Revelation (chap. 1:20), and there explained to symbolize the church of Christ during the present time. The seven represents perfection or completeness; hence as a whole the lamp-stand represents all the true saints or light-bearers in all the various phases of ... development. (Rev. 2:1, 5)

“The oil represents the holy Spirit which, burning in the true believers, causes the illumination of the sanctified in Christ Jesus.

“The two olive trees from which the olive oil proceeds to the seven lamps we understand to be typical of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments – God’s two witnesses. The holy Spirit is ‘the spirit of the truth’; and God’s Word is truth!” (R1491:1)

### **The Two Candlesticks of Revelation 11:4!**

In Zechariah’s prophecy (Zech. 4:2, 3, 7-11), reference is made to but a **single** (one) Candlestick (lampstand); whereas in the Revelation (chap. 11:4), bearing upon the identical matter – **two** Candlesticks are mentioned.

We believe, of course, that the Church of this Gospel age – while this side of the “Veil,” has been just such a Candlestick, light-bearer, though not unto the world of mankind; but rather unto those who as the priesthood of God, have served within the “Holy” – in the “secret place of the Most High.” (See T115 and Psa. 91:1) Thus, the “olive trees” would most aptly represent the Old Testament and the New Testament, from or by way of which, the holy Spirit (represented by the olive oil) flowed into it, as the source of its enlightening influence and power. (See R244:4; 1491:1)

The reference to the **two** Candlesticks in the Revelation (chap. 11:4) therefore, must be to this and another; and, in a sense, fleshly Israel has been a light-bearer, if you please, especially during the ages past. And thus do we read:

“... this prophecy respecting the Golden Candlestick, etc., to natural Israel at the time was properly understood to mean that they were to be God’s light bearers amongst all the nations of the world, and that God himself would see to the supply of light which they would shed forth. And all that was true of natural Israel for centuries; they were God’s light-bearing nation, and undoubtedly their influence in the world hindered a greater degradation than might otherwise have occurred. The nations furthest away from them and the light which God placed in them and which **shone out** from them were the nations which became the most degraded, while the nations nearest them and their light were the nations which went downward least rapidly...

“We remember that ... in his last message to the church, our Lord pictures seven golden candlesticks or lampstands separated from one another, and explains that these represented the seven stages or epochs of the church symbolized by the seven congregations of Asia. The seven lampstands united in one represented, therefore, the church as a whole from first to last, its every member complete, the number seven representing completeness. (Rev. 1:12, 13, 20; 2:1)” (R3650:3, 6)

In harmony with this, we read:

“... from these two Kingdoms (even before Jehovah’s glory rests upon them, to make them his channels of blessings to the world of mankind) has proceeded all ‘the light of the world’ during all the darkness of the past: for are not these the representatives of the Old and the New Testaments, the old and the new Covenants? Do not these correspond to the Lord’s two witnesses and the two olive trees of Zech. 4:3, 11, 12 distinctly mentioned in Revelation (chap. 11:4) in that these two parts of the mountain symbolize the outcome of those covenants, the

<sup>1</sup> See “*Special Treasures*” Book: “The Golden Candlestick of Zechariah 4”

results of the witnessing – the Kingdom in its heavenly and its earthly phases?” (D6S1)

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“In one of the visions of Zechariah, (chap. 4) he saw a golden lampstand between two olive trees from which through golden pipes flowed the needed oil. The angel explained that these lamps did not burn by human wisdom or knowledge, ‘not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit; saith the Lord of hosts.’ The prophet was further told that ‘these are the two anointed ones, (Hebrew, sons of oil) that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.’ This helps us to understand the symbol of the two witnesses in Revelation (chap. 11:4), for it is written, ‘these are the two olive trees, and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.’ Thus we perceive they are the Old and New Testaments; the sources of light from which the church, (the spiritual channel) must draw her supply of oil. These witnesses were to be clothed in sackcloth (symbolic of mourning and probably of the clothing in a dead language – Latin) during 1260 years, while they testified for God. They were killed in the Babylonian city Rome – and exposed in one of her ten streets – France – during the three and one half years (1793 and onward). Since then, they have been caught up to heavenly places in symbolic language – a position of honor and power, and translated into nearly every tongue have witnessed to all nations as Jesus foretold.” (R244:4)

**11:5** – “And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.”

The Greek word *θέλει* here rendered “will” might more correctly have been rendered “desire” (*Emphatic Diaglott*), or “wishes” (*Marshall*); either of which implies a measure of wilfulness. This wilfulness, however, may not be particularly directed against the Word of God, yet lessening its influence upon those who were to be blessed by it. Thus, Papacy, while considering itself the “champion” of the Bible, proscribed it, kept it away from the masses, purposely, wilfully, in fear of losing its hold over them. In this, Papacy was assisted by the civil powers – an illicit relationship, scripturally termed “fornication.” This did “hurt” the Two Witnesses, and divine judgment was immediately registered against the system. The punishment, however, was temporarily deferred, to allow time for repentance (Rev. 2:21); and because this grace was received in vain, the fiery indignation of God is ultimately administered and this enemy of the Two Witnesses is utterly destroyed. (Rev. 2:22, 23; 18:8)

**11:6** – “These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.”

In the Old Testament, we have brought to our attention two witnesses – prophets, who served the fleshly Israel, and, who, like the Two Witnesses – the Old and the New Testaments – which now serve the spiritual Israel (Rev. 11:3, 6), were representatives of Jehovah God; and like them, were “empowered” to shut heaven so that there would be no rain; turn waters into blood; bring plagues upon the land! These were Elijah and Moses respectively, the same two that appeared in the vision on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:3; Mark 9:4), speaking to Jesus about the death he was soon to accomplish on Calvary! (Luke 9:30, 31) Elijah bore the testimony to Ahab, and brought a drought upon the land for 3-1/2 years (1 Kings 17:1; Luke 4:25; Jas. 5:17); Moses bore testimony to Pharaoh, turned water into blood (Exod. 7:17-21), and caused plagues to be visited upon the land of Egypt. (Exodus chapters 8-12)

These two “witnesses” in a sense, correspond to **one** of the Two Olive trees (Zech. 4:11; Rev. 11:3); viz., the Old Testament, whose canon had to that time not been completed; but they were, as it were, living units of that “Word” which Jesus in his day designated, “the Scriptures.” (John 5:39; Luke 24:44)

There is a correspondency between the 3-1/2 years during which there was no rain in the days of Ahab and Jezebel, and the 42 months (1260 days) during which the Two Witnesses to spiritual Israel (the Old and the New Testaments) were clothed in “sackcloth.” (Rev. 11:6) During the period between A.D. 539 and A.D. 1799 (1260 years) when the antitypical Ahab (the civil powers), married, as it were, to the antitypical Jezebel (the Papacy) reigned, and the true Church was driven into the wilderness condition (Rev. 12:6), there was a “drought” (Amos 8:11), i.e., spiritual truth with its blessed refreshment was at a minimum!

“Not only is Jezebel referred to in Revelation as symbolizing a corrupt church system, inculcating false doctrines amongst the Lord’s nominal people, (Ahab, her husband, as representing the civil power and Elijah typical of the saintly class of the church), but let us also note that the time of no rain was also typical, as mentioned in the Book of Revelation. Four times is this same period of three and a half years referred to as the period in which the true saints of God were hidden from the eyes of the world in general, in the wilderness condition. And during the same period there was a great drought and famine, spiritually, amongst the people. Those three and a half years in Revelation are styled three and a half times; and again twelve hundred and sixty days; and again forty-two months. (Rev. 14:14; 12:6; 11:3; 13:5)” (R4741:2)

### The “Drouth”

“That long period when the true church was eclipsed by the success of Babylon, marked the time of great **spiritual drouth**. . . . During that long

period the Word of God, the Bible, was suppressed and neglected ...

“It was during that dark time that there was a famine in the land ... not a famine for bread, nor a thirst for water, but a famine for the hearing of the Word of the Lord. (Amos 8:11, 12) According to the Bible those 1260 years of drouth began with the year 539 A.D., when ecclesiastical power attained persecuting ability, and ended in 1799 A.D., as its persecutions came to an end, at the time of Napoleon’s great victory, when the pope was taken prisoner to France.” (R5741:6; 5742:1)

The empowering of these Two Witnesses – the Old and the New Testaments – to smite the earth, was not merely for the period during which they were clothed in “sackcloth” but, “**for as often as they will.**” Therefore, we ought not be surprised if in the period since A.D. 1799, the “waters of truth” have again, for some, become more and more repulsive – figuratively, “turned to blood.”

“... the first plague which came upon the Egyptians was the turning of all the waters of Egypt into blood – the river, ponds, etc., so that the Egyptians could not drink the water, but digged for themselves wells near the river. As the water represents truth, the thought conveyed would be that from the worldly standpoint very soon all truth will become repulsive – every feature of truth connected with the divine plan as represented in the Word of God will become abhorrent; and the digging of wells would seem to imply that, rejecting the Word of God, the world (Christendom – Churchianity) will seek for truth in various ways of their own.” (R4060:4)

**11:7, 8** – “And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city; which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.”

The term “bottomless pit” well describes the source of all that is evil and iniquitous. It is the abyss out of which belch forth the diabolical teachings of the “higher criticism” – modernism and the agnostic theologies. (See Rev. 9:2, 3) It might well be called the abode of Satan himself; yea, his very workshop! It is not surprising then, that John saw a creature come forth out of it, a beast, to make war and overcome the Two Witnesses (the Scriptures)! These “Witnesses” had given a faithful testimony during all of the Ephesus and Smyrna periods. But by A.D. 325, some opposition manifested itself, when creed-making came to the fore. This too, was a machination of the Devil. The “Witnesses” however, continued their testimony into the Pergamos period (A.D. 325-1378), wherein Satan’s great masterpiece the Abomination of Desolation, (the Papacy) was finally exalted in A.D. 539. (Dan. 11:31; Matt. 24:15) Immediately the “drought”

began. The beast (the Papacy) arose out of that “bottomless pit” and began to make war against the Two Witnesses; and prevailed!

As already suggested, originally the Scriptures were in the living language of the people; and they who could and would read them, were blessed. However, this beastly institution soon changed this, for the Two Witnesses were now “clothed” in sackcloth – able to speak only through a dead language, Latin, which only a few could read, and still fewer could understand.

“... who among Bible students does not know that as that system increased in power and influence, all who dissented from its teachings were treated as heretics, cast out of society, threatened, tortured, or persecuted unto death? Who that is acquainted with history is ignorant of the fact that the Bible, which in the first two centuries was loved and cherished by all Christians as the sole guide in spiritual matters, was gradually lost sight of and buried in the rubbish of Papal superstition? And from the twelfth century to the sixteenth, **even amongst the clergy of the Church of Rome** it was scarcely known. Nay more – the Bible was taught to be pernicious and a dangerous book for the people to have access to; so that the great mass of people looked for their knowledge of the Christian religion to come from the debauched clergy of Rome.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – R. E. Streeter, Vol. 1, p. 520)

And so long as there were those who could “hear” the “Witnesses” and proclaim the message of God to others, they were not really slain (dead), despite the fact of their being proscribed, and their proponents circumscribed. But the time came when practically all proponents had been silenced. It was then, when for 3-1/2 “days” the Two Witnesses, for lack of proponents, were “**dead.**” This seems to have been the period from the day when the Fifth Lateran Council informed Pope LEO X, that there was no longer any opposition to the Church – May 5, 1514, to the day when Martin Luther tacked his 95 Theses to the door of the church at Wittenberg, October 31, 1517, exactly 3-1/2 years!

“It is a curious historical coincidence that, at the Fifth Lateran Council, May 5, 1514, no witness (not even the Moravians who were summoned) testified for the truth, as Huss and Jerome (of Prague) did at Constance; an orator ascended the tribunal before the representatives of Papal Christendom and said, ‘There is no reclaimant, no opponent.’ Luther, on October 31, 1517, exactly three and a half years afterwards, posted up his famous thesis on the church at Wittenberg.” (*Jamieson, Fausset, Brown Commentary*)

“The day of the ninth session of the Lateran Council, when the proclamation above referred to was made, was, as we have seen May 5, 1514; the day of

Luther's posting up his theses at Wittenberg (the well-known epoch of the beginning of the Reformation), was October 31, 1517. 'Now from May 5, 1514 to May 5, 1517, are three years; and from May 5, 1517 to October 31 of the same year 1517, the reckoning is ... in all 180, or half of 360 days, that is half a year; so that the whole interval is precisely to a day three and a half years.' (Elliott, II, p. 402, 403) But without insisting on this very minute accuracy anyone can see, and all must be prepared to admit that, on the supposition that it was intended by the spirit of God to refer to these events, this is the language which would be used; or, in other words, nothing would better represent this state of things than the declaration that the witnesses would be 'slain,' and would be suffered to 'remain unburied' during this period of time, and that at the end of this period, a public testimony would be borne again for the truth, and against the abominations of Papacy, as if 'the spirit of life from God should again enter them, and they should stand upon their feet'. (Rev. 11:11)" (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 1, p. 526)

Thus were the Two Witnesses (the Old and the New Testaments) "slain," in that their proponents were completely silenced. And their "dead bodies" were left "unburied" lying in the midst of the street of the "great city" (religious community); whose name is both Sodom and Egypt; where also the Lord was crucified. Let it be remembered that it was the religionists, who not recognizing the Messiah (Isa. 53:1; John 1:11) had him crucified by the Gentiles. (Psa. 22:16; Matt. 20:18, 19; 23:22) Thus was the nominally Jewish Church the "great city" in Jesus' day; and its Gospel age counterpart is the nominally Christian Church (Christendom) the "great city" in which our Lord has again been crucified, by way of both the doctrine of the Mass, and the suppression of divine Truth! To this "city" the name Sodom may well be applied because of its likeness to the ancient city from whence Lot needed to be delivered (Gen. 19:1-17); and though in the Revelation this "city" is called by a different name – Babylon, the cry is still the same, "Come out of her, my people." (Rev. 18:4) And the name "Egypt" is also Scripturally applied to this "city," because its "Pharaoh" has sought to keep God's people sojourning within it, in perpetual ignorance and bondage – too overworked, and too tired, to even contemplate the "three days' journey into the wilderness." (Exod. 3:18) – the spring-board into the promised Canaan!

### **Christendom = Sodom**

"When we learn that Babylon is doomed, and hear the Lord's message, 'Come out of her my people that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues,' it is indeed like the voice of the messengers who hastened Lot and his family out of Sodom, saying, 'Stay not in all the plain; escape for

thy life; escape to the mountain lest thou be consumed; look not behind thee.' (Gen. 19:17)

"The illustration is heightened when we remember that **Christendom is 'that great city (Babylon) which spiritually is called Sodom.'** (Rev. 11:8)" (D607)

### **The 3-1/2 "days" – years!**

In R244:4 W. I. Mann, suggested that these 3-1/2 "days" – commenced in A.D. 1793. It is possible that he erred in this, not seeing clearly at the time that the years of the French Revolution were not particularly slanted against the Two Witnesses (the Old and the New Testament), but rather retributively, against the Papacy, which had so passionately endeavored to silence them, and to thwart their proponents.

"The careful Bible student will see from this record of the historian that instead of this being a suppression of the Scriptures and of evangelical testimony – the death of Christ's Witnesses – it was a judgment on Papacy and the great apostate Church. It will be noted that even this was local in its effects – confined to France alone." (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter – Vol. 1, p. 531)

**11:9,10** – "And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth."

### **A Seventh Day Adventist's Comments on Rev. 11:9**

"The language of this verse describes the feelings of other nations beside the one committing the outrage on the witnesses. They would see what war infidel France had made on the Bible, but would not be led nationally to engage in the wicked work, nor suffer the murdered witnesses to be buried or put out of sight among themselves, though they lay dead three days and a half ... in France. No, this very attempt on the part of France served to arouse Christians everywhere to put forth new exertions in behalf of the Bible, as we shall see presently." (Uriah Smith – *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 502)

### **Rev. 11:10**

"This denotes the joy those felt who hated the Bible, or were tormented by it. Great was the joy of infidels everywhere for awhile, but the 'triumphing of the wicked is short;' so was it in France, for their war on the Bible and Christianity well nigh swallowed them all up. They set out to destroy Christ's 'Two Witnesses,' but they filled France with blood and terror, so that they were horror-struck at the result of their own wicked deeds, and were soon glad

to remove their impious hands from the Bible.” (Uriah Smith – *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 502)

But, note our comments as follows –

Many of the rank and file of this apostate Church (its membership), did not want the Bible done away with completely (“buried”); but were satisfied to have it devitalized! They would still have it serve as a charm or fetish against evil! However, they did rejoice in the fact that it was proscribed (“slain” – “dead”): for it was now possible for them to call themselves “Christians” without even making any endeavor to attain those high and noble ideals which the Bible held forth. These ideals, consecration, dedication and self-denial, as proclaimed, not by the Church, but by the Bible’s now silenced proponents, and their rebuke, had been in the nature of torment to these. Therefore, they now revelled in an “authorized” (Church sanctioned) freedom: they rejoiced, and made merry, and exchanged gifts with each other.

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

As suggested, the “three and an half days” (3-1/2 “prophetic” days – years), ended on October 31, 1517, when Martin Luther tacked his 95 theses to the church door at Wittenberg, and the Reformation was on!

It is true, numerous attempts at reformation had previously been made; and the Bible had been translated into French (about A.D. 1160), and English (about A.D. 1380). Yet all of these had been more or less effectively thwarted by the Papacy, so that at the time of the Fifth Lateran Council, there were no “reclaimants.” Huss and Jerome of Prague, were among the many, who as proponents of the “Two Witnesses” had been silenced in death. (Dan. 11:33) The proclamation at the time was:

“There is an end to resistance to Papal rule and religion; there is none to oppose. The whole body of Christendom is now subjected to its head, that is to thee, Leo X.” (May 5th, 1514)

But the time had now come for the “Spirit of life from God” to enter again into the Two Witnesses – proponents were beginning to arise (Dan. 11:34), and Martin Luther became their champion; so much so that Leo’s successor, Pope Adrian VI, in a communication to the Diet of Nuremberg (A.D. 1523) declared:

“The heretics, Huss and Jerome, **seem now to be alive again** in the person of Luther.”

Nevertheless, the warfare of Papacy against the Two Witnesses continued; nor did it really cease until about A.D. 1799 (the end of the 1260 days); but **never again** did the “beast” prevail to utterly overcome or suppress

and silence them completely! The revitalization of these Two Witnesses is borne out by their many proponents since Oct. 31, 1517: Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, Calvin, Farel, Reuchlen, Latimer, Ridley, Knox, etc.

It was as if the Two Witnesses had heard a voice from heaven, saying, “Come up thither.” And they gradually ascended to their rightful place, one of exaltation. This caused their enemies to fear. They responded with what is called the “counter-reformation” and in time even went so far as to translate the Scriptures out of the dead tongue (Latin) into a modern one – English!

“When Wycliffe published his translation, Pope Gregory sent a bull to the Oxford University condemning the translation as ‘run into a detestable kind of wickedness.’ Tyndale’s translation was also condemned; and when Luther published his German translation, Pope Leo X issued a bull against him. Nevertheless, the work went grandly and steadily forward: the Bible was to have a complete resurrection, and was destined to shed light upon men of every nation and language. Slowly the Church of Rome came to realize this, and resolved, therefore, to permit the translation of Scriptures into modern languages, by Catholic translators, accompanied with Catholic notes. These, however, were not to be given to the people, except where there was danger of their receiving the Protestant translations. The *Rhemish* translation declares this.

“The following show the character of some of the Notes of the *Rhemish* translation – which, however, is in recent years being superseded by the *Douay* translation, very similar, but with less pointed notes. A note on Matt. 3 reads: ‘Heretics may be punished and suppressed; and may, and ought, by public authority, either spiritual or temporal, to be chastised or executed.’ One on Gal. 1:8 reads: ‘Catholics should not spare their own parents, if heretics.’ On Heb. 5:7 the note reads: ‘The translators of the Protestant Bible ought to be translated to the depths of hell.’ And on Rev. 17:6 the comment reads: ‘But the blood of Protestants is not called the blood of saints, no more than the blood of thieves, man-killers, and other malefactors, for the shedding of which, by the order of justice, no commonwealth shall answer.’” (B319)

This “resurrection” heavenward (place of exaltation) was gradual, and reached its fullness only at the end of the 1260 “days,” when their “sackcloth” fell off completely and the Bible Societies began the circulation of Bibles in the languages of the day. The “cloud” referred to (Rev. 11:12), was the ever increasing number of witnesses (proponents).

### The Rheims and Douay Versions of the Bible

“It was not until Queen Elizabeth’s reign that members of the Romanist party found it expedient to

translate the Bible into the vernacular ‘**for the more speedy abolishing ... of false and impious translations put forth by sundry sects**’.” (Preface to the *Rheimish Version*) (*Encyclopedia Britannica* [1942], Article: *Bible, English*, Vol. 3, col. 2, par.1)

“By 1582 even the Roman Catholic Church had been driven to undertake an English version of the Bible. **This was not due to any desire to place the Scriptures in the hands of the laity.** They were there already, and the Romish Church, with its usual astuteness, set itself to minimize what it considered an evil. A New Testament in English was prepared and printed at Rheims, bearing the date 1852.... Moreover, it was only a secondary translation, since the text followed was the Vulgate. Although this is the case, and although no mention is made of any indebtedness to earlier versions, examination proves that on even this translation the earlier Protestant versions exerted great influence. The Old Testament portion did not appear until 1609-1610.

“In the *Rheims* and *Douay* version the English is naturally ecclesiastical rather than popular.” (*The Illustrated Bible Treasury* – Richard Lovett, M.A. -p.18)

### The “1260 days” (Symbolic)

Rev. 11:9, 11 – “And they of the people and kindred tongues and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. ... And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet.”

The following excerpts were gleaned from *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 1, p. 526:

“The remarkable coincidence in regard to time – supposing that<sup>1</sup> three years and a half are intended – will be seen from the following statement. The day of the ninth session of the Lateran Council, when the proclamation above referred to was made, was, as we have seen, May 5, 1514; the day of Luther’s posting up his theses at Wittenberg (the well-known epoch of the beginning of the Reformation), was Oct. 31, 1517. Now from May 5, 1514, to May 5, 1517, are three years; and from May 5, 1517, to Oct. 31, of the same year, 1517, the reckoning in days is ... in all 180, or half of 360 days, that is half a year; so that the whole interval is precisely to a day three and a half years.” *Elliott II*, p.402, 403.

“Some Adventists, also others more recently, who quote from Smith’s *Thoughts on Daniel and The Revelation*, have applied the three and one half days (years) as beginning in 1793 and ending three and one half years after. The quotation from this work on prophecy is as follows:

“In 1793, a decree passed the French Assembly suppressing the Bible. Just three years after, a resolution was introduced into the Assembly superseding the decree, and giving toleration to the Scriptures. That resolution lay on the table six months, when it was taken up, and passed without a dissenting vote. Thus, in just three years and a half the witnesses ‘stood upon their feet’.” (Uriah Smith)

See *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 1, p. 529, last two paragraphs)

**11:13** – “And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain the names of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.”

The tenth part of the “city” (Christendom), i.e., France (one of the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s image – Dan. 2:31-45) fell in the day when 7000 names, titles, etc., were dropped, deleted, from the nation’s roster, in the revolution whose violence, rapine, murder, etc., left a small remnant to glorify the God of heaven.

Shortly before the 1260 “days” (Rev. 11:3) ended, in fact, incidental to the bringing of the period to its close, there occurred what the Scriptures here call a “great earthquake.” It was in the “same hour” as it were, that the Two Witnesses (the Old and the New Testaments) were being “resurrected” to that position of honor, which they could, however, not fully attain until this period had ended (i.e., after A.D. 1799). This “earthquake” which visited retribution upon the Papacy, was the French Revolution, which began in A.D. 1789.

“In the symbolic language of Revelation, the French Revolution was indeed a ‘great earthquake’ – a social shock so great that all ‘Christendom’ trembled until it was over.” (DS31)

“The more deeply the French Revolution is considered, the more manifest is its preeminence above all the strange and terrible things that have come to pass on this earth.... Never has the world witnessed so exact and sublime a piece of retribution ...

“The Nation which abolished and proscribed Christianity, which dethroned religion in favor of reason,

<sup>1</sup> Note: If we consider the 3 ½ “days” of Rev. 11:11 to be 3-1/2 “days” of symbolic “years”; and that the period begins with the establishment of the “Abomination of Desolation” in A.D. 539 (see C77), then the period will end 1260 years later, A.D. 1799, the beginning of “the time of the end.” (B272; C40, 42) (539 + 1260 = 1799)



and enthroned the new goddess at Notre Dame in the person of a harlot, must needs have been afflicted by a very unreasonable and very corrupt form of Christianity. The people that waged a war of such utter extermination with everything established, as to abolish the common forms of address and salutation, and the common mode of reckoning time, that abhorred 'you' as a sin, and shrank from 'monsieur' as an abomination, that turned the weeks into decades, and would know the old months no more, must surely have had good reason to hate those old ways from which it pushed its departure into such minute and absurd extravagance.

"In no work of the French Revolution is this, its retributive character, more strikingly or solemnly apparent than in its dealings with the Roman Church and Papal power. It especially became France, which after so fierce a struggle had rejected the Reformation, and perpetuated such enormous crimes in the process of rejection, to turn its fury against that very Roman Church on whose behalf it had been so wrathful ... to abolish Roman Catholic worship, to massacre multitudes of priests in the streets of her great towns, to hunt them down through her length and breadth, and to cast them by thousands upon a foreign shore, just as she had slaughtered, hunted down and driven into exile hundreds of thousands of Protestants ... to carry the war into the Papal territories, and to heap all sorts of woes and shames upon the defenseless Popedom.... The excesses of revolutionary France were not more the punishment than the direct result of the excesses of feudal, regal, and Papal France.

"In one of its aspects the Revolution may be described as a reaction against the excesses, spiritual and religious, of the Roman Catholic persecution of Protestantism. No sooner had the torrent burst forth than it dashed right against the Roman Church and Popedom.... The property of the church was made over to the state; the French clergy sank from a proprietary to a salaried body; monks and nuns were restored to the world, the property of their orders being confiscated; Protestants were raised to full religious freedom and political equality.... The Roman Catholic religion was soon afterwards formally abolished.

"Bonaparte unsheathed the sword of France against the helpless Pius VI.... The Pontiff sank into a dependent.... Berthier marched upon Rome, set up a Roman Republic, and laid hands upon the Pope. The sovereign pontiff was borne away to the camp of infidels ... from prison to prison, and was finally carried captive into France. Here ... he breathed his last, at Valence, where his priests had been slain, where his power was broken, and his name and office were a mockery and a byword, and in the keeping of

the rude soldiers of the commonwealth, which had for ten years held to his lips a cup of such manifest and exceeding bitterness.... It was a sublime and perfect piece of retribution, which so amazed the world at the end of the eighteenth century; this proscription of the Roman Church by the very French nation that slaughtered myriads of Protestants at her bidding; this mournful end of the sovereign pontiff, in the very Dauphine so consecrated by the struggles of the Protestants, and near those Alpine valleys where the Waldenses had been so ruthlessly hunted down by French soldiers; this transformation of the 'States of the Church' into the Roman Republic; and this overthrow of territorial Popedom by that very French nation, which, just one thousand years ago, had, under Pepin and Charlemagne, conferred these territories." (T. H. Gill – *The Papal Drama*)

"France is one of the 'ten horns' that gave 'their power and strength unto the (papal) beast'; or is one of the ten kingdoms that arose out of the Western empire of Rome, as indicated by the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image, the ten horns of Daniel's beast (Dan. 7:24), and John's dragon. (Rev. 12:3) France, then, was 'a tenth part of the city,' and was one of the strongest ministers of papal vengeance; but in this revolution it 'fell,' and with it fell the last civil messenger of papal fury. 'And in the earthquake were slain of men (margin, names of men, or TITLES of men) seven thousand.' France made war, in her revolution of 1793-98 and onward, on all titles of nobility. It is said by those who have examined the French records, that just seven thousand titles of men were abolished in that revolution." (Uriah Smith – *Thoughts on the Revelation*)

### The French Revolution

"Though the religious reformation movement throughout Europe had severely shaken Papacy's influence, yet the reformed churches had so closely imitated her policy of statecraft, affiliation with earthly empires, and claims of clerical authority over the people (that the 'clergy' constitute a special and divinely appointed rulership in the world), that the first effect of that reformation became greatly modified, and left the people and the civil rulers largely under superstitious and unwholesome veneration formerly concentrated upon Papacy alone. But the political reform witnessed during this Nineteenth Century, dating particularly from 1799, the 'Time of the End,' though very different from the former, is none the less a reformation. The revolution and independence of the American colonies – the successful establishment of a prosperous Republic, a government by the people and for the people, without the interference of either royalty



or priestcraft – had set a new lesson before the now awakening people, who for so many centuries had slumbered in ignorance of their God-given rights, supposing that God had appointed the church to the supreme rulership of earth, and that they were bound to obey those kings and emperors sanctioned by the church, no matter how unjust their demands, because he declared them to be appointed by God, through her.

“... Finally, oppressed by priestcraft, royal extravagance, etc., augmented by repeated failures of the crops, which impoverished and almost famished them, the people of France arose in desperation and accomplished that most terrible revolution which lasted for fourteen years, from 1789 to 1804.

“Of course, such a reaction from such a cause would be to infidelity. France suddenly became thoroughly infidel under the influence of Voltaire and his associates, who deluged the country with their writings, hurling contempt and ridicule upon Christianity, or rather upon the apostate Church of Rome, which was the only Christianity with which the French people were acquainted. They pointed out its falsehoods, its absurdities, its hypocrisies, its immoralities, its cruelties and all its wickedness, until the French people became inflamed in their zeal to exterminate Catholicism and all religion as they had formerly been zealous to uphold it. And miserable, deluded France, for a thousand years completely under the influence of the Papacy, supposing that the real Christ and not the Antichrist had been her despicable master, cried out in the words of Voltaire, ‘Down with the wretch’; and their efforts to down the execrable Antichrist resulted in all the horrors of the French Revolution – a wonderful illustration of retributive justice when viewed with the dreadful massacres of St. Bartholomew’s day, and similar occasions incited and rejoiced over by the Papacy.

“Infidel France suddenly rose in its might, destroyed the Bastille, issued its declaration of the rights of man, executed the king and queen and declared war against all kings and sympathy with all revolutionists everywhere.... The French renounced Christianity, and confiscated all the vast estates and revenues of the Roman Catholic Church, as well as the estates of the king and nobility.” (CS1)

The “remnant” referred to is not the church (many of whom may have been slain in the hysteria of the times), but most likely, those not having any religion whatsoever, who, being spared, were grateful for life, and longed for law and order, with the assurance of peace and happiness, and who were undoubtedly instrumental in bringing about the overthrow of the revolutionary elements, establishing, as it were, thereby, something, somewhat better! This “remnant” proved the desire of men for

higher and nobler things, which man in his fallen condition, could not possibly bring about. In this, the “remnant” unconsciously glorified God – the God of the heavens (Psa. 76:10), who in His own due time will bring to pass “the desire of all nations” (Hag. 2:6, 7) – the Kingdom on earth, in which His will will be done, as it is in heaven. (Matt. 6:10)

“And the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.’ Their God-dishonoring and Heaven-defying work filled France with such scenes of blood, carnage, and horror, as made even the infidels themselves tremble, and stand aghast; and the ‘remnant’ that escaped the horrors of that hour ‘gave glory to God’ – not willingly, but the God of heaven caused this ‘wrath of man to praise him,’ by causing all the world to see that those who make war on heaven make graves for themselves; thus glory redounded to God by the very means that wicked men employed to tarnish that glory.” (Uriah Smith – *Thoughts on the Revelation*)

**11:14** – “The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.”

The first woe – the spirit of modernism (Rev. 9:1-11), which by casting doubt upon the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, took away from the “inhabiters of the earth” (Rev. 8:13), some of the peace and comfort which the Word of God had previously been able to instill.

The second woe – the spirit of revolution against the old established order (Rev. 11:13), caused Christendom all over the earth to tremble, and fear “for after looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.” (Luke 21:26)

And now, the third woe, was to come quickly; and this it did after a period of about 75 years – in October of A.D. 1874, with the sounding of the seventh trumpet!

**11:15** – “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, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.”

### Sounding of the “Seventh Trumpet”

“To our understanding the last trump, the seventh of the series of symbolical trumpets began in 1874 ... its sound is to continue until the close of the Millennial age, a thousand years.” (R2982:4)

“Its beginning we understand was in 1878, and its termination will be a thousand years future from that date.” (R2992:6)

### The Seventh Trump (Rev. 8:2 and 11:15)!

“... the Trumpet of Jubilee was to be sounded when the Jubilee Year began, to proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof. (Lev. 25:10) The antitype is ushered in with the

sound of the (symbolic) ‘Seventh Trumpet,’ the ‘Trump of God,’ the ‘Last Trump.’” (B197)

“... we ... recognize that the seven trumpets of Revelation are symbolical, and not literal ... this seventh trumpet – ‘The Last Trumpet’ – ‘The Trump of God,’ – is as much symbolic as were its predecessors, and marks a much larger and more important fulfillment than any of them. Its fulfillment extends through a period of 1000 years; its events mark and coincide with all the various features of the Millennial reign of Christ. Its beginning, we understand, was in 1878, and its termination will be a thousand years future from that date. It will be ‘sounding’ for all that time – during which its events will be in process of accomplishment.” (R2992:6)

### **The “Trumpets”**

“They are each said to sound, and Sir Isaac Newton, Clark, and all commentators of note agree that five or six of these trumpets are in the past. They have been fulfilled in events upon the earth, each covering a period of time. They certainly must all sound<sup>1</sup> before the resurrection, for that is under the seventh.” (RS80:1)

Like unto the six which preceded it, the seventh angel represents the coincidence of time and circumstances (B151), suitable to the ushering in of something new and different! This one was identified with the “seventh trumpet” (Rev. 11:15); the “last trump” (1 Cor. 15:52); the “trump of God” and the second presence of Christ Jesus. (1 Thes. 4:16)

“The propriety of calling the ‘seventh,’ or ‘last trump,’ the ‘trump of God,’ is evident, too, when we remember that the events mentioned under the preceding six trumpets of Revelation refer to humanity’s doings, while the seventh refers specially to the Lord’s work, and covers the ‘Day of the Lord.’ Since the preceding six trumpets were symbols – it would be a violation of reason and common sense to expect the seventh the last of the series, to be a literal, audible sound on the air. And not only so, but it would be out of harmony with the Lord’s general methods, as well as with those statements of Scripture indicating the secrecy of his coming; for a thief never sounds a trumpet to announce his arrival.

“The seven trumpets of Revelation are all symbolic, and represents seven great periods of time and their events. ... we find ourselves today in the midst of the very events which mark the sounding of the seventh trumpet. The great voices, the increase of knowledge, the angry nations, etc., taken in connection with time prophecies, establish this as a fact. Many events are yet to transpire before this seventh or last trumpet ceases to sound; as, for instance, the reward-

ing of the saints and prophets, the resurrection of all the dead, etc. In fact, it covers the entire period of the Millennial reign of Christ, as indicated by the events which are to transpire under it. (Rev. 10:7; 11:15, 18)” (B147, 148)

“The ‘great trumpet’ we understand to be the anti-typical ‘trumpet of Jubilee,’ the ‘seventh trumpet,’ as symbolic as the preceding six (Rev. 11:15-18), none of which ever made any literal sound. It has been symbolically sounding since October 1874, and will continue to the end of the Millennium. With the beginning of this trumpet began the ‘harvest’ and the reaping and separating, which must continue until the ‘elect,’ the ‘wheat,’ are all gathered out of the present heavens (ecclesiastical systems) unto the Lord.” (D601)

### **The “Mighty Angels” – Who or What are they?**

“The ‘mighty angels,’ messengers, or agents of his power, are various, and may properly be understood as applying to and including all the various agencies, animate and inanimate, which shall be used by our Lord in the overthrow of the evil systems of the present, and in the chastisement of evildoers.” (B 151)

### **The “Seventh Messenger” and “Babylon is Fallen” (in 1879)**

“This rejection of the nominal – Babylon – Church by the Lord seems to be illustrated in the picture of the Church in its seven stages. (Rev. 3:16) The seventh or last, boasting of her being rich, increased in goods, etc., is pronounced by the Lord poor, naked, miserable, wretched and blind, and is spewed from his mouth. Once she was the mouthpiece of God; he spoke and taught through her, but now she is spewed out. ‘Babylon is fallen.’ Who cannot recognize that Babylon is now falling in the esteem of the world, which points to its children as more honorable, honest and faithful than the many Pastors and great ones in the church, of whose fall into great sins we hear almost daily.” (R46:2)

At the beginning of this period, the “seventh messenger” (Rev. 3:14), appeared upon the scene, giving the Lord’s message to the Laodicean church – of her rejection – “thou art neither cold nor hot ... I will spew thee out of my mouth” (Rev. 3:15,16); and admonished those of the Lord’s people still in “Babylon” to come out of her, so as not to be partakers of her sins, nor receive of the plagues to be visited upon her. (Rev. 18:4)

With regard to the “great voices in heaven,” which at the very beginning were to announce that the time had

<sup>1</sup> See “The Ten Egyptian Plagues” page 165

come for the establishment of the Kingdom, this Laodicean messenger, declared:

“... we are not to expect them to be angelic shoutings in the sky, nor mutterings of thunder ... the voices are symbolic as well as the trumpets, and in this direction we look for the fulfillment of this declaration which must be due at about the present time, if we are correct in our understanding of the prophetic teachings to the effect that the kingdom power of Messiah was assumed in 1878, and that the King has since been ordering the events which will shortly bring about the great time of trouble, the angry nations, and the wrath of God manifesting itself in their destruction, as nations and institutions – not as people, though, undoubtedly, many human lives will be sacrificed in that trouble.

“... we are not to expect that the voices under the Seventh Trumpet, proclaiming the kingdom, will be any more than human voices and human agents. Nor should we expect them to be other than the voices of those who have some measure of light in respect to the times in which we are now living, the harvest time, the time of the establishment of the kingdom. Those who utter these voices declaring that the ‘kingdom [dominion] of this world, has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ’ must of necessity be such as have first learned this fact from some quarter.

“We might say that the volumes of *Millennial Dawn* have to some extent been such voices, announcing the kingdom, and giving the reasons for believing that it began to be established in 1878; that it will reach full establishment (soon) ... that ultimately it shall bless all the families of the earth. These voices have been circulated here and there throughout the whole civilized world. These voices have been uttered, and to some extent heard, in the symbolic heavens, the nominal church.” (R2994:3)

There are also the voices which have arisen by virtue of the circulation of the “volunteer” literature:

“These ‘voices’ ... ‘great voices’ in the sense of being widespread and in the sense of exercising considerable influence – they have been heard by many.” (R2993:5, 2994:3)

Slowly, but surely (though not too willingly) the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our Lord (Jehovah), and of his Christ, which latter kingdom will be an everlasting one.

“The nations will be ruled by force, irresistible force, until righteous order is established by a general submission; – every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess divine power and glory, and outward obedience will be compulsory. As it is written, ‘He shall rule the nations with a rod of iron, and as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers.’

(Rev. 2:27) This smiting and breaking properly belongs to the Day of Vengeance, and though the power and rod will still remain throughout the Millennial age, their use will probably be unnecessary, as all open opposition will be thoroughly rebuked in the great time of trouble. As the Prophet represents the matter, God in this smiting-time will be saying to babbling, clamoring, self-assertive humanity – ‘Be still! and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the peoples, I will be exalted in the earth.’ (Psa. 46:10) It will, however, be the work of the entire Millennial age to ‘lay justice to the line and righteousness to the plummet’ in all the little and great affairs of each individual of the race, all of whom will thus be ‘taught of God’ through his ‘elect’ Servant of the Covenant, the great Prophet, Priest and King (head and body): Prophet in the sense of teacher, King in the sense of governor, Priest in the sense of mediator who, having redeemed, is the advocate of the people and the dispenser of divine favor. The offices are united: ‘Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek’ – who was a priest upon his throne – (Heb. 7:17; Zech. 6:13; Acts 3:22; Deut. 18:15)” (D636)

“... primarily it is the Kingdom of the Father, which rules over all (Matt. 13:43; 26:29); but the Father has voluntarily proposed to place the dominion of earth for a thousand years under the full charge of a Viceroy, a Vicegerent – Christ and his bride exalted to the divine nature and majesty—to subjugate and destroy evil and to lift up all who will come to full harmony with the Father under the gracious conditions of the New Covenant. In a secondary sense it will include the earthly ministers or ‘princes’ who will be its visible representatives among men. In a still wider sense it will include all those who, when they recognize its establishment, will render to it loyal submission and devotion –both Jews and Gentiles. In the widest sense it will gradually include all subjects who obey its laws, while all others will be destroyed. (Acts. 3:23; Rev. 11:18)” (D642)

### **The Kingdom – “The earth is the Lord’s”**

“When the earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof, **it will not be because all the kingdoms of this world will have been converted to God and purified**, and their kings permitted to reign by the grace of God, as they now claim to do, and because all the now restless masses of men will have become docile and submissive to the present governing powers; **but it will be as the prophet declares, because God will have ‘founded it upon the seas and established it upon the floods.’** That is, **the present earth, or social organization, and the present heavens, or ruling powers, will have**

**passed away, and the new earth will be established upon the ruins of the old.** When the waves of the restless sea-element of society shall have arisen in their might and overwhelmed the whole present social order, so that the wild and stormy sea of anarchy shall prevail everywhere, then, amidst the wreck and ruin, the desolation and universal despondency and despair, the voice of Jehovah will be heard, saying, 'Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.' (Psa. 46:10) And out of the wild commotion of that stormy sea God will bring order and peace.

**"Instead of this restless sea of humanity he will found the new earth, the new order of things;** yea, he will firmly establish it upon (in place of) the floods; there he will establish his kingdom 'which cannot be moved.' (Heb. 12:28) And he will set his king upon his holy hill of Zion and give to him the nations for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. (Psa. 2:6, 8) Then, indeed, shall the King, the Lord's anointed, reign in righteousness and princes shall decree justice (Isa. 32:1); and in consequence there shall be abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. (Psa. 72:7)

**"There will then be but one kingdom [mountain or hill] in all the world – the kingdom of God;** and his anointed will be king in all the earth in that day. (Zech. 14:9) This hill or kingdom of the Lord is that to which the Psalmist refers when he raised the question, 'Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in his holy place?' To ascend into the hill is to come into his kingdom as loyal and obedient subjects, as true citizens, worthy of all its blessings and privileges; and not as aliens and foreigners, having no part or lot in the common interests and inheritance of all the true and loyal people of God, viz., eternal life and all its blessings of righteousness, peace and everlasting joy. Who indeed shall be counted worthy thus to ascend into the mountain of the Lord? 'And who shall stand in his holy place?' The reference here is to the antitype of the typical temple of God, which standing upon the top of Mount Zion, prefigured the glorious true temple, the church of the living God, in kingdom power and glory. Who shall stand in that holy place in that age of glory and blessing now so near at hand? – who shall be counted worthy to reign with Christ in his kingdom?" (R3113:3; 3114:1)

**11:16, 17** – "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."

As already suggested (Rev. 4:4), these "four and twenty elders" sitting, as it were, before God, represent the **testimonies** concerning the Kingdom, as given by Enoch, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, Job, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and John the Baptist (24 in all), which testimonies so long ignored, despised and rejected, with this change of dispensation, find themselves being vindicated. For this, they now render thanks to him who "was" once the man Christ Jesus; who, for his faithfulness unto death, "is" now highly exalted to the divine nature; and who "is to come" to the fullness of his glory as the Prophet, Priest and King, with the restoration of mankind to the glory once lost in Eden. In John's apocalyptic vision, the reign is already begun.

### **"And art to come"**

The clause "and art to come" which appears in the *Authorized (KI) Version*, is omitted in the best and most reliable of the ancient manuscripts; and for this reason, is not found in any of the more modern translations. It is possible that the clause is spurious – an interpolation! However, since it is very consistent with the tenor of the Scriptures (Rev. 1:4; 4:8), and what follows in the text is in harmony with the thought ("because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned" – meaning, of course, that the Lord had already begun his "takeover" which would eventuate in the ultimate glory of his accomplished mission) we have ventured to comment on the same. It will be recalled that Bro. Russell with regard to the passage in Rev. 20:5 – "the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (also considered spurious) said ... "the repudiation of this clause is not essential to the 'Plan'."

**11:18** – "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth."

### **Time of Trouble – God's Wrath**

"Daniel the prophet (Dan. 12:1) also refers to this 'curse' or time of trouble with which this Gospel Age will end. He speaks of it as 'a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation,' and tells us that it will occur at the second coming of Christ, when He shall 'stand up,' assume authority in the beginning of His reign. The same thought is given us in Revelation, where we are distinctly told that our Lord will take unto Himself His great power and reign, and at that time the nations will be angry and God's wrath will come upon them, and they shall be broken in pieces as a potter's vessel under the rule of Messiah's 'iron rod' of inflexible justice. (Rev. 11:15-18) The Apostle Paul also notes the coming of this 'curse' as

a sure thing, and declares that our Lord, at His second advent, shall be revealed ‘in flaming fire, taking vengeance’ – symbolic fire, it is true – a symbol of the destructive force which will be exercised against everything that shall oppose the laws of Messiah’s Kingdom. Again he tells us: ‘The fire of that day shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.’ (2 Thes. 1:8; 1 Cor. 3:13)” (OV324)

“The Scriptures identify this trouble with Messiah’s taking to Himself His Kingdom power and beginning his reign. (Dan. 12:1; Rev. 11:18) Thank God! The intimation of the Scriptures are that the conflict of that time will be short. It must, however, last long enough to teach humanity a lesson never to be forgotten – that God and His arrangements must stand first and must be obeyed, if blessing is sought.” (OV321)

“Those who expect the Millennial kingdom to come as a result of present efforts, under the order of society now prevailing, and who believe that the world is gradually approaching the Millennium by an evolutionary process, should carefully consider this word of the Lord through the Prophet.... The Prophet declares that when Messiah shall take the reigns of government, his first step will be to judge the poor, and to reprove the rich in equity, in the interests of the meek of the earth. How could this be possible if equity had already prevailed by a gradual process, so that there were no poor and no rich, and so that all had become meek? Other Scriptures in harmony with this testimony of the Prophet Isaiah show that the very work which our Lord is to do at the beginning of his reign will be to correct the wrongs then prevailing. Our Lord himself implies that the earth will be far from being a blessed condition at his second advent, when he asks the question, ‘When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find The Faith on the earth?’ (Luke 18:8) The Revelator also gives no uncertain testimony on this subject. He says: ‘And the seventh angel sounded: and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever.... And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldest destroy them that corrupt the earth.’ (Rev. 11:15-18)” (R5573:3)

Ere this, it will have been noted that the events recorded in the Revelation, do not all follow sequential order; that frequently there is a “cut-back” in which the selfsame period may be covered but from a different viewpoint. Accordingly, in Rev. 11:15-18, particular stress is laid upon such events as are to mark the end of

the Gospel age: the anger of the nations; their becoming the kingdoms of our Lord by way of the destruction of the old order; the establishment of the new; the glorification of the saints; the resurrection of the ancient worthies (prophets, etc.); the judgment of the world of mankind during the Millennium; and the ultimate destruction of the incorrigible – those “which destroy the earth.”

The closing period of the Gentile Times (which ended in A.D. 1914) was marked with great efforts on the part of the nations, to establish universal peace! This, of course, was a vain thing (Psa. 2:1-5), for how could they expect to accomplish this without accepting the King of Peace – Melchizedek – whom Jehovah had raised up for the holy hill (the Kingdom-to-be). This King will break these nations into pieces with a rod of iron (divine authority and control), as is outlined in Psa. 2:6-9; Rev. 2:27.

A Peace Palace had been erected at The Hague (Netherlands). Then sudden destruction was ushered in with World War I, involving 29 nations! Indeed, the nations were angry. Nor were they ready for the reestablishment of Israel as a nation! This great cataclysm was, however, followed by a period of “comparative” peace, for the war was merely the first of a number of labor (travail) pangs (1 Thes. 5:3) that would eventuate in the birth of the new order – the Kingdom of God, in which both righteousness and peace were to be established. (Heb. 7:2)

“... the Scriptures tell us that about the time of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, certain great events, enumerated in our text, will begin to take place...

‘The nations were angry, thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged.’ The church are the first to receive their judgment, the decision in their case; for the world God has appointed a thousand-year day. (Acts 17:31; 2 Pet. 3:8) ‘And that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets (the ancient worthies) and to the saints (all the holy ones), and them that fear thy name, small and great.’ All this latter class – the world of mankind – will be judged, will have the decision passed upon them, according to the way in which they will conduct themselves under the Millennial conditions. And thou shalt ‘destroy them that corrupt the earth.’ If this verse contains so much that a thousand years will be required for its fulfillment, the same may be true of other Scriptures.

“Through the testimony of God’s Word we understand that the resurrection began in 1878; not that we saw anything by the natural sight of the eyes, but that through the eyes of our understanding we recognized that the time had come for that great transaction, the first resurrection, as far as the sleeping saints were concerned; and we understand that

there commenced the time mentioned by the writer of Revelation, when he declared, 'Blessed are they who die in the Lord, from henceforth,' marking a particular time, before which it would not be a blessing to die, but after which it would be a blessing. 'From henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.' (Rev. 14:13)

"That particular time came, we believe, in 1878; then, not only the apostles were awakened, but all the faithful in Christ Jesus, all the sleeping members of the body of Christ. That was the beginning of the resurrection of the body of Christ – the Lord judging among his people first, before the judgment of the world. He foretold that when he would come he would call his own servants and reckon with them – not with the world – giving reward to those of his church who had gone before, giving them part in the first resurrection, and then afterward dealing with us, 'who are alive and remain,' so that each one of us who are of the Lord's people, may at death be 'changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,' during the sounding of the last trumpet – the seventh.

"At present the nations show such bitterness toward each other, such a desire to conquer and destroy one another, that they are determined to continue the war, even if it result in the loss of their own wealth, the destruction of their own homes, and of one another. The spirit of competition, which was supposed to have died, had only been covered up for a little while; and the spirit of the adversary is still there. Although they are called Christian nations, they have not received the Spirit of the Lord; they have not received the spirit of meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly kindness and love, the fruits of the Holy Spirit; but on the contrary, the spirit which St. Paul says consists of hatred, wrath, strife, murder – the works of the flesh and the devil. For this reason they are angry and have involved themselves in the present turmoil.

"Our text proceeds to say, 'And the time of the dead, that they should be judged,' that they should receive their proper rewards and punishments, and be righteously dealt with, is closely associated with this time of angry nations. The whole dead world will be dealt with during that thousand years of Christ's reign. The object of that dealing is that he 'should give reward to his servants the prophets,' beginning at the proper time. Their reward is that they are to be the earthly princes in the kingdom, in all the earth. 'And to the saints.' The saints will be changed in the first resurrection, 'right early in the morning.' (Psa. 46:5, margin) 'Them that fear thy name, small and great,' shows the reward of all those who will come into harmony with the Lord during the thousand

years – this pictures the blessing of restitution coming to all mankind. These blessings they are to receive as they show their obedience to him in all things.

"What will the consummation be? 'And shouldest destroy them which destroy (or corrupt) the earth.' Those that give forth corrupting influence and that refuse to come into harmony with righteousness during the thousand years will be destroyed from amongst the people. Nothing will be left of them. Everything evil will be destroyed, root and branch; only the righteous will prevail throughout all eternity. All having sympathy with unrighteousness will be destroyed. We see, then, that the entire Millennial age will be needed to accomplish the work outlined in our text. It is not to be suddenly accomplished; we are not to expect a sudden fulfillment of that work." (R5563:3; 5566:5; 5567:6)

**11:19** – "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail."

Not long after the beginning of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, when the sleeping saints shall have been raised to resurrection glory, and when all the still remaining saints shall, one by one, also have been "changed" (1 Cor. 15:42) to the Lord's own glorious likeness – the Temple class will have been completed, and will be constituted the new heavens (2 Pet. 3:13), or powers of spiritual control. In these "heavens" mankind will eventually be privileged to "see" (by mental perception) (T85) that the Ark of His Covenant (Testament) is the glorified Christ (Head and body). (T121)

Thus –

"when the work of reconciliation is complete, God will recognize the world of mankind, and place his sanctuary among men. **Then** will be fulfilled that which was written: The Tabernacle of God [God's dwelling, the glorified Church] is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be [become] his people; and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things [the reign of Satan, sin and death] are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. (Rev. 21:3-5)." (T76)

However, in the beginning of the Millennial age, while the kingdoms of this world are being forced to give way – to becoming the kingdoms of our Lord (the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness – 2 Pet. 3:13) there will be "lightnings" – the diffusion of knowledge; "voices" – contentions for knowledge and liberty; "thunderings" – controversies; and "an earthquake" – social upheavals,

anarchy, etc.; and “great hail” – the dissemination of hard, sharp and distressing truth!

**12:1** – “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 “and” here, does not signify that what follows is a continuation of the events thus far recorded and described, as being identified with the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet! It means that there is still more to be said anent the Gospel age: but this involves a “cut-back” to its very beginning, when there appeared this great wonder in the ecclesiastical heaven – a woman clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars upon her head.

“... the ‘woman’ symbolizing the early church is represented as clothed with the sun, that is, resplendent in the full, clear light of the unclouded Gospel. The moon under her feet represents that the Law which supports her is nevertheless not the source of her light. The twelve stars about her head as a crown represent her divinely appointed and inspired teachers – the twelve apostles.” (D591)

**12:2** – “And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.”

### “Zion” Travailing!

There is a sense in which the “woman” in Rev. 12:1, 2, 5, is the same “Zion” as of which Isaiah speaks (Isa. 66:7, 8) and which latter Bro. Russell designates “the Gospel church ... which term throughout the Gospel age **included the entire body of professed Christians, all of whom are on probation for full membership in the Church triumphant, the true Zion of the future**, and the true Zion of the present age, the elect ‘little flock’ to whom it is the Father’s good pleasure to give the kingdom.” (R1648:6)

There is, however, a difference between the male child delivered out of “Zion,” **before her travail** (Isa. 66:7; see R1649:1), and that born of the “woman” **in premature travail**. (Rev. 12:1, 2, 5; see R306:4) In the case of the former, the man child is the true Church; whereas in the case of the latter, it is the counterfeit church – the “Man of Sin.” One is the result of the operation of the holy Spirit; whereas the other is the result of the working of the “mystery of iniquity!” (2 Thes. 2:7)

The Church in all of its seven stages of development, is made up of two elements – the nominal and the true! This is reflected in the seven candlesticks (of Rev. 1:12) which Bro. Russell said: “... symbolize the Lord’s nominal people of this Gospel age, including his ‘members’.” (R3569:4)

This fact needs more than ever to be kept in mind, if we are to understand this 12th chapter of Revelation, wherein the “woman” clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, with a crown of twelve stars upon

her head (the early church), and whom the Apostle Paul espoused as a chaste virgin unto the heavenly bridegroom (2 Cor. 11:2), is found to be “with child” before her marriage!

This “woman” has been “humbled” (“raped,” as it were) by the “mystery of iniquity,” already working in the Church in the Apostle Paul’s day. (2 Thes. 2:7) The Adversary, ever ready to corrupt what is good, holy and pure, by way of the natural propensities of the fallen nature (which propensities ought to be mortified – slain, killed, in those who profess to be new creatures in Christ Jesus – Rom. 8:13,14, caused some to want to lord it over God’s heritage. Note particularly, the reference to the Nicolaitanes, in the Lord’s message to the Church at Ephesus! (Rev. 2:6)

**12:3-5** – “And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. 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.”

### The “Great Red Dragon” and The Beast of Daniel 7

Dan 7:19-23 – “Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, whose teeth were iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet. And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. And I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, the fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon the earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.”

### The Great Red Dragon

“The great red dragon represents the Pagan Roman Empire. The seven heads representing Rome’s successive and distinct forms of government, and the ten horns, the divisions of power – these being mentioned to identify it (Rome) as the same beast, or government described by Daniel and elsewhere in Revelation.” (R306:2)



### Papacy – the Same Beast – Yet Also Another!

“In some respects, Papacy was a new government (‘beast’) distinct from the old Roman empire; and in others, it was a horn or power among others out of that empire, which for a time held superior control over the other horns or powers. It is presented in symbol from both these standpoints so as most thoroughly to locate and designate it.” (B305)

The period of human gestation is about nine (9) months – actually 267 days. If, as in the prophetic Scriptures, we take each of these days to be a year, the “woman’s” delivery ought to have taken place about two hundred and sixty-seven years after A.D. 53 – that is in A.D. 320. St. Paul’s second Epistle to the Thessalonians was written about A.D. 53, and it was in this that he spoke of the “mystery of iniquity” being already at work. However, her child was premature, it was born in A.D. 314!

“If we locate it aright, the woman is seen in this vision about A.D. 308, and has been in the ‘Smyrna’ stage as described in Rev. 2:8-10. It has just been passing through a long series of persecutions from the ‘dragon’ (Roman Empire).” (R306:5)

This “red dragon” that stood by, ready to devour the “woman’s” seed, and which dragon had seven heads (seven successive and distinct forms of government), and ten horns (ten divisions of power – ten kingdoms of the earth), is the selfsame “beast” which Daniel described as “dreadful and terrible,” “strong exceedingly,” and having “great iron teeth,” – a beast that would “devour and brake in pieces, and stamp the residue with the feet of it,” and “diverse from all beasts that were before it,” and having ten horns. (Dan 7:7) Surely, a perfect symbolism for the great, pagan Roman Empire – the fourth universal empire, which –

“... when viewed in the light of its bloody persecutions, certainly has been the most devilish of all governments.” (A258)

It was a persecutor from the very beginning of the Church’s history; but particularly in the period between the reigns of Nero and Diocletian. Of the persecutions, there was probably none more severe than that which was instituted by Diocletian, which raged from A.D. 303 to A.D. 313 – ten years, until Diocletian’s successor, Galerius, mitigated the plight of the Christians. These ten

years of Diocletian’s persecution are specifically referred to in our Lord’s message to the Smyrna Church, as the “tribulation ten days.” (Rev. 2:10)

The ancient, i.e., the pagan Roman Empire, had ere this often deified its emperors:

“The city of Rome and the Imperium Romanum were always regarded as sacrosanct, even under the republic. The argumentation of Augustine, in his memorable treatise *De Civitate Dei*, revolves mainly upon the pagan allegation of the intimate dependence of Rome on the guidance of her gods. Under the empire, the city was fervently adored as *diva Roma, urbs divina*, and the sacred fire was kept ever-burning in her honor. Such a perpetual fire was maintained in the imperial palace. Julius Caesar was Pontifex Maximus,<sup>1</sup> holding the holiest of offices at the time of his assassination, and had been chief of the religion many years previously. On his murder, he was deified and became Divus Julius. On the death of Lepidus, Augustus united the office of Pontifex Maximus to his other titles. He, too, was deified. **Subsequent emperors retained the pontificate, and many were worshipped as Divi while still alive.**” (*McClintock & Strong’s Encyclopedia*, Vol. IX, p.93)

#### The Exaltation of the Papacy

“From the time of Constantine, the bishops of Rome had held a most prominent position before the world, and they began ere long to claim an authority over all others – in the church as well as in the world – demanding that some one person should be recognized as an authority or head in the church, and that the bishop of Rome should be that one. They claimed that Peter as well as Paul had lived in Rome, and that Rome was thus constituted the seat of apostolic authority, and also that, by reason of its long having been the seat of the Caesars and the seat of civil government, it held a place of authority in the minds of the people.

“These pleas for supremacy were not readily conceded, however. The spirit of rivalry was abroad, and other bishops in other large cities claimed supremacy also, some upon one and some upon another ground. It was not until A.D. 533 that the bishop of Rome was thus recognized by the emperor, Justinian I.

<sup>1</sup> Re: The Title “Pontifex Maximus” of the ancient Roman Emperors – “The Roman Empire had not only conquered the world and given it politics and laws, but recognizing religious superstitions to be the strongest claims by which to hold and control a people, it had developed a scheme which had its origin in Babylon, in the time of her greatness as ruler of the world. That plan was, that the emperor should be esteemed the director and ruler in religious as well as in civil affairs. In support of this, it was claimed that the emperor was a demi-god, in some sense descended from their heathen deities. As such he was worshipped and his statues adored; and as such he was styled Pontifex Maximus – i.e., Chief Priest or Greatest Religious Ruler. And this is the very title claimed by and given to pontiffs or popes of the Roman Hierarchy since this Antichrist obtained ‘the power and seat and great authority’ of the former ruler of Rome. (Rev. 13:2)” (See B288; 290)

This was in connection with a warm religious discussion in which the emperor took sides with the bishop of Rome, recognizing the Virgin Mary's worthiness of adoration, and disputing with the Eutychians and Nestorians regarding distinctions and blendings of natures in our Lord Jesus. The emperor feared that the discussion might divide the church, and thus divide the empire which he was desirous of more firmly uniting; for even at that early day the nominal church and the empire were one and the same – 'Christendom.' And desiring to have some authority as a standard to settle the dispute, and to tell the people what to believe and what to disbelieve, and finding the bishop of Rome already the most popular of the claimants to primacy (poppedom or headship), as well as the one most 'orthodox' – the one most nearly in harmony with the emperor's views on the questions – Justinian, by documents, not only condemned the doctrines of the Eutychians and Nestorians, but, addressing the bishop of Rome as the Head of all the holy churches, and of all the holy priests of God, thus acknowledged him, and desired to assist the Pope in putting down the heresy and in establishing the unity of the church.

"In conjunction with this edict, the emperor thus addressed Pope John, Patriarch of Rome: –

"The victorious Justinian, the devout, the fortunate, the renowned, the triumphant, the ever August, to John, the most holy archbishop of the fostering city of Rome, and patriarch. Rendering honor to the Apostolic See and to your Holiness (as always was and is our desire), and reverencing your Blessedness, as befits a father, we have hastened to bring to the notice of your Holiness everything which concerns the condition of the churches, since it has always been our great desire to guard the unity of your Apostolic See, and the standing of the holy churches of God, which still maintains itself and endures unshaken, with nothing to prevail against it. And so we have hastened to make subject to the See of your Holiness, and to unite with it, all the priests of the whole Eastern district. At present, then, we have held it necessary that there come to the notice of our Holiness the matters which are in commotion, however plain and certain they are, and however firmly they have always been guarded and declared by all the priests according to the doctrine of your Apostolic See. For we do not permit that any question be raised as to anything which concerns the state of the churches, however plain and certain it be, that be not also made known to your Holiness, who is the Head of all the holy churches. For in all points (as has been said) we are eager to add to the honor and authority of your See.'

"The epistle next refers to certain views, styled heretical, which were causing the commotion, and gives the emperor's faith as in harmony with that of the Church of Rome ...

"Pope John replied to the above, under date of March 24th, A.D. 534.

"Upon the same occasion the emperor wrote to the patriarch of Constantinople. The first paragraph of his letter we quote, as follows: –

"Epiphanius, the most holy and most blessed Archbishop of this royal city, and Ecumenical Patriarch: – Wishing your Holiness to know all matters which relate to the condition of the church, we have held it necessary to make use of these ecclesiastical compends, and through these to make manifest what movements are already started, although we are persuaded that you also know of these. And since we had ascertained that certain ones, aliens from the Holy See and Apostolic Church, had followed the heresy of the impious Nestorius and Eutyches, we promulgated an ecclesiastical edict (as your Holiness also knows) in which we censured the madness of the heretics. In no manner whatever have we changed, or shall we change, or have we (as your Holiness also knows) passed beyond that position of the church which, by the favor of God, has as yet been preserved; but in all respects the unity of the most holy churches with his SUPREME HOLINESS, THE POPE OF ANCIENT ROME (to whom we have written in like manner), has been maintained. For we do not suffer that any of those matters which relate to the state of the church be not also referred to HIS BLESSEDNESS, since he is the head of all the most holy churches of God; even especially for this reason, that as often as heretics have sprung up in those parts, they have been repressed (literally, pruned off, as the sprouts of a tree) by the wisdom and righteous decisions of that venerable See.'

"This, the first official recognition of Papacy's claims, was afterward confessed more and more pointedly by Phocus and succeeding emperors.

"But even after being recognized as a ruler, a sacerdotal emperor, for the time it was of no special advantage to Papacy, beyond the empty name; for Justinian was far from Rome, with his capital at Constantinople. Rome, and Italy in general, was under the sway of another kingdom – the Ostrogoths – who did not recognize the bishop of Rome as supreme pontiff; for they were mainly Arians in faith. Papacy, therefore, was exalted and advantaged in name only, by the emperor's recognition, until the fall of the Ostrogothic Monarchy, when its exaltation became an actual fact. Indeed, as if by preconcerted arrangement, the emperor at

once (A.D. 534) sent Belisarius and an army into Italy, and in six years after the pope's recognition by the emperor, the Ostrogothic power was vanquished, and their king Vitiges and the flower of his army were taken with other trophies to Justinian's feet. This was in A.D. 539, which is therefore the point of time from which we should reckon the 'Desolating Abomination set up.' Papacy there had its small beginning. There the little, peculiar 'horn,' noted in Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 7:8, 11, 20-22, 25), just began to form or take root two centuries before, and in two centuries after its small appearance its 'look was more stout than its fellows' – the other horns, authorities or powers, in the territory of the old empire – and its eyes, and its mouth speaking great swelling words, began to develop; and it lorded it over the other horns, claiming divine right to do so." (C70-75)

### **Papal Exaltation and Persecution of the True Church**

"In the first flush of papal exaltation, the people as a whole were nominally members of the church or else pagans; and all who professed Christ were expected to conform to the usages and regulations of the gradually self-exalting hierarchy. Error always more popular than truth, when exalted to influence and power, hunted down, proscribed and made disreputable the truth, and all who held it. This was the time when, as pictured in Revelation the true Church (woman) fled into the wilderness – into solitude (Rev. 12:6) – an outcast because of her fidelity to the truth, and to the true Lord and Head of the Church. In this time, when apostates were being exalted as princes, the true, humble saints were experiencing what the Lord had warned them, and all who will live godly ... to expect, viz., persecution." (B329)

"St. Bernard affirms that 'none except God is like the pope, either in heaven or on earth.' 'The Emperor Constantine,' says Pope Nicholas I, 'conferred the appellation of God on the pope; who, therefore, being God, cannot be judged by man.' Said Pope Innocent III – 'The pope holds the place of the true God'; and the canon law, in the gloss, denominates the pope – 'our Lord God.' Innocent and Jacobatius state that 'the pope can do nearly all that God can do,' while Decius rejects the word nearly, as unnecessary. Jacobatius and Durand assert that 'none dare say to him any more than to God – Lord, what doest Thou?'" (B311)

And so it was that the religion of Jesus Christ became a challenge to the Roman Empire; for did not Christians believe that the "seed" of a certain woman was to become the ruler over all of the earth? It is no wonder, then, that the Roman Empire is here portrayed as a "red dragon" standing by, to devour the "woman's" offspring! But, in

an endeavor to deceive the "very elect" Satan was now about to establish his great counterfeit.

Some of the persecutions of pagan Rome, had, of course, caused –

"... some to relax their vigilance for the truth, and a spirit or desire to please and get into favor with the persecuting 'dragon' (came) over some of the bright ones in the church. So we read, the tail of the dragon drew the one third of the stars; they became his followers or servants which, of course, tended to degrade them. The long desired favor of Rome came at last by the conversion of Constantine, A.D. 313, and there, we believe, the labor pangs of tribulation ceased and Papacy was born; i.e., there the blending of church and state commenced. It was not yet the 'Man of Sin,' in the same sense that a child is not a man; but it was the beginning, of what resulted in Papacy – 'The Man of Sin' the man-child was born.

"Persecuted and reviled, she was pained to be delivered and longed for the completion of the promised 'Seed of the woman, which should bruise the serpent's head.' Her anxiety and desire in this direction produced a pre-mature birth – 'The Man of Sin' (the Papal hierarchy) being the offspring. This 'male child,' at first a weak one (A.D. 314), was gradually 'caught up unto God and to his throne,' or exalted to the position and titles, homage and praise of the true 'seed,' so that 'he as God sat in the temple (church) of God, showing himself that he is God.' And within three hundred years he did 'Rule the nations with a rod of iron'." (R306:3, 4)

**12:6** – "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 now speak of the true church (the one which has no head save Christ) as being driven into the "wilderness" (separated, from that which has a head in the "Man of Sin"). But, we must not overlook the fact that the protesting church, has still associated with it, the nominal element. However, the "wilderness place" had been prepared by God, for the true church, whom he intends to care for, and feed, throughout the whole period of 1260 "days" A.D. 539 to A.D. 1799. (See R1841:6)

The Church now enters the Pergamos period (A.D. 325 to A.D. 1160) – the period of "earthly elevation" for the "Man of Sin" (Rev. 2:5), during which new persecutions arise for the true Church, not from the "red dragon" – the pagan Roman Empire; but from another "beast" as it were, to be known as Papal Rome, which by its persecutions caused the death of many of God's true witnesses – the "Antipas" of Rev. 12:5!

### The True Church ... The Wilderness

“The Papacy did not go into the wilderness, however; but Protestantism stepped out of the wilderness condition, to be more particularly recognized by the people and by the government.” (R5628:6)

**12:7** – “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.”

#### Jesus = Michael!

Michael = Who is like God? or as God. The “**el**” at the end of the name is a term applied to “mighty ones” – and because of this is applied to God (*Jahweh*) himself. In fact, in Gen. 2:7, the plural of “**el**” i.e., “**elohim**,” is used, and there it is as the Rabbis say, “the plural of majesty.” The term is also applied to Jesus, when referred to in Daniel’s prophecy:

Dan. 12:1 – “And at that time shall **Michael** stand up, **the prince**, which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.”

And this will be the fulfillment of another prophecy, that of Isaiah:

Isa. 9:6 – “For unto us a child is born, and unto us a son is given: and the **government** [of God’s Kingdom – Matt. 6:10] shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, **The mighty God** [‘el’], The everlasting **Father**, **The Prince of Peace**.”

And, is Jesus like God (*Jahweh*)? Here is what the Apostle Paul has to say:

“Who is the image of the invisible God.” (Col. 1:15)

“For in him dwelleth the fullness of the Deity bodily.” (Col. 2:9, *Diaglott*)

Heb. 1:1-3 – “God ... hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom he also made the worlds; **who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person**.”

#### The “Michael” of Rev. 12:7

“B – But does it not seem a forced construction to suppose Michael to symbolize the ‘Man of Sin?’ Is not this the same Michael referred to in Dan. 12? If it is a symbol in one case, is it not in the other?

“A – No; the account in Dan. 12 is a literal statement. The resurrection and other matters there

mentioned are literal, but not so Rev. 12. The woman, dragon, tail, stars, horns, etc., are all symbols, and it would be out of order to have a real Michael fight a symbolic dragon. However, it seemed puzzling at first to know why this name should be given to Antichrist, but on turning to a dictionary we find that the meaning of the word Michael is – ‘Who as God.’ It is quite remarkable that the meaning should be in such close accord with Paul’s description – ‘He as God sitteth in the temple of God.’ (2 Thes. 2:4) When the dragon was cast out of heaven (out of the ruling position) it left this one (‘Who as God’) in control, or in the heavens, and from him issues the ‘loud voice’ (great proclamation) of verses 10 to 12. That is, Papacy claimed that when it assumed control – ‘The kingdom of God and power of his anointed,’ had come to the world. They claimed that they had overcome by the blood of the Lamb, their lives and testimonies. They claim that their victory, was the result of the firm stand of the (‘Smyrna’) church, which just previously had suffered so much persecution. ‘Therefore, rejoice ye heavens.’ (Let Papacy and all connected therewith rejoice.) ‘Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, etc.’ As the church had once been persecuted when Paganism reigned, so now when she reigns she makes the Pagans and heretics suffer. This Papacy claims as the Millennial reign, during which it broke in pieces the kingdoms with the rod of iron.” (R306:4)

“Recognizing the breadth of the Greek word *theos*, it will be seen at once that the Apostle’s statement concerning Antichrist – that he will seat himself in the temple of God, showing himself to be a god – does not of necessity mean that Antichrist will attempt to exalt himself above Jehovah, nor even that he will attempt to take Jehovah’s place. It simply implies that this one will exhibit himself as a religious ruler, claiming and exercising authority over and above all other religious rulers, even to the extent of exalting himself in the Church, which is the true Temple of God, and there claiming and exercising lordly authority as its chief or authorized ruler.” (B274)

**12:8, 9** – “And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 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.”

Let it be noted that both the “woman” (the early church), and the great “red dragon,” appeared in “heaven.” Heaven, here, has reference to the religious, the spiritual atmosphere or arena, in which both of these operated, so to speak. The “woman” – the early church, quite naturally is a spiritual or heavenly entity; and the “great red dragon” – the Pagan Roman Empire, was itself

in a sense, a great religious entity by virtue of the fact that its emperors were its Pontifex Maximus – the chief religious teacher!

“And there was war in heaven; there was a conflict or controversy between the two elements – the church and the empire – when this son of the church attempted to take the ruling position. This conflict and casting down of the dragon or civil power, continued for several hundred years, or until about A.D. 752, when ‘In the pontificate of Zachary, the German court decided that no Metropolitan could enter upon his functions without the approval of the Pontiff.’ ‘In the same year, Pepin asked the sanction of the Pope to ascend the throne of France.’” (R306:4)

“Michael and his angels’ – the Papacy and its supporters – fought against the dragon – pagan rulers, etc. – and the great dragon was cast out of heaven. This conflict between Papal and Pagan power resulted ... in the gradual overthrow of the latter.” (R306:5)

The name “Michael” means “who as God” and in Daniel 12:1 and Jude 9, is properly referred to Christ Jesus; but in Rev. 12:7 the holy Spirit ironically applies it to the great Counterfeit – the Antichrist!

“To this fourth beast, representing Rome, Daniel gives no descriptive name.... John the Revelator, seeing the same symbolic beast (government), was also at a loss for a name by which to describe it, and finally gives it several. Among others, he calls it ‘the Devil.’ (Rev. 12:9) He certainly chose an appropriate name.” (A258)

“... it seems that the names ‘Devil’ and ‘Satan’ refer not merely to the person of the adversary, but to all that system of things of which he has stood as the representative or head or center; for instance in Rev. 12:7-9, a great religious system is apparently spoken of as the Devil.” (R4609:3)

**12:10-12** – “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. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death. 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 he hath but a short time.”

“When the dragon was cast out of heaven (out of the ruling position) it left this one (Who as God’) in control, or in the heavens, and from him issues the ‘loud voice’ (great proclamation) of verses 10-12. That is, Papacy claimed that when it assumed control – ‘The kingdom of God, and the power of his anointed,’ had come to the world. They claimed that

they had overcome by the blood of the Lamb, their lives and testimonies. They claim their victory was the result of the firm stand of the (‘Smyrna’) church, which just previously had suffered so much persecution. ‘Therefore, rejoice ye heavens.’ (Let Papacy and all connected therewith rejoice.) ‘Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, etc.’ As the church had once been persecuted when Paganism reigned, so now when she reigns she makes the Pagans and heretics suffer. This, Papacy claims as the Millennial reign, during which it broke in pieces the kingdoms with the rod of iron.” (R306:6)

The “heavens” which are here called upon to rejoice, were the Roman Catholic heavens, consisting of the popes, the bishops, and prelates; and the “Ye that dwell in them” undoubtedly has reference to the underpriesthood, brothers, nuns, and the so-called general membership of that church.

While in one sense of the word, the Papacy is another “beast” (government – likened unto a leopard in Rev. 13:2); yet, in another sense, it is the same “beast” only that another “head” was now in the place of control; yet, thinking itself to be the Vicar of Christ Jesus, it would look upon the pagan system as the Devil himself. It accordingly, would warn those concerned, “the earth” (the civil powers) and “the sea” (the ever-restless masses of the people), of the Devil’s probable vindictiveness over having been cast out of his erstwhile heaven by the “man-child” – the “woman’s” offspring.

**12:13** – “And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the manchild.”

The “dragon” – and it was angry – instead of directing its hostility against the “man-child,” directed it once again against the “woman” (the Church) that gave birth to it! And, strange as it may seem, little by little the outcast Devil and the “man of sin” became allies in the persecution of the Church; in fact, the civil powers soon “took orders” from this “Michael” – the “man of sin.” And, stranger yet, the civil powers, and the ecclesiastical, became wedded to each other, and after A.D. 800, became known as “the Holy Roman Empire”! (Commencing at this date, the Papal Millennial lasted just 1,000 years!)

### **Pagan Rome becomes Papal Rome**

“Remember, therefore, that hereafter the dragon represents the empire or military power under the control of its ecclesiastical head. This military power must be made use of by its new head, and its force was directed against the woman and against the remnant of her seed (who joined not the apostasy), which **keep the commandments of God** and have ‘the testimony of Jesus.’ (‘The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.’) Among those of the church who did not join, were some whose descendants in

after years were known as Waldenses, Huguenots, etc. These doubtless knew from the prophetic word, not only that the ‘same Jesus’ would come again ‘to be glorified in his saints,’ but also that there would ‘first come a great falling away, and That Man of Sin be revealed – the son of perdition’ – before the day of the Lord. And they probably recognized Papacy in its true light as Antichrist.” (R306:6)

### Pagan Rome becoming Papal Rome

“The Church of Rome consists of bishops and prelates who share the dignities of the hierarchy though differing in degree of honor – cardinals, bishops, etc.” (B303)

### Rome’s Millennial Kingdom

“Roman Catholics hold that they set up the kingdom of God about the year 800 A.D.; first by dividing between clergy and laity, and exalting the clergy to a special class; then, the Roman Church having great power, and the kings of the earth being comparatively weak, Papacy established a spiritual rule over the kings and princes of earth in the name of Christ – the popes being recognized as Christ’s vicegerents, as reigning instead of Christ, as his substitutes.

“The kings and princes of earth were informed that they might continue to rule the people if they would be obedient to the Papacy; that in that event they would be kingdoms of God; but if they should fail to be obedient to Papacy, the latter would inform the people that such kings were no longer to be recognized, but were disowned by God’s spiritual kingdom, and would appoint other kings and other princes in their stead. The rulers of Europe readily assented to this partnership, by which the people would recognize them as having divine authorization to rule.” (R5829:3)

**12:14** – “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.”

### The “Two Wings”

“To the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness (literally the place deserted) into her place. The two wings are probably the ‘two witnesses’ – the Word, which now showed **the true Church from which Papacy had sprung**, her true condition – ON earth instead of, as at first, above the earth, with the moon under her feet.

“These two witnesses assist her, not only to mount upward again, but to return to ‘the place deserted,’ i.e., to a condition of harmony with God, not with the world. She was nourished in this wilderness 1260 years.” (R55:5)

“The Lord speaks directly to his church as thou or you; but of the world, as they or them. He came to his own, and in a sense delivered them out of Babylon; **bearing them up on eagles’ wings** (Rev. 12:14), and **carrying them into the wilderness; ‘into her place, where she is nourished.’** ... from the face of the serpent, Satan. To them – Babylon, he comes with the sword, and by the sword they are cut into two – The Roman and Greek churches.” (R359:6, W. I. Mann)

### The “Wilderness” (Rev. 12:6, 14)

“A wilderness condition is one of separation from the blessings of civilization; it is a cut-off condition, a separation from the world. In the case of the church, we read that the Lord provided her with two wings, that she might go into the wilderness 1260 symbolic days or years. Apparently she went into the wilderness condition of her own accord, and became voluntarily an outcast from the privileges and advantages of the world’s society; she underwent a general ostracism or separation.

“... The Lord’s people can be in this wilderness condition even while surrounded by all the affairs of the world. We are separate from the world; we are in the world but not of it – isolated....

“In figurative language the city represents honor, distinction and prominence in the world, while the wilderness signifies the reverse condition – that of being ignored, ostracized, etc. During the 1260 symbolic days the church was in the condition of ostracism. The governments paid no attention to her; but on the other hand, they gave a great deal of attention to the great system, which exalted itself and became ‘that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth’ – Mystic Babylon.” (R5628:3)

**12:15** – “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.”

However, as we near the end of the period, a significant change takes place. To this time, the Papacy and the civil power, were both like a single instrument in the hand of the Adversary, by way of which, he maintained control over the masses. Now, this wily foe of our God, senses that the power of his counterfeit “Lord” – the Papacy, is about to be broken. This, of course, would awaken the masses to the fact that it is after all, not a thing to be revered nor feared. Should this happen, his own control would be proportionately weakened. Recognizing that he could not prevent the breaking-up of Papacy’s power, he devised a scheme whereby he would destroy the “woman” whose influence was already being felt amongst some of the civil powers. He would create a “flood of waters” (of truth), to swallow up the “woman,” and at the same time bring to pass such a reign of lawlessness and anarchy, as would make the civil powers fearful,



and only too glad to have the Papacy re-established in power and authority. But the whole affair back-fired!!!

“The ‘flood’ in or during which these 1260 years of Papal power terminated ... symbolized a condition of things during the French Revolution.... This ... ‘flood’ mentioned in Rev. 12:15, 16 where it is shown ... as coming out of the mouth of the serpent or dragon, and where its real object, from Satan’s standpoint, is explained to be to overwhelm the ‘woman’ (the protesting Church of God), as her three and a half times (1260 years) of wilderness-hiding were about closing, and she was coming forward into prominence ‘leaning on [the arm of] her beloved,’ The Word of God. (Cant. 8:5)

“In symbol, water generally represents truth; and the symbol preserves its meaning even though it be said to issue from the mouth of the dragon or serpent. The thought conveyed by this symbol is, that truth would issue forth through evil agencies, and with an evil intent. And just this we find: the strength of the French Revolution lay in the fact that it was instigated by many stern truths, regarding priest-craft and king-craft, and regarding the individual rights and liberties of all. ‘**The Rights Of Man**’<sup>1</sup> was indeed the watchword of that revolt against civil and ecclesiastical oppression. Truths regarding human rights were seen and expressed there which cause us surprise when we consider the ignorance, superstition and servility of that day, under which the masses had so long rested. Many of the truths which then swept as a ‘flood’ over France, deluging it with blood, are now very generally accepted among all civilized peoples; but they were too strong, and too suddenly put, for that time.

“Indeed, the prophecy clearly shows that the serpent, Satan, did not intend what under God’s providence has resulted, but the reverse. In this he overreached himself, as he has done on other occasions. Satan will never send forth the waters of truth to bless and refresh and release from bondage: on the contrary his effort has all along been to blind and securely bind mankind under ignorance and superstition; and this sudden flood of waters (truth) was designed to act as an emetic, to lead to the casting out of the food of liberty already being received by the people from the Bible, as a result of the Reformation, and thus to force rulers and teachers to oppose the truth through fear of anarchy.” (C64)

**12:16**— “And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened up her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.”

“Satan’s design in instigating the French Revolution was to create an alarm throughout Europe, especially among the influential class, unfavorable to liberty, and to illustrate in France the theory that were the superstitions of Rome to be overthrown and liberty to be given full sway, all law and order would speedily end. This was a master-stroke of policy, worthy of its author, and designed, as the prophet shows, to overwhelm the ‘woman’ (the reformed Church), and to drive all conservatives and peace-lovers – rulers and ruled, back to union and harmony with Papacy. The failure of the scheme was not due to lack of craftiness in its designer, but to the overruling power of God, whereby he is able to cause all things to work together for good.

“In this case God’s plan, for the protection of the ‘woman’ (Church) from Satan’s wiles and for causing the intended ill to work out good, may be clearly traced, in exact fulfillment of the prediction made seventeen hundred years before, viz: ‘And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened up her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.’ The ‘earth,’ in symbol ... represents society – order-loving people; and it is a fact of history that the flood of truth which spread over France – arrainging Papacy and its priest-craft, and monarchy and its parasitic aristocracy, as the responsible causes of much of the ignorance, poverty and superstition of the people – was swallowed up, or absorbed by the people of Europe generally (the Roman ‘earth’). To such an extent was this the case, that, though Papacy and royal aristocracy were thoroughly alarmed, they were also thoroughly separated, by the fall of Papal influence as well as by Napoleon’s armies. And when the ‘man of destiny’ was finally crushed, and the rulers of Europe formed what was called ‘The Holy Alliance,’ for the suppression of the liberties of the people and the perpetuation of their own thrones, it was too late to fetter the people; for having drunk up the flood of waters, they would not submit. It was too late to think of re-establishing Papacy, which had been so terribly humiliated and whose anathemas against liberty and the French had so reacted against itself; so the

<sup>1</sup> Re: Thomas Paine’s “*Rights of Man*” – “His famous *Rights of Man*, a reply to Burke’s *Reflections on the French Revolution*, appeared in England in 1791-2. It had an enormous circulation, but the government prosecuted Paine for sedition and he fled to France. **Today it seems a very moderate work.**” (*The New American Encyclopedia*) “His *Rights of Man*; being an answer to Mr. Burke’s attack on the French Revolution, **is a complete statement of republican principles.**” – *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*.



pope was not even invited to join the 'Holy Alliance,' of which before he would have been the recognized head. Thus the 'woman,' the reformed and progressing Church of God, was helped, spared from being overwhelmed, and liberty and truth stepped out to prominence before men; and from that time forward the spirit of liberty and God's Word have led all who were willing to follow, into more and more light and truth." (C66)

**12:17** – "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 term "seed" is here used in a rhetorical sense; for the "woman" – the true church, is herself "the seed" of the Sarah Covenant. (See Gal. 3:7-9, 29; 4:26) Remaining, as it were, a virgin, she has no "seed" until during the Millennium she becomes mother to the regenerated world of mankind.

In the meantime, Satan, whether it be by way of ecclesiastical systems, earthly institutions, organizations, civil governments, etc., or the world of mankind in general (since they lie in the wicked one – 1 John 5:19) will ever and always be seeking the destruction of that "seed" which God has declared is one day to be the "kings and priests, to restore and rule over, and bless mankind." (T39) It is to this class that the Apostle Peter addresses himself, admonishing them to "be sober, be vigilant: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Pet. 5:8)

**13:1-3** – "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. 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. 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."

"The first two verses of this chapter direct our attention to the Dragon, which in the preceding chapter we found to symbolize the Roman Empire; the same which Daniel saw in vision, called the 'fourth beast dreadful and terrible.' (Dan. 7:7) This dragon passed its dominion over to a beast which arose out of the sea – a government which came up from among the irreligious masses; in other words, the Roman Empire passed under a new rulership – the Leopard Beast – whose mouth was lion-like, and his feet bear-like. This beast which came into possession of the Dragon's seat and power, we understand to be Papacy: it corresponds to the 'man child' of the

preceding chapter. It has certain qualities which resemble the first three beasts of Daniel 7, viz: the Lion, Bear and Leopard – described as representing Babylon, Persia and Greece. This new Beast, then, would combine certain leading characteristics of the preceding empires and unite them in the power of the last – the Roman.

"Babylon was celebrated for its splendor and its pride – the Lion, the king or ruler of all beasts – so Papacy had a mouth of this sort, i.e., it claimed to be the kingdom over all kingdoms by divine right – the Kingdom of God, which was to break in pieces and consume all others – a strong mouth.

"The bear's feet suggest another of Papacy's peculiarities as an empire – viz: persistency. Like the Bear Empire (Medo-Persia) which would besiege for years, and even turn a river aside from its channel to accomplish its ends; so Papacy moves cautiously and gets possession of kingdoms rather by strategy than by battle. This same quality is illustrated in the bear; it hugs its prey to death with its paws.

"The body of the Papal beast was like a Leopard. The Leopard was the third beast seen by Daniel – viz: Grecia. Greece was noted as the center of learning, piety and wisdom (Acts. 17:23); so Papacy's chief claim, to be the ruler of all kingdoms, is based on the claim that it is the center of wisdom, learning and piety. Other peculiarities of the Leopard are its activity, vigilance and secretiveness; so with Papacy. Again, a Leopard is spotted irregularly, so too Papacy's policy varies in various parts of the earth: in enlightened liberal countries it is liberal, in other places it varies in its rulings to suit the circumstances.

"This Leopard beast (Ecclesiastical Empire) is given the power, seat, and great authority of the (Dragon) Pagan Roman Empire, and for a time becomes the only representative of that dominion – the various horns (kingdoms) rendering allegiance and support to it." (R318)

### The Leopard Beast

"The beast of Rev. 16:13 is the same that is mentioned in Rev. 13:2, where it is described as resembling a leopard – spotted. Protestant interpreters of the Revelation agree that this symbol refers to the Papal system – not to the Pope, not to Catholic congregations, not to individual Catholics, but to the system as a whole, which has existed for centuries.

"In His word, God has been pleased to recognize the Papacy as a system, as a government." (OV270)

### The Leopard's (Papacy's) Spots

"Well do the Scriptures symbolically represent Papacy as a leopard beast (or mottled government – Rev. 13:2). In one place it is liberal, almost white in

its professions or appearances; in another quarter, it is black, corrupt, degrading, brutal; and in still other places it has various neutral and tawny shades of correspondence to the natural depravity of the people it rules with its rod of eternal torment and its staff of purgatory.” (R2538:6)

The Reformation had dealt and inflicted a most serious wound, a deadly wound to the Papacy; yet, it didn't take too long ere Satan had decoyed the Reformers also into similar bonds as he had Papacy; and the wound was healed.

“Reformation and cleansing for a time ceased, and, instead of progressing with the cleansing, the reformers gave attention to organizing themselves, and to revamping and repolishing many of the old papal dogmas, at first so loudly condemned. Thus did Satan decoy the reformers into the very ‘harlotry’ (union of church and state) which they had denounced in the Church of Rome. And thus the deadly wound which Papacy had received was for a time healed. (Rev. 13:3)” (C111)

### **Papacy's Deadly Wound, and its Healing!**

“The sword is the Word of God, and Papacy received such a wound during the Reformation. The preaching of the word of God by Luther, Zwingli and others, showing it to be the ‘**mystery of iniquity**’ ‘The Man of Sin,’ ‘The Antichrist,’ etc., took away much of its power, and almost took its life.” (R63:4)

“Papacy's wound began to heal from the time the Reformation Church united to worldly empires, for how could the Reformers any longer use the Sword of the Spirit against Papacy as a church-state organization, when they themselves were the same?” (R64:1)

“... the wounding of the Papal head ... by the sword ... refers to the Reformation work, when Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, and others, by advocating the teachings of the Word of God, as opposed to the teachings of Papacy, showed that it was the system referred to in Revelation, and in Paul's writings called the ‘Mystery of Iniquity’ – ‘Antichrist’ – ‘The Man of Sin.’ They struck so mightily at this Papal head, that the system had well nigh died: but as the cause of the Protestants became more popular, the sympathies of some in power came to be exercised on their behalf. Soon various small German kingdoms (princeloms) were found on the side of the Reformers, and lent their sanction to them rather than to Papacy. Soon Belgium, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and others, withdrew all allegiance to their former head and **RULER** – the Pope; and though not acknowledging Luther, Calvin, or others, as a new head or spiritual emperor, they supported the various Reformation churches with state funds and protection...

“The effect of this governmental favor upon the teachings of the reformers, can well be imagined. Once they had complained about empire and church being united in Papacy; had shown that the Virgin espoused to Christ awaiting His kingdom, was unfaithful to him (therefore termed a Harlot) when she united with, and leaned for support upon earthly powers. This part of their smiting with the ‘Sword of the Spirit,’ soon ceased, as they began to regard the favor and smile of earthly governments upon themselves. They could not consistently condemn in Papacy, what they themselves had come to enjoy and crave. It was their desire (lust) for power, name, and influence, to do a great work, and have many children, that led these daughters of Rome to follow the example of their Mother – ‘Babylon the great, the mother of harlots.’ (Rev. 17:5)” (R319:5)

And all the world wondered!

**13:4** – “And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?”

“The people respected the Beast because of its peculiarities – leopard body and lion mouth – and they respected the civil power all the more, because it had so honored ecclesiastical authority. The various kingdoms (horns) soon learned that their hold of power over the people was strengthened, rather than weakened by allegiance to Papacy, for Papacy in turn recognized those despots as of divine appointment.” (R318:5)

“And they did homage to the Dragon (Paganism) because he gave the authority to the Beast. And they worshipped the Beast ‘Who is like to the beast?’ Thus we see that the people honored both the empire and the ecclesiastical or church power, finally concluding that the Beast (ecclesiastical power) was the stronger, and saying – ‘Who is able to make war (to contend) with the Beast?’” (R63:3)

**13:5, 6** – “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.”

The “forty and two months” (42 x 30 days = 1260 days) – the period during which the Leopard beast would be blaspheming our God, and exercising his great power, is the selfsame period as during which the “two witnesses” would be testifying in sackcloth (Rev. 11:3); and the true Church would be in the wilderness condition (Rev. 12:6), viz: from A.D. 539 to A.D. 1799.

“Antichrist’s great swelling words, or blasphemies, cover the whole period of his long career. The expression, ‘blasphemy,’ in our day, is usually given only a coarse meaning, as if related to the most vulgar forms of cursing and profanity only, but in its true significance the word ‘blasphemy’ is applicable to any indignity offered to God....

“Papacy’s great swelling words and boastful claims have, one and all, been blasphemies.... God’s character, i.e., his ‘name,’ was blasphemed in the thousand monstrous edicts, bulls and decretals issued in his name, by the long line of those who claimed, as vicegerents, to represent his Son; and God’s tabernacle, the true Church, was blasphemed by the false system which claimed to take its place – which claimed that its faithful were the true and only tabernacle or Church of God.” (B305)

### **Papal Blasphemy!**

“The pope is of such dignity and highness that he is not simply a man but, as it were, god, and the vicar (representative) of God.... Hence, the pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven, of earth and of hell. Nay, the pope’s excellence and power are not only about heavenly, terrestrial and infernal things, but he is also above angels, and is their superior; so that if it were possible that angels could err from the faith, or entertain sentiments contrary thereto, they could be judged and excommunicated by the pope.... He is of such great dignity and power that he occupies one and the same tribunal with Christ; so that whatsoever the pope does seems to proceed from the mouth of God.... The pope is, as it were, God on earth, the only prince of the faithful of Christ, the greatest king of all kings, possessing the plentitude of power; to whom the government of the earthly and heavenly kingdom is entrusted.... The pope is of so great authority and power that he can modify, declare or interpret the divine law.... The pope can sometimes counteract the divine law by limiting, explaining, etc.” – From *Ferraris’ Ecclesiastical Dictionary* (Quoted from B310)

### **“Power was given unto him”**

The following is an excerpt from *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, by Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 81:

“The year following this, in 533, one of the most significant events in connection with the rise of the Papal Antichrist occurred. It was in this year that Justinian, the Eastern Roman emperor, issued a decree constituting the bishop of Rome the head of the Church on earth. Thus do we have the fulfillment of the expression, ‘and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.’ For some time previous to this there had been a rivalry – indeed, a dispute, between the bishop of Rome, and

other ambitious, aspiring bishops of other cities, concerning which of them could, as they expressed it, rightly claim the honor of Apostolic succession, etc. This decree of Justinian settled the matter in favor of the bishop of Rome. The decree was not enforced, however, until the armies of Eastern Rome under Belisarius overthrew the Ostrogothic power, that under Theodoric ruled in Italy. This was in 538 or 539 A.D., and without doubt, marked the beginning of the period of the twelve hundred and sixty years, when the saints were delivered into Papacy’s hand. (Dan. 7:25) It was the beginning of the Papal Antichrist; also the time when the ten kings began to give their power and strength unto the beast, as represented in its Papal head.”

**13:7, 8** – “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.”

It may seem strange and contradictory that the saints represented by the “woman” who for her very protection fled to the “wilderness” – the place God had prepared for her, should at the same time be overcome by this Leopard beast, to whom was given the power over “all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.”

The secret place – the “wilderness” was not a place where the “woman” might not suffer for Jesus’ sake (2 Tim. 2:12); but a place where she would be nourished! (Rev. 12:14) Thus, was this period filled with much persecution, and the death of many, many Christian martyrs. The so-called Holy Inquisition, flourished during this period; which Inquisition was intended to search out the saints; to make war with them; and to overcome them. Therefore, many, because of fear “worshipped” (paid homage to) the beast; but their names are not such as appear in the Lamb’s book of life!

### **The Inquisition**

“Under his commission from Pope Innocent, to punish with confiscation, banishment and death the heretics who would not receive his gospel, Dominic stimulated the civil magistracy and populace to massacre the heretical Waldenses; and he at one time committed one hundred and eighty Albigenses to the flames. It was for such faithfulness in the service of Antichrist that he was canonized a saint, and is today adored and prayed to by Roman Catholics....

“It would be impossible briefly to convey any adequate conception of the horrors of the Inquisition, or of the dreadful fear which it inspired among the people. Those not loud in their praise of Antichrist, or who ventured a criticism of his methods, were suspected of heresy; and such persons, with-

out warning or redress, were liable to imprisonment in a dungeon for an indefinite time until a convenient season for trial – both the accuser and the accusation often being unknown to them. The proceedings of these trials were conducted secretly, and tortures were often employed to extort confessions. The tortures inflicted were almost too appalling to be credited in this age and land of freedom, yet their reality is confirmed by evidence which even Catholic historians cannot deny; and their fruitless attempts to apologize for them only tend to substantiate the evidence. Instruments of torture, relics of the Inquisition, are still in existence which would render denial unavailing. The ‘Holy Office’ even employed physicians to watch the process of torture and stop it when death seemed likely to relieve the sufferer; and the victim was allowed partially to recover, that the torture might be applied a second or even a third time. These tortures were not always inflicted as punishments for the offence of heresy: they were in general for the purpose of compelling the accused to confess, retract or implicate others, as the case might be.” (B342)

**13:9, 10** – “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.”

“Only those whose ears have been circumcised – those who had come to a considerable knowledge of God’s Word and who had the hearing of faith – to respect him and his Word, despite the magnificence, success and power of error, would be able to receive the foregoing statements concerning those who were deceived by Papacy: that they were of those unwritten in the true church, of which that was the counterfeited.

“If any one is for captivity he goes away; if any one will kill with the sword with the sword must he be killed. Here is the patient endurance and the faith of the saints.”

“The Papal system was one of bondage. All who acknowledged its claims must of necessity render implicit obedience, as unto God; for it claimed to be the Kingdom of heaven; and its head, the Pope, to be God’s vicegerent; consequently those who were for or in favor of such a captivity of individual thought, and who acknowledged the right of that Papal system to limit and define the faith of all, by consenting, became captives.

“On the other hand, there were some who asserted that Papacy was a usurpation of the titles and power of the true head and ruler of the church, and claimed their right to the individual liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. Such used, the ‘sword of the

spirit, which is the Word of God,’ in the defense of their liberty, and such were put to death by Papacy – it overcame the saints during its 1260 years of power. This was a severe test of true saintship – Would they go into captivity and join in the usurper’s ranks, or would they remain faithful to the true king and wait for the kingdom which he promised to establish? Those whose names were written in heaven, stuck to the sword and sealed their testimonies by death.” (R319:3)

### The Deceptions of Papacy

“The deception of Papacy was so complete that the world was deceived and all the church, **except the overcomers**, whose names were ‘written in heaven’ were deceived in the same way, and hasted to unite themselves with, and to worship the BEAST, and have it enroll their names on its books. From this has sprung the delusion so common to all Protestants at this day – viz: that their names must be connected with some SUCH earthly church system, or they are not the Lord’s saints. But, **the important item is, to have our names recorded in the Lamb’s book of life** – His is the only record of any value.” (R319:2)

**13:11** – “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.”

“As the first beast had ten horns, or powers which gave it their strength and protection, so this beast has ‘two horns’ which indicates that two powers or governments will support it.

“Again, notice that this beast ‘ascended (came gradually) out of the earth,’ while the first one came out of the Sea. Now, if our definitions of these symbols be correct – as the coming of Papacy from among the irreligious masses of the Roman empire, was shown by its coming out of the ‘sea,’ then the coming of this second beast out of the ‘earth’ should signify that it sprung up among a professedly religious people.” (R319:2)

“... there is but one church which this symbol fits perfectly, viz: the established ‘Church of England and Ireland.’ This system, like the Papal, was a blending of church and state – an ecclesiastical empire.

“Now let us see about the two horns: England, of course, was one of them ... Ireland was the other. History says that in 1537 the Irish Parliament in Dublin ‘passed the act of supremacy, declaring Henry VIII, SUPREME HEAD OF THE CHURCH, prohibiting intercourse with the court of Rome, and making it treason to refuse the oath of supremacy.’ Henry VIII, also took the title of ‘King of Ireland.’ Thus we see that the second horn came up within the brief space of five years after the first.

“From 1538 to 1871 – 333 years – the title of the church was ‘The Church of England and Ireland,’ thus recognizing both ‘horns.’

“On January 1, 1871 (by action of parliament and consent of the Queen, the head of the church) the Irish Church was disestablished, or that horn cast off. So, too, all of the horns which once supported Papacy have broken off from her; the difference being that in Papacy’s case the horns have turned against her, and in the case of the second BEAST it casts off the Irish horn of itself, believing it to be a weakness rather than a strength.... The ‘two horns like a lamb,’ would seem to indicate that this BEAST would be peaceably inclined – not inclined to be aggressive, but merely using the horns for defense.” (R320:6)

### The Two Horns

“... it is one ecclesiastical system, and the two horns show that it is supported, and its authority recognized by two kingdoms.” (R320:1)

### The Two-Horned Beast – its Eventual Loss

“... The fact that the ‘Two-Horned Beast’ was not mentioned at all in this final struggle (Rev. 19:19) we interpreted as signifying that that system (The State Church of England and Ireland) would pass out of existence as a ‘beast’ or church and state combination.

“The ecclesiastical power symbolized by the Two-Horned Beast, is rapidly dissolving. The church as a governmental establishment in Ireland, has already passed away, and the ablest statesmen of England concede that it is only a question of a very short time when it will be disestablished in England.

“... Thus we see the Two-Horned Beast as such dropping from view, and we can thus account for the fact that it has no part in the struggle at its close as shown in Rev. 19:19. A ‘beast’ is the symbol of a kingdom: hence the separating of the English Church from the government will neither destroy the beast nor church; but since Revelation is treating of ecclesiastical beasts, it drops from view when it ceases to be an ecclesiastical Government. In Rev. 19:19, 20, its government appears among the others – among the ‘kings of the earth,’ etc., and the English church is represented among the other Protestant systems in the ‘false prophet!’” (R834:4)

### King of England – Head of the Church!

“It is carefully to be observed that this downfall of Papal authority in England was not productive of much benefit, either to the friends or to the cause of the Reformation. For the same monarch, who had so resolutely withdrawn himself from the dominion of Rome, yet superstitiously retained the greatest part of its errors along with its imperious and persecuting

spirit. He still adhered to several of the most monstrous doctrines of popery, and frequently presented the terrors of death to those who differed from him in their religious sentiments.” (*Mosheim’s Ecclesiastical History*)

“... the thought would seem to be because of Henry VIII’s assumption and usurpation of the same Divine power as Papacy, not only did the two-horned beast fail to enlighten mankind concerning the erroneous and indeed blasphemous claims and usurpations of Papacy, and its influence over the people, but rather it served to encourage, to establish these claims, because it became apparent that Papacy’s power and influence was so much greater and wider that it caused the great masses of men to hold to that one, which, because of its longevity, seemed to be the one of Divine origin.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ, Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 114*)

And “he spake as a dragon” – that is, like a dragon!

“Notice that it does not say the dragon, but a dragon. We understand this to mean simply that its utterances resembled those of a purely civil (dragon) power, and in its words there would be little, to denote that it is an ecclesiastical government.” (R320:6)

**13:12** – “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.”

“... this shows that the second does not take the place of the first beast, but that they exist contemporaneously.” (R320:6)

By retaining many of the monstrous doctrines of Papacy, this second beast – the two-horned beast, was causing the first beast – Papacy, to be worshipped (or rather those doctrines for which the first stood).

“And by establishing a similar system, devoid of some of the grosser Papal errors, it attracted attention of all to those errors, as being the only possible fault of Papacy. And when some of those errors were shortly after discarded by Papacy, the inference was that both BEAST systems were right ... but from God’s standpoint the systems are abominations, and wrong from the very center.

“The very basis of both systems is their claim to be the ‘Kingdom of God’ in reigning power. That idea once admitted justifies their persecution of individuals and nations, forcing them to submit and bow in obedience. Scripture accords those powers to the ‘kingdom of God’ – when ‘the kingdom is the Lord’s and he is the Governor among the nations; all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.’ (Psa. 22:27, 28) Unto

him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. (Phil. 2:11) And if their claim be GOOD who can object to them for carrying out the scriptural statements?

“These Anti-Christ, to make their claims of kingdom power appear true, had simply to take another step in compelling obedience, backing up their right to do so, by the Scriptures just quoted. And not only was this great evil sanctioned, but their claim once admitted, that the kingdom was established and the reign in progress, those who admitted it were hindered from looking for the true HEAD of the church; to set up the true kingdom under the whole heavens, which SHALL break in pieces present imperfect governments – establish righteousness in the earth and cause every knee to bow and every tongue to confess to the glory of God.” (R321:2)

**13:13** – “And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.”

“Remember that both beasts are now in ‘heaven,’ or **in authority**. The second beast displays its power over ‘the earth,’ or those who are under its authority by occasionally sending down fire (symbol of judgment and punishments) upon them – declaring certain judgments and punishments upon those who oppose it – heretics. Such fire was sent down upon the Dissenters – Baptists, Puritans and others.” (R64:4)

“This Government, like Papacy’s claimed heavenly power, and its denunciations were regarded as from heaven, judgments or fire being called down upon offenders.” (R321:2)

**13:14** – “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.”

“We make a distinction between the earth and those who dwell on it. As the EARTH symbolizes those obedient to and supporting the BEAST, so, ‘those dwelling on the earth,’ we understand to mean independent Christians who do not support either of these systems.

“Saying ... that they should make an IMAGE to the BEAST [Papacy] ...’ She advised this by her example. From the year 1800 to 1846 was a time in which great numbers of new sects arose, whereas before that they were few and prominent. This gave rise to uneasiness among the various older denominations, who wondered whereunto this thing would lead. As the Bible came to be read more and more by the masses, occasional individuals would feel free to

preach what they thought it taught, regardless of denominational creeds and the views of older sects. As a consequence Protestants were fast splitting up into fragments. They began to say, ‘By what means shall we check and stop this disposition to individual thought and opinion relative to the teachings of Scripture?’ They wanted to stop the very thing God desired, viz: that each individual should be free and independent of restraint, with his faith based, not on the views of others, not on the decisions of councils or presbyteries, nor in the decision of the Pope, nor in the things approved of the HEAD of the English Church, but in the WORD OF GOD.

“The question came – How can we restrain these preachers? This was a quandary to all except the Roman and Episcopal Churches, since these both claimed the ‘Apostolic Succession,’ and that this by ordination, conferred upon their ministers special power and authority to preach and to administer the ‘Sacraments’; hence that no others had a right to do so, but were clerical pretenders. Other denominations could not claim this continuation of apostolic power through their preachers, but simply set them apart by prayer, consequently those of one denomination could not object, that the preachers of other denominations as well as all laymen, were not as truly authorized of God to expound the Scriptures as their own clergy.

“But the example of the Church of England showed what a prestige she had by reason of the voice of authority with which she commanded a reverence for her clergy and her teachings. The teaching by example was not lost. The various denominations felt a necessity for some common STANDARD OF DOCTRINE which would be supported and upheld by all of them, and thus give prestige to their teachings, and bring the combined influence of all AGAINST ANY FURTHER ADVANCE IN KNOWLEDGE or the development of any different phase of TRUTH. Thus they would protect themselves by being able to say The combined opinion of all Protestants is against you; therefore you are HERETICS, and therefore we will shun you, and not call you brethren, but use all our influence against you.

“This was done by the formation in 1846, of the ‘Evangelical Alliance.’ It was stated to be one of the objects of the Alliance (and we believe the principle one) to ‘Promote between the different Evangelical denominations an effective cooperation in the efforts to REPEL COMMON ENEMIES and DANGERS.’

“It is far from my wish to say they purposely combined against the unfolding of truth, nor would I say this of Papists. But I do say, that by their action they

were following Papacy's tactics, and that in that Alliance they did make the – IMAGE OF THE BEAST.

"A prominent characteristic of the BEAST copied by the image is the honoring of the special class, the clergy, with special honors and titles. They are known as Reverends, Divines, etc., but Jesus THE son of God said: 'Ye call me Lord and Master, and ye say well, for so I am.' 'Be not ye called Rabbi, neither be ye called Master, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.' (Matt. 23:8) These titles are assumptions fashioned after those of Papacy." (R321:3-6)

While the Evangelical Alliance was the first representation of the Image of the Beast – away back in 1846, its modern counterpart is the Protestant Federation of Churches. (Dvii)

### **The Image of the Beast**

"The dragon, then, symbolizes the Roman power, represented by the civil power in the world. The beast is the Papal system of government. The third symbol, the false prophet, remains to be interpreted. This, we believe, is another name for the system, elsewhere called 'the image of the beast.' (Rev. 13:14) According to the Scriptures, this image is a very exact representation of the beast. The false prophet, or image of the beast, we understand to mean the Protestant Federation of Churches." (OV271)

### **The Dragon, Image of Beast, etc.**

"The Dragon, then, symbolizes the Roman power, represented by the civil power in the world. The Beast is the Papal system of government. The third symbol, the False Prophet, remains to be interpreted. This, we believe, is another name for the system elsewhere called 'the Image of the Beast.' (Rev. 13:14) According to the Scriptures, this Image is a very exact representation of the Beast. The False Prophet, or Image of the Beast, we understand to mean the Protestant Federation of Churches.

"In order to see why the Protestant Federation of Churches should be symbolized as the Image of the Beast and as the False Prophet, we must examine other symbolical Scriptures. In Rev. 17:5 our attention is called to a great 'mystery.' The word 'harlot' in Scriptural symbolism does not mean an immoral person. It refers to the Church, which was to be the Kingdom of God, but which lost her virginity and became united to an earthly husband, instead of her Heavenly husband. To what earthly husband did the Church unite? To the Roman Empire. In the minds of Luther and other reformers there was no doubt that there was a close union between the Church and

the world. The Church for a time claimed to be waiting for Christ to set up His kingdom. Finally she said, 'I will not wait until the Second Coming of Christ, I will unite with the Roman Empire.'

"All know the result. The Roman Catholic Church was exalted, and reigned as a queen for centuries. This union of Church and State is represented in a famous picture found in Italy. On a throne the Pope and the Emperor sit side by side. On one side are cardinals, bishops, the lower clergy and the laity, in order of rank. On the other side are generals, lieutenants, soldiers, etc., down to the common people. Thus the union of Church and State was recognized." (Dvii)

### **The Evangelical Alliance – Protestantism (Image of the Beast)**

"The question now arises, Why should the Scriptures picture Protestantism as an Image of the Beast? When and how did this come about? From the time of the Reformation, Protestants had been striving individually to get out of the darkness of the past and thus had formulated many creeds and had organized many denominations. But about the middle of the last century the leaders began to see that if every one continued to study the Bible individually, the time would come when each one would have an individual creed. To prevent what seemed to them a loss of power, they planned a union of Protestants in a system called the Evangelical Alliance.

"The Evangelical Alliance, an organization of the different Protestant denominations, was formed in 1846 for the very purpose of doing in their own way the same thing that Catholicism would do in its own way. Seeing the great power that Roman Catholics would exercise because of a united system, Protestants said, 'We are divided. We have no power. We will organize.' Then and there, according to the Scriptures, they made an Image of the Beast." (Dviii)

"We have already pointed out that the 'symbolical image of the beast' began 1846. We are now anxiously looking for the vitalizing of that Image as foretold in Rev. 13:15. Our expectation is that this causing of the Image to have life, speech and power will have its fulfillment in some pact or union or agreement amongst so-called Protestant denominations, with a sympathetic alliance and cooperation with the Church of Rome. Our expectation is that the spark of life to the organic union begun in the Evangelical Alliance will come from the Episcopal Church, which claims divine authority through apostolic succession – a claim which other Protestant denominations would be glad to make. The Episcopal Church is quite ready to confer the spark of authority and vitality." (R3390:1)



“... the Lord’s symbolic prophecy ... tells us that in the close of this age the Image will receive life, vitality, energy, power. No longer will it stand as a mere Image. It will become as active as the Beast. Moreover, it will not be antagonistic to the Beast, but sympathetic, and cause that all shall either worship the Beast or the Image – all must be in harmony either with Catholicism, or with the Protestant system, of which the Evangelical Alliance was the primary organization or Image. The Protestant Church Federation will be the outcome as soon as it receives the vitalizing breath....

“A few years ago the Episcopal Church took an important step toward vitalizing the Church Federation movement... That important step was the recognition of the ministers of the denominations represented in the Evangelical Alliance ...

“Perhaps this recognition of the Image is all the vitalization the Image needs, but we are inclined to expect more.” (RS349:3)

“In Rev. 16:13 we find mention of the False Prophet, another representation of the image – the vitalized product of the Evangelical Alliance, which has taken the form of Church Federation, and has today a great deal of vitality. Whether we can expect it to have more remains to be seen.” (Orig. Dx)

**13:15** – “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.”

“The Bible says ... that before the Image can do any particular harm, it must receive life from the two-horned Beast. (Rev. 13:15) This two-horned Beast with horns like a lamb, but a voice like a dragon, we believe represents the Church of England, which is not a party to the Evangelical Alliance. The Church of England makes the claim which the Church of Rome makes – that she is the true Church; that all others are wrong; that she has the original apostolic succession; and that no one is commissioned to preach unless he has had divine, apostolic hands laid upon him. This has been the contention of the Church of England for centuries, and constitutes the difference between that Church and all other Protestant denominations.

“... The denominations in the Alliance were united only in name, and hence have worked against each other. Denominations outside of the Alliance were declared to be unauthorized; and they, in turn challenged the Evangelical Churches to show where they got authority to preach. As a result, the Image had no power to act; it was trodden upon; and to get vitality – life – it would need apostolic succession; it must have something as a basis for operation.

“The Scriptures indicate that the Church of England will become intimate with the Evangelical Alliance and will give it apostolic authority to preach. Because of this union the Alliance will be able to say, ‘We have apostolic authority to preach. Let no one speak unless he has our sanction’.” (Dix)

“The worship and the killing are symbolic as well as the image and this signifies that all who will not bow to the decrees of the Evangelical Alliance shall be esteemed as heretics, shunned and cast out by all who are ORTHODOX (?) i.e., all who worship its decrees and agree to believe neither more nor less than is stated in its nine articles of creed. Now the various sects have a sort of backing in this organization, and each may act as the mouthpiece of the Image, in denouncing as heresy all matter not included in this general creed, and in cutting off or ecclesiastically beheading those who differ. (Rev. 20:4)” (R322:3)

### A Word of Explanation!

In the original Volume 4 Foreword page x, we read:

“In Rev. 16:13 we find mention of the False Prophet, another representation of the image – **the vitalized product** of the Evangelical Alliance, which has taken the form of Church Federation, and **has today a great deal of vitality. Whether we can expect it to have more remains to be seen.**”

In RS349:3 we read:

“... the Lord’s symbolic prophecy tells us that in the close of this age the Image will receive life, vitality, energy, power. No longer will it stand as a mere image. It will become as active as the Beast. Moreover, it will not be antagonistic to the Beast, but sympathetic, and cause that all shall either worship the Beast or the Image – all must be in harmony either with Catholicism, or with the Protestant system, of which the Evangelical Alliance was the primary organization or Image. The Protestant Church Federation will be the outcome as soon as it receives the vitalizing breath.

“... A few years ago the Episcopal Church took an important step toward vitalizing the Church Federation movement... That important step was the recognition of the ministers of the denominations represented in the Evangelical Alliance.... **Perhaps this recognition of the Image is all the vitalization the Image needs, but we are inclined to expect more.**”

In the new Foreword of *Volume 4*, page iii, we read:

“The Bible points out that about this time the Nominal Church systems of the world will rise to great prominence again in connection with the Civil powers. We can readily see the grounds for this. All the kingdoms, financially weakened, will realize the necessity for keeping a dominating grip upon the

public and preventing anything akin to Socialism and Anarchy. They will naturally look to the great religious institutions called Churches to support them, to threaten the people with future torments, and in general to help keep the Ship of State from being overturned. The churches also will be ready and glad for such an opportunity. Already they are rolling together as a scroll – the one side Catholic, and the other, Protestant, opposed and yet connected – each side united and federated to the best of its ability.”

However, nothing is specifically mentioned about the Evangelical Alliance – the Protestant Federation, nor its vitalization.

In *RS601:3* we read:

“When the earthquake, or revolution, so prominently mentioned in the Scriptures shall have come, that, no doubt will be the time when the kings and the captains of industry, of finance and of politics will in self-defense greatly exalt the power of religious leaders. Then we may expect that the Federation of Churches will exercise a power in the world such as has not been since the days of Papal supremacy. In the symbolic language of Revelation, that will be the time in which the ‘image of the beast’ will have life and work great wonders, threatening, commanding, in the name of heaven. (Rev. 13:11-18)”

Was Bro. Russell at the time of his death (10/31/16) still “waiting, as it were, to see”?

### **Power ... to the Image of the Beast**

“The Bible says ... that before the image can do any particular harm it must receive life from the two-horned beast. (Rev. 13:15) This two-horned beast with horns like a lamb, but a voice like a dragon, we believe represents the Church of England, which is not a party of the Evangelical Alliance. The Church of England makes the claim which the Church of Rome makes – that she is the true Church; that all others are wrong; that she has the original apostolic succession; and that no one is commissioned to preach unless he has had divine, apostolic hands laid upon him. This has been the contention of the Church of England for centuries, and constitutes the difference between that Church and all other Protestant denominations.

“Although the Evangelical Alliance was organized in 1846, it has not been able to accomplish its purpose, because it did not know how to operate. The denominations in the Alliance were united only in name, and hence have worked against each other. Denominations outside of the Alliance were declared to be unauthorized; and they in turn, challenged the Evangelical Churches to show where they got authority to preach. As a result, the image had no power to act; it was trodden upon; and to get vitality

– life – it would need apostolic succession; it must have something as a basis for operation.

“The Scriptures indicate that the Church of England will become intimate with the Evangelical Alliance, and will give apostolic authority to preach. Because of this union, the Alliance will be able to say, ‘We have apostolic authority to preach. Let no one speak unless he has our sanction.’ This action on their part is described in Rev. 13:17. None will be allowed to buy or sell spiritual things in the spiritual market unless he has either the mark of the beast or the mark of the image.” (*OV272, 273*)

### **Non-Worshippers of Beast to be Killed**

“The image or likeness of this organization to the ‘Beast’ consists in its doctrines and its general policy. And although the likeness is not yet complete, the Revelator, in vs 15, indicates that the persecuting power will ere long complete this, and that the order will go forth practically that all who will not worship (reverence) either the Papal ‘Beast’ or the Protestant ‘Image’ shall be killed, although the killing is not necessarily to be understood as physical: it may be in some instances, though more probably it will be killing in a social sense – cutting off their influence, their name, etc., and allowing them no standing or liberty as Christians.” (*R1409:4*)

**13:16, 17** – “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.”

“According to the old, but erroneous, thought handed down for centuries, the bishops of the church of England and of the church of Rome are ‘apostolic bishops,’ or successors to the apostles, according to the old theory of apostolic succession. According to that same theory, no one on earth has one particle of right to teach and to preach, except as those ‘apostolic bishops’ shall grant their permission by laying on their hands.

“According to this rule, then, Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans, Presbyterians and all such are preaching without authority. When they talk about ordination, they merely mean that each sect ordains its own ministers. The Alliance is attempting to get around this difficulty and to have the sects recognize each other’s ordination. The Federation is building upon this general recognition of orthodoxy, and is about, in some manner, to be given life, virility, power, dignity, by something which the church of England will do for them which will recognize their ordination as ministers.

“We may be sure that they will make the road to the preaching and teaching of the Gospel a very narrow

one to all attempting to preach without their recognition and ordination. These will be trying times upon us and upon all who will refuse to worship the beast and his image, or to receive the mark of the beast upon the forehead or upon the hand. (Rev. 13:15-17)” (R5349:4)

The “mark” in the right hand, would seem to signify authority given to “work” in the Master’s vineyard; and in the forehead, would be indicative of the intellectual bias, given in favor of the recognized ecclesiastical powers that foster it!

“No man will be able to buy or sell (exchange) spiritual doctrines, when that power is at its zenith, except such as bear its stamp of approval or orthodox or evangelical ‘marks’.” (R1845:5)

The “name” and the “number” of the beast are revealed in the next verse:

**13:18** – “Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred and three score and six.”

There are three Latin words, “VICARIVS FILII DEI” meaning the “Vicar of the Son of God,” which appear on the Pope’s triple mitre, the numerical significance or equivalent of which words is, 666! Thus:

|         |        |         |       |
|---------|--------|---------|-------|
| V = 5   | F = -  | D = 500 |       |
| I = 1   | I = 1  | E = -   |       |
| C = 100 | L = 50 | I = 1   |       |
| A = -   | I = 1  |         |       |
| R = -   | I = 1  |         |       |
| I = 1   |        |         |       |
| V = 5   |        |         |       |
| S = -   |        |         |       |
| 112     | + 53   | + 501   | = 666 |

“There are three Latin words inscribed on the Pope’s crown Vicarivs Filii Dei, the Vicarious Son of God. This title attached to the Pope would seem to be an illegitimate one. He is not the vicarious Son of God; he is not the vicar of Christ; and therefore every intimation to the effect that he is the substitute or representative of Christ in reigning power would seem to be much of a blasphemy. Not that the Pope and the Catholics understand that they are blaspheming. I presume they feel fully confident that this is all very true of him, but to our understanding, it is untrue and he is in a false position – is really anti-Christ, or the counterfeit Christ, as the Bible would express the matter.” (Q37)

**The Number 666**

“The most plausible name we have ever seen suggested as containing the number of the beast, is the title which the pope applies to himself, and allows others to apply to him. That title is this: *Vicarius Filii*

*Dei*, ‘Vicegerent of the Son of God.’ Taking the letters out of this title which the Latins used as numerals, and giving them their numerical value, we have just 666. Thus we have – V,5; I,1; C,100 (a and r not used as numerals; I,1; U (formerly the same as V),5; (s and f not used as numerals); I,1; L,50; I,1; I,1; D,500; (e not used as a numeral); I,1. Adding these numbers together, we have just 666.” (*Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation* – Uriah Smith, p. 580)

**14:1-3** – “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, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.”

Reference here, is, of course, to Christ Jesus – the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36), and to the 144,000 elect saints (Rev. 7:4) which follow the Lamb “whithersoever he goeth.” (Rev. 14:7) It is to be carefully noted that instead of having been marked in their foreheads with the name and number of the Beast (Rev. 13:16, 17), these have the Father’s name written on theirs.... As the Redeemed from amongst men, and the “firstfruits” unto God, and to the Lamb, they follow him right into his, and their glory!

**The 144,000 – The Faithful**

**“The faithful class is pictured to us in Rev. 7:3, 4; 14:1-5. These are the 144,000 who have the Father’s name in their foreheads. They sing the new song, which none can sing but these 144,000.** Oh, we long to be among them! We cannot afford to be anywhere else. The outcome is all in our hands whether we succeed or fail, after God has given us his holy Spirit. It will be our own fault if we miss the kingdom. There will be no blame to attach to the Lord; for he has arranged for our continual cleansing day by day; and his loving, protecting providences are continually about us if we are trustful and obedient to the best of our ability.” (R5924:5)

“These are represented as standing with the Lamb on Mt. Zion, and singing the song which none but themselves could learn to sing. (Rev. 14:1-3) Again, these are represented as being with the Lamb, standing upon the sea of glass. (Rev. 15:2, 3) Thus in various ways this group seems to represent the very elect, the saintly few, the little flock, to whom it will be the Father’s good pleasure to give the Millennial Kingdom, as jointheirs with their Lord and Redeemer.” (R5231:5)

“The symbol of having the name written in the forehead, we believe, pictures something ... definite.... While describing something that characterizes all of

the 'elect' class throughout the Age, it seems to refer more especially to those who live in the period when the image of the beast is fully developed and acting. It appears to refer to some outward mark that will distinguish these from all others who profess the name of Christ, something that will make them conspicuous, even to the world at large." (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 138)

The testimony of these, was to John, as a "voice from heaven," and as the "voice of many waters." Yet, only these from amongst the whole world of mankind, were able to sing this "song of redemption." The music for this song was written in heaven, by the Father himself; therefore, the song is called "the Song of Moses and the Lamb" (Rev. 15:3); and thus is this testimony of the elect by word and by life, like a "voice from heaven." Its being like unto "the voice of many waters," is indicative of the fact that those who sing it, are from among many nations, kindreds and tongues. That it sounded like "a great thunder" signifies that it gives rise to controversies concerning the Word of Truth. Nevertheless, it was to John "the voice of harpers, harping on their harps." That is, the harpers (the consecrated and elect saints) knowing well their instruments, sang as they played upon their harps (the Word of God); and the harmony of their well-tuned instruments together with their voices was so very sweet, John could hear its cadences above the roar of the "thunder."

"The whole divine testimony must be in harmony, whether it be communicated by the Law, the prophets, the Lord or the apostles. Their entire harmony is the proof of their divine inspiration. 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.' (Rev. 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. Praise the Lord for the exquisite melody of the blessed 'song of Moses and the Lamb,' which we learn through the testimony of his holy apostles and prophets, of whom the Lord Jesus is chief!" (F235)

These "harpers" (singers are they too) sang their new song "as it were before the throne ... and the four beasts, and the elders," that is to the honor, glory and praise of the Father, and the Son, in appreciation of the Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, revealed in the prophetic

utterances and their fulfillment. And, as already suggested, "no man could learn that song, but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth!"

Yet, even **now**, such of these saints as are living in the end of this Gospel Age, are privileged to play upon the Harp<sup>1</sup> of God, and to sing, as none before them could:

### The Song of Moses and The Lamb

Have you heard the new song  
That most beautiful song,  
The song which **the saints now may sing**  
How the old **harp of Moses**,  
And **sweet flute of John**  
With harmonious melody ring?

'Tis the song of the Lamb  
Once by Moses foretold,  
In the symbols and types of God's law;  
As the dawn of the day  
Doth its symbols unfold,  
We behold what we ne'er before saw.

O! what visions of glory  
Are brought to faith's view,  
Of glory which all soon shall see;  
For the great King of Glory  
Shall make all things new,  
And O! what rejoicing there'll be.

Tune your voices, ye saints,  
For this glorious strain,  
And earth shall with melody ring;  
Let **the grand 'harp of God'**  
Loudly swell the refrain,  
For tributes of praise all may bring.

**God's Word is that harp**,  
Which has long been unstrung,  
And men heard but discordant notes;  
Now as tuned are its chords  
From Moses to John,  
How grandly sweet melody floats.

It will float o'er the world  
In a rapturous strain,  
Of glory and peace and good will,  
And all then shall hear  
And may join the refrain  
And joy shall the hearts of all thrill.

*Hymns of Dawn, 79*

<sup>1</sup> The ten strings of **this Harp** are as follows: (1) The Perfect Creation; (2) The Permission of Evil; (3) Divine Condemnation; (4) The Abrahamic Covenant; (5) The Law Covenant; (6) The Ransom Sacrifice; (7) The Resurrection; (8) The Election; (9) The New Covenant; (10) Restitution (Restoration)! (See Psa. 33:1-4; 92:1-4; 144:1-3; Rev. 5:6-10; 14:1-3; 15:2-4)

### The 144,000 Standing With the Lamb on Mount Zion

This is, of course, as God sees them, in the finished picture, actually standing with the Lamb, as the glorified Church, on Mount Zion! However, it is similar to the picture Jahweh gives us of the glorified “priest” in Leviticus 8, arrayed in garments of glory and beauty before he has done a bit of sacrificing on the altar of burnt-offering (See T38); for as Revelation rolls along, we see the same class in Revelation 15:1-3, singing, the “song of Moses and the Lamb” while still standing on the sea of glass – mingled with fire! Commenting on this latter, Bro. Russell had this to say:

“These overcomers sing a song. A song symbolizes a beautiful and harmonious expression. It is the song of Moses and the Lamb. That is, the song, or preaching of these overcomers is in perfect accord with the Law and the Gospel. It is the same which Jesus (the ‘Lamb’) taught, and which Moses taught in the Law and types. Not only does the description of the overcomers indicate that they are but a little fragment of the nominal Church, but the words of the song teach us the same – that the class who proclaim these things are few.” (R497:3)

#### The 144,000 Standing on Mount Zion

These are the ones that are referred to by Obadiah, the prophet, when he says, “... saviors shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD’s.” (Obad. 21)

Yes, “saviors” shall come up on mount Zion.... The Lamb will be the Redeemer (for he took away “the sin of the world” – John 1:29); **but with him** there shall be **the 144,000 “saviors”** who had consecrated their all (were “baptized for the dead.” – 1 Cor. 15:29)

“... into death with Christ, baptized for the dead, to the intent that we may by and by be associated with him as the Life-giver of the world – the Seed of Abraham.” (F456)

#### The 144,000 = “Male-Child” (Man-Child) of Isa. 66

Isa. 66:7 – “Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.”

These 144,000 (of Rev. 7:3, 4) are the sharers in the First Resurrection, upon whom the Second Death will have no power. (Rev. 2:11; 20:6) They are the “man child” born of Zion (nominal Christendom) before her travail.

“The symbolic travail, in the above prophecy, is a reference to the great time of trouble – the travail that is to come upon the nominal Gospel church, great ‘Babylon,’ from which some are to be counted worthy to escape. (Luke 21:36) ...

“The travail that is coming is to be upon nominal Zion – ‘Christendom,’ ‘Babylon’; and it will be a

great and sore affliction – ‘a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.’ But the marvelous thing the Prophet here has to record is that a man-child is to be born out of Zion before this travail comes. This is a striking reference to the fact, elsewhere clearly taught, that the ripe wheat of the Gospel church is to be separated from the tares, that they are to be exalted and glorified before the burning, the consuming trouble, shall come upon the latter. This man-child is, therefore, the little flock – the true Zion in God’s estimation, the body of Christ; as it is written, ‘There shall come out of Zion (the nominal Gospel church) the deliverer (the Christ, Head and body), and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (the fleshly Israel or Zion).’ (Rom. 11:26)

“This is the man-child that is to bless all the families of the earth. (Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:16, 29) The birth of the man-child is the first resurrection. Such are now begotten of God by the Word of truth, and quickened by the holy spirit (Jas. 1:18; Eph. 2:1; Rom. 8:11), and in due time – before the travail – they will be born in the glorious likeness of Christ. The birth of this man-child began over eighteen hundred years ago with the resurrection of Christ Jesus. There the head of this body of Christ came forth; and as surely as the Head has been born, so surely shall the body come forth. ‘Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth and shut the womb? saith thy God.’ (Isa. 66:9) Ah, no: ‘the man-child,’ the Christ complete, the great Deliverer, shall come forth.

“Yet ‘who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things?’ for not only shall the body of Christ, the true overcoming Zion, the ‘holy nation, the peculiar people,’ be delivered out of nominal Zion, before the travail; but when she travails, a great company of other children will be born. This is the great company described in the Apocalypse as coming up out of the great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. 7:14) The body of Christ, the man-child, born before the travail, will be composed of those who heard and obeyed the call, ‘Come out of her, my people,’ etc. (Rev. 18:4) and who were counted worthy to have part in the first resurrection; while the many children born through the great tribulation will be those believers in nominal Zion, Babylon, who have allowed themselves to become measurably intoxicated by the spirit of Babylon, the spirit of the world, and who, therefore, are not quick to discern and prompt to obey the voice of the Lord in this harvest time, and consequently fail to understand the separating work which the sickle of present truth is accomplishing, regarding those servants of God who wield it as

enemies, and hence as opposing them and the Lord whom they serve.” (R1648:1; 1649:2)

**14:4, 5** – “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.”

In the Scriptures, a woman is often used to symbolize the Church as the bride-to-be, a chaste virgin, espoused to Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 11:2), but a woman is also used to symbolize the unfaithful Church, which commits fornication with the kings of the earth – the Harlot; and also of her “daughters.” (Rev. 17:1-5) Identification with the latter bespeaks defilement. The “harpers” (the true saints of God) who play upon their “instruments” and sing the heavenly music, are not so defiled, for they continually look unto Jesus, and follow him, as the Lamb of God, “whithersoever he goeth”; they are the “redeemed from among men” – the “firstfruits” unto God and the Lamb.

“... a woman is always the symbol used for a church separate from its head and lord. The true Church is symbolized by a ‘chaste virgin,’ while the apostate church, which has fallen away from primitive purity and fidelity to the Lord, is symbolically called ‘a harlot.’” (B277)

“Blessed are those whose eyes can see that Jesus was indeed ‘the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world’; that the cancellation of the world’s sin is to be effected by the payment of man’s penalty, by the application of Jesus’ sacrificial merit in due time for the sins of all mankind. Only the church have as yet received of the merit of Jesus’ death. Greatly favored are those who can see that as the whole world lost divine favor and came under divine sentence of death, with its concomitants of sorrow and pain, so it was necessary that a satisfaction of justice should be made before this sentence, or cause, could be removed; and that therefore, as the Apostle declares, ‘Christ died for our sins’ – ‘the Just for the unjust,’ that he might bring us back to God. Thus he opened up a new way – a way of life everlasting.

“The Scriptures call the Church of Christ, ‘the church of the first-borns,’ ‘a kind of first-fruits unto God of his creatures,’ ‘the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb.’ (Heb. 12:23; Jas. 1:18; Rev. 14:4) These expressions imply that ultimately there will be others of God’s family later born; they imply after-fruits.” (RS869:6; 5870:1)

These selfsame saints of God, are pure and guileless – like unto little children, i.e., childlike, meek, lowly and teachable. And, they are very careful to see that no word proceeds out of their mouth, save that which is intended

to build up and edify the brethren. (Eph. 4:29) This is the state or condition which they attain ere they are glorified to sit upon the throne of the heavens. Their hearts are right, and God, before whose throne they have a standing, considers them as being without guile, and faultless. (Num. 23:21)

**14:6, 7** – “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”

For John, the scene now changes. He sees another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto all peoples.

This, “another angel,” like some that preceded him, represents the fact that the time and the circumstances were exactly right for the propagation of this Gospel to all men. While this Gospel had already been given by God to some of the ancients who had the requisite faith, e.g., Abraham (Gal. 3:8); this grace was limited to the fleshly “seed” of Abraham, the Jewish nation, Israel, until the time their “seventy weeks” of special favor (Dan. 10:24) ended. Then, in obedience to the declaration of Jesus, his disciples began carrying this very Gospel into all the world “for a **witness**.” (Compare Matt. 24:14 with Matt. 28:19) The purpose then being, the calling out of the true “seed” of blessing; nor did this involve the immediate judgment of the world of mankind. This particular witness, in a sense began at the end of Israel’s seventieth “week” – that is, in the Spring of A.D. 36. But **this** preaching is not the one here referred to (Rev. 14:6), for, let it be noted, the latter was identified with the world’s “hour of judgment” (Rev. 14:7) – commencing at the end of the Gospel age, and taking in all of the Millennium!

It is true that some of this preaching to the world of mankind, began in the Harvest of the Gospel age, by some of the “feet members” still sojourning in the flesh; yet, this preaching is more particularly the ministry of the glorified Christ, throughout the Millennial age.

“... we find, that the message which God has sent us, preaching peace and life by the blood of the cross to every one that believeth is indeed the central good tidings. And since it shall be testified to all **in due time**, we see, how it will be good tidings ‘to all people.’ This is the ‘everlasting (good news) gospel,’ mentioned in the symbol of Rev. 14:6. **It already is being sounded forth** and must during the Millennial age now dawning, reach every nation and kindred and tongue and people.” (R924:3)

“The judgment seat of Christ does not come into existence until his thousand-year reign begins; and the *krisis* or the *krisis* day does not begin until the



dead come out of their graves, and Christ sits on his own throne. (John 5:29; Rev. 14:7)” (R2425:3-6<sup>1</sup>)

To the world of mankind, released from the great prison house of death, this message – the glad tidings of redemption, so loudly proclaimed (everyone will hear it) – will be the means of instilling in them a sincere reverence and worship of Jehovah, causing them also, to glorify and praise him, the Creator of their new heavens and new earth “wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (2 Pet. 3:13)

As time goes on, this world of mankind will gradually learn to read God’s other Book – the Book of Nature; and find therein that all physical phenomena are the reflection of the greater spiritual law! They will “see” new beauties in the heavens, the earth, the sea, and the fountains of water! And, perhaps, like David of old, they too will say, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament his handiwork; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth forth knowledge” (Psa. 19:1) or “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?” (Psa. 8:3, 4)

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

Here we are told of another, a second angel, **following the first**. Again, the significance is that time and circumstances were ready for the event now to take place – the proclamation of the fall of Babylon.

As suggested, the preceding angel’s message began to be preached in the end of the Gospel age, during the Harvest period. The second angel’s proclamation, which is sequential to the first, also began in the same period, but later.

“We ... see very clearly that the nominal church of the Gospel age is Babylon (the confused, mixed condition of worldly-mindedness and lukewarm Christianity), described in Rev. 18:2, 4.

“The ‘spewing out’ (Rev. 3:16), or casting off, of the nominal church as an organization in 1878 ... the date of Babylon’s fall. ... Since then we feel ourselves led of the Spirit, through the unfolding of the word of truth, to say in the name of the Lord, to all God’s true children in Babylon: ‘Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues.’ (Rev. 18:4) This seems to accord wonderfully with the second message, ‘**Babylon is fallen.**’ (Rev. 14:8)” (R474:6)

The reason given for “Babylon’s” fall and rejection: “because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” Fornication, i.e. illicit intercourse, here means worldly affiliation! This is the “wine” with which she made all nations “drunk.”

“False teachings concerning the character and mission of the Church, and the claim that the time for her exaltation and reign had come (and particularly after the great boom of success which her worldly ambition received in the time of Constantine, when she claimed to be the Kingdom of God set up to reign in power and great glory), led many into Babylon, who would never have united with her had she continued in the narrow way of sacrifice. Pride and ambition led to the grasping of worldly power by the early Church. To obtain the power, numbers and worldly influence was necessary. And to obtain the numbers, which, under present conditions, the truth never would have drawn, false doctrines were broached, and finally obtained the ascendancy over all others; and even truths which were still retained were disfigured and distorted. The numbers came, even to hundreds of millions, and the true Church, the wheat, still but a ‘little flock,’ was hidden among the millions of tares. Here, as sheep in the midst of devouring wolves, the true embryo Kingdom of God suffered violence, and the violent took it by force; and, like their Lord in whose footprints they followed, they were despised and rejected of men, men of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” (C164)

#### The “Cup” of the “Apostate Woman”

“... there is a spiritual intoxication, the spirit of error. All the world are intoxicated with this spirit. All Christendom has been made drunk with the wine which comes from the golden cup mentioned in Revelation, which the apostate woman, has held out for all to drink. **The cup is filled with false doctrines.** These false doctrines were her mixture. Thank God! the intoxication of these is passing away, and we are able to see more clearly than ever before. But we see many who are still intoxicated.” (R5633:2)

**14:9-11** – “And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascended up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.”

<sup>1</sup> Quote from a letter by M. L. McPhail to Bro. Russell, with the evident endorsement of the latter.



Here again, the appearance of the third angel evidenced the fact that time and circumstances were now most favorable to the proclamation of the third message.

The third message was a warning as to what would be the fate of those who failed to regard the second message, "Come out of her, my people." Should they really be the spiritual Israel of God, they would not only find the creeds and doctrines of nominal Christendom quite uncomfortable, because they do not "fit," but the fellowship, within its confines would leave very much to be desired. The very fact that message number three, followed number two, is an assurance that some of the Lord's people would remain in Babylon after its fall.

"The third message (Rev. 14:9-11) was that concerning the **worshippers of the Beast and his Image**, showing the nominal church in the colors in which the Word of God paints it, pointing out how all who remain in her, either in spirit or name, in opposition to the Word of God, saying, 'Come out of her,' will be subjected to torment and vexation so long as they are worshiping creeds and doctrines and organizations of men, the remembrance of which distress (smoke of torment) will never be forgotten." (R475:1)

It will have been noted that this third angel followed the other two in sequence, also during the harvest of the Gospel age.

"As with the preceding two, so with this third message, it could not have been more accurately fulfilled than it was. All three ... as special messages in the sense referred to in the prediction of the Revelator, they all had been given before the fall of 1881, and this was the time which corresponded with the end of the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy." (R475:2)

Note: It is possible that the holy Spirit used the very early editions of the *Watch Tower*, to promulgate these three messages (Rev. 14:6-9; See R475:2) This much is certain, the messages were reiterated in the subsequent publication of *Scripture Studies* (originally known as *Millennial Dawn*) volumes 1-6!

**14:12,13** – "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

According to the Bible Chronology, the sleeping saints were resurrected in the Spring of 1878. Since that time, those remaining in the flesh, patiently, have been looking forward to their own "change" in the twinkling of an eye to glory, honor and immortality (1 Cor. 15:51-53); yea, in patience they have been possessing their souls. (Luke 21:19)

### The Blessedness ... Dead ... Die ... Henceforth

"Through the testimony of God's Word we understand that the resurrection began in 1878; not that we saw anything by the natural sight of the eyes, but through the eyes of our understanding we recognized that the time had come for that great transaction, the first resurrection, as far as the sleeping saints were concerned; and we understand that there commenced the time mentioned by the writer of Revelation, when he declared, 'Blessed are they who die in the Lord from henceforth,' marking a particular time, before which it would not be a blessing to die, but after which it would be a blessing. 'From henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.' (Rev. 14:13)

"That particular time came, we believe, in 1878; then, not only the apostles were awakened, but all the faithful in Christ Jesus, all the sleeping members of the body of Christ. That was the beginning of the resurrection of the body of Christ – the Lord judging among his people first, before the judgment of the world. He foretold that when he would come he would call his own servants and reckon with them – not with the world – giving reward to those of his Church who had gone before, giving them part in the first resurrection, and then afterward dealing with us 'who are alive and remain,' so that each one of us who are of the Lord's people, may at death be 'changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,' during the sounding of the last trumpet – the seventh." (R5566:5)

"It signifies that from the time of the beginning of the reaping of the 'harvest' of this age by the crowned reaper (the Spring of 1878), there will be a wonderful blessing not previously possible, upon the certain class described. From this particular date onward those of this particular class who die will be favored or blessed in a manner in which none of the preceding members of this same class were blessed; namely, in that their death will not interrupt their works, which will continue right along, the labor and weariness alone ceasing, the work itself continuing under more glorious and more favorable conditions." (R2982:3)

While many of their trials have been the result of the changes taking place in the world as the great "time of trouble" advances (Matt. 24:21), the severest trials have come as a result of the judgment beginning with the "house of God" (1 Pet. 4:17); and the shaking of all things that can be shaken (Heb. 12:27); but they have been warned that when "iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." (Matt. 24:12) Herein too, lies the patience of the saints, for they continue to press on for the prize of their "high-calling of God in Christ Jesus"

(Phil. 3:14), keeping the commandments of their Lord, and their faith centered in Christ Jesus.

“Since then we are in the time of patient waiting for our ‘change’ described in verse 12 ... it was in the fall of 1881 that, for the first time, we were able to read understandingly the words, ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth.’ Evidently the blessing is to the members of the Christ now living.

“But, we inquire, in what respect will death be a blessing to us now? We answer, that now we shall not sleep, but we will be instantly invested with our heavenly (spiritual) bodies, being changed in a moment, dropping all that is human and earthly, and being clothed with our heavenly condition. In the case of Jesus, there were nearly three days of sleep – the unclothed, unconscious, dead condition between the times when the earthly body was resigned and the heavenly body was received. Paul and others have been nearly two thousand years waiting ‘unclothed,’ or ‘asleep in Jesus,’ and this is one of the principal reasons why death was undesirable even to Christians. We don’t wish to be unclothed, even for a moment, but we do desire to be clothed upon, or to have the change an instantaneous one. (1 Cor. 15:52)

“Herein consists the blessing to those of the body now taken. Death to the human will be instantaneous with the perfecting of the divine nature, hence it will be a blessed ‘change.’ Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; but their works follow with them.’

“To the class thus ‘blessed’ there will be no interruption of work. Already dead to the world and alive toward God, their work is in harmony with the kingdom work now going on, and they merely step to their higher plane of ‘divine’ perfection and power, and there continue the same work. It is only the labor (toil) incident to the mortal body – the frail ‘earthen vessel’ which ceases. Not so highly favored in this regard was the lot of any of the members of ‘the body’ which preceded us. Quite a period elapsed in Paul’s case between sufferings and glory. When he had fought the good fight and finished his course he looked forward, not to a change in a moment, but to a sleep from which he would be awakened to receive his reward in the kingdom. So he expresses his hope ‘Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of life which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.’ (2 Tim. 4:8)” (R475:4)

**14:14,15** – “And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple,

crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.”

### The Sickle and The Harvest

“The sickle is suggestive of harvest time and harvest work. In this instance it doubtless represents what is generally termed, Harvest Truth. The golden crown symbolizes the Divine nature and authority of the kingly Reaper. The vision describes in a general way the work of gathering the ripe fruitage of the Gospel Age – the saints, who are to be united to Christ as His Bride. This is briefly, but very comprehensively described in the symbolic words: ‘And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.’ (Rev. 14:16)” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Streeter – Vol. 2, p. 211)

“Now, **in the ‘harvest’** of this age, God causes the light to shine more clearly, for the reason that he is making **the truth his ‘sickle’** by which he will separate wheat from tares completely and finally. Therefore, put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand – that you be not among the thousands to fall in this time of trial. (Psa. 91:7,11,12)” (R981:5)

### Judgment Beginning at the House of God!

“... we have found also that the forepart of this day of trouble, will be a special time of peculiar trouble and trial, testing and sifting upon the church; for – The judgments of this day ‘must begin with the house of God.’ We see this sifting and shaking in progress all about us in the nominal church, **and still more intensely among those who occupy a still higher position and enlightenment through the knowledge of present truth.**” (R4077:3)

**14:16** – “And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.”

This bespeaks the Lord’s second presence; and that the world of mankind cannot see him, save figuratively, in the clouds of the “time of trouble.”

“Men see the clouds and, therefore, see him coming in the clouds with power and great glory (the glory of power and justice), but **they do not recognize him.** Not until the clouds have let fall hail stones and coals of fire (Psa. 18:12, 13) to batter down men’s pride, and selfishness, and prejudices, and consume these, will the clouds disappear, and reveal the full majesty and glory of Christ’s presence ...

“Behold, he cometh with clouds,’ (Rev. 1:7), and in due time ‘every eye shall see (discern) him,’ shall recognize his presence, power and authority.” (B152)

As suggested, “clouds” in the Scriptures often are the symbols of the “time of trouble”; and “clouds of trouble are heavy and dark.” (B152) Here, however, the cloud is said to be **white**. It evidently still signifies trouble; but being associated with the presence of the Lord (one like unto the Son of man, sitting upon it), it betokens that the trouble is incidental to the establishment of his kingdom of righteousness in the earth!

“This harvest, like the Jewish one, is to be first a time of trial and sifting upon the Church, and afterward a time of wrath or pouring out of the ‘seven last plagues’ upon the world, including the nominal Church. The Jewish Church was the ‘shadow’ or pattern on the fleshly plane. That which tried fleshly Israel in the harvest of their age was the TRUTH then presented to them. **The truth then due was the sickle**, and it separated the ‘Israelites indeed’ from the nominal Jewish Church; and of the true wheat there was but a fragment compared to the professors. So also is the harvest of this age. The harvest of the Gospel age, like that of the Jewish age, is under the supervision of the chief reaper, our Lord Jesus, who must then be present. (Rev. 14:14) The first work of our Lord in the harvest of this age will be to separate the true from the false. The nominal Church, because of her mixed condition, the Lord calls ‘Babylon’ confusion; and the harvest is the time for separating the different classes in the nominal Church, and for ripening and perfecting the wheat class.” (A238)

“... the recognition of the harvest work in actual process is proof of the Lord’s presence, since he declared that he would be the chief reaper and director of the entire work, and that this would be his first work. – ‘Behold, a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.... And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.’ – ‘In the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, gather’ etc. (Rev. 15:14, 16; Matt 13:30)” (B150)

**14:17-20** – “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 voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. 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. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.”

Two other “angels” enter in upon the scene: one, as it were coming out of the temple in heaven; the other from the altar. Only the former had a sharp sickle. Evidently,

time and circumstances were just right for another reaping, different to be sure, from that to be accomplished by the “one like unto the Son of man” that sits upon a white cloud. Yet, it seems evident too, that it is the selfsame agency that is to accomplish this reaping also! Is not our Lord Jesus, the Chief Reaper, the one who on leaving his disciples, promised that his going away was merely so that he might prepare a place for them, that he would return to gather them unto himself, so that where he was to be eternally, they might be also? (John 14:3) And is he not also the one who has received both power and authority from the Temple Court (where also the altar is located) of the great Jehovah, not only to avenge the blood of his saints (Rev. 19:3), but also to gather together, and utterly to destroy, the great Harlot system and her paramours, with all that is evil and iniquitous in the whole earth. (2 Thes. 1:7-10) Thus there is but one harvest period, but in it, two harvestings (reapings) will be accomplished.

“This harvest period not only accomplishes the separation of wheat from tares in the nominal Gospel church, and the gathering and glorification of the wheat class, but it is also to accomplish the burning (destruction) of the tares, (or imitation wheat – not as individuals; the fire of destruction is symbolic as well as the tares), and the gathering and destruction of the corrupt fruitage of ‘the Vine of the earth’ (human ambition, greed and selfishness), which has been growing and ripening for centuries in the kingdoms of this world and the various civil and social organizations among men.” (B104)

“‘I am the true vine,’ institutes a comparison, and suggests to the mind a counterfeit or false vine; and this reminds us of the fact that our Lord, through this same writer, subsequently explained that there would be two harvests – a gathering of the fruit of the true Vine, and subsequently a gathering of the ‘vine of the earth.’ (Rev. 14:18-20) If ... the true Vine represents the true church, then the vine of the earth represents a false church, an untrue, un-genuine one.” (R2464:6)

“Great is the vine of the earth, wonderful in the eyes of men. But the harvesting time will show that these nominal systems are not the vine of Jehovah’s right hand planting (Isa. 60:21), and it is, therefore, the system which the Lord declares he will utterly uproot and destroy, and whose destruction is so graphically described in Revelation. In the winepress of the wrath of God, in the great time of trouble which is nearing – which we believe the Scriptures to teach will be fully upon the world (soon) – the blood of Babylon’s grapes will mean a flood of trouble and anguish to the world. By that time, however, the true vine and its branches will all have been glorified, and the results of their proper fruit-bearing will mean blessings to all the families of the earth.” (R3544:3)

“The treading of the winepress is the last feature of harvest work. The reaping and gathering is all done first. So this treading of the winepress of the wrath of God into which ‘the vine of the earth’ (the false vine, which has misappropriated the name Christian and Christ’s Kingdom) is cast when its iniquitous clusters are fully ripe (Rev. 14:18-20), represents the last work of this eventful ‘harvest’ period. It pictures to our minds the last feature of the great time of trouble which shall involve all nations, and of which we are so abundantly forewarned in the Scriptures.

“The fact that the King of kings is represented as treading the winepress ‘alone’ indicates that the power exerted for the overthrow of the nations will be divine power, and not mere human energy. It will be God’s power that will punish the nations, and that will eventually ‘bring forth judgment (justice, righteousness, truth) unto victory.’ ‘He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips (the force and spirit of his truth) shall he slay the wicked.’ (Isa. 11:4; Rev. 19:15; Psa. 98:1)” (D18)

### The Vine of the Earth

“... we have shown that the harvest of the Gospel age is already come; that it began in 1874, when the presence of the Lord of the harvest was due; and that, while a great harvest work has been in progress ever since that date, we are now fast nearing the latter end of the harvest period, when the burning of the tares and the gathering and treading of the fully ripe clusters of the ‘vine of the earth’ (the matured fruits of the false vine – ‘Babylon’) are due. (Rev. 14:18-20)” (D51)

“The vine of the earth is the nominal Christian system organized along the lines of earthly wisdom. Its branches are the various sects and parties of Christendom. Its fruitage is cathedrals, temples, tabernacles, chapels, orphanages, hospitals, etc., political power, honor of men, wealth and social standing. It is great and influential in the world and has the spirit of the world running through its branches and governing all of its affairs, and brings forth a fruitage which is not entirely bad, but which is entirely earthly, and which is relished and appreciated because it is earthly and practical rather than heavenly. The vine has grown wonderfully, has some three hundred branches and claims four hundred million adherents, and through its untold wealth of property and its adherents it may be said to practically control the wealth of the world.” (R3544:3)

### The Horses Bridles and the 1600 furlongs

We have been unable to find any exegesis of this passage anywhere, which we deem satisfactory. Nor can we find that Bro. Russell ever commented on it. Until we

learn more about its true significance, may we suggest that it reflects the completeness of the overthrow, and utter destruction of all that is evil, or would be inimical to the establishment of God’s Kingdom of righteousness in the earth.

“Take another prophetic testimony. (Zeph. 1:7-9, 14-18) ‘The Lord hath prepared a slaughter, he hath bid his guests. (Compare Rev. 19:17) And it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord’s slaughter that I will punish the princes and the king’s children, and all such as are clothed in imported clothing. And I will inflict punishment (also) on all those (marauders) who leap over the threshold on that day, who fill their masters’ houses with violence and deceit.’ (This shows not only that there will be a great overthrow of wealth and power in this time of trouble, but that those who will for the time be the instruments of heaven in breaking down present systems will also be punished for their equally unjust and unrighteous course; for the coming trouble will involve all classes, and bring distress upon all the multitude.)” (A315)

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

Perhaps it is well to be reminded here, that John, in many of these apocalyptic visions represents the Church throughout the whole of the Gospel age; and sometimes more particularly, the last, the “feet members” of the body of Christ, living in the end of the age. The scene before us belongs to this latter period, for the pouring out of the seven vials of the wrath of God, is surely identified with the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which began sounding in 1874. (Rev. 11:15-18)

It is possible that the “seven angels” who pour out the vials of God’s wrath upon the earth, is none other than the one, elect Church – the “little flock.” The term “seven angels” is thus to indicate the perfection and completeness of this “little flock” in the eyes of Jehovah God! The closing scenes of the Gospel age are reflected in Psa. 149:7-9, where, speaking of this elect company, the prophecy declares that they are –

“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.”

And, to show that **all** of the “little flock” will be thus involved, those already on the spirit plane (partakers of the divine nature), and those still sojourning in the flesh – the Psalmist, under divine inspiration adds, “this honor have all the saints.” (Psa. 149:9)

### Kingdom Work – Both Sides of the Veil

“This does not signify, that there may not be a part of the kingdom work begun while some of the members

of Christ are still in the flesh. Indeed some Scriptures seem to imply that there will be a kingdom work done this side the veil, while a work of still greater magnitude and authority is progressing on the other side of the veil. We read, 'Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds.' This seems to imply, as we have mentioned before, that there is a special work to be done while these saints still have beds, while they are in a condition of repose – 'not tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine,' but fully at rest in God's great plan. The Scripture goes on to say that they have a two-edged sword in their hands – this is the Word of God. They use it as the sword of the Spirit. This would not be true of them on the other side of the veil. They would have no use for a sword there. The Scriptures also declare that the high-sounding praises of God are upon their lips. This too, seems to be applicable to those this side the veil." (R5631:6)

Commenting on Rev. 19:14 – "the armies of heaven," Bro. Russell had this to say:

"We know not why this prophecy speaks of heavenly armies – in the plural. We merely suggest that the heavenly army may possibly be in two divisions – one of this side of the veil, the other on the other side of the veil. We are waiting to see, and merely watching while we wait, and noting with possibly greater care our Father's Word. We may be sure that if any commission be given to the Lord's people to execute judgment this side of the veil it would be so explicit as to leave no room for doubt, remembering that the divine requirement throughout the age has been that the saints of God shall be subject to the powers that be. Any change of this order to the effect that we should execute judgments upon them will need to be very positively and very clearly understood before being executed.

"Just how the kings and nobles – financial, political and social – will be bound, and just what kind of fetters of strength will be used, we may not know until qualified; but the outworking of all these will be, as expressed in Psa. 149:9, 'to execute upon them the vengeance written: this honor have all of God's saints.' Whether we participate in this work on this side of the veil or on the other side makes no difference to us. In any event, whatever we shall do at any time under the guidance of the Lord's holy Spirit will be in harmony with justice and all the time intermingled with sympathetic love. None except those possessing and controlled by this, the holy Spirit of God, will ever be permitted participation in the kingdom glories and power." (R5451:4)

As is indicated in the passage, the vials represent the **wrath of God**, as it is to be poured out, or visited upon the last generation in the dispensation, which, as it were,

is to be held accountable for all the righteous blood having been shed throughout the Gospel age, as were the Jews of Jesus' day. (Luke 11:50, 51) The vials of wrath to be poured out are the seven last plagues!

### "The Wrath of God"

"But the Scriptures declare that the punishments upon the Jews which culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 were, some of them, for sins committed long before. Notice Jesus' words, 'The blood of all the Prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, shall be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, who perished between the Altar and the Temple.' (Luke 11:50, 51)

"Wherein was the justice in exacting all that of the people living in the close of that Age? We reply that those people had far more responsibility than all who preceded them. They had a great Light amongst them, shining from Jesus and the early saints. In their treatment of these lightbearers, crucifying them and variously injuring them, upon that last generation of the Jewish Age '**wrath came to the uttermost.**'

"The Bible intimates that similar aggregations of punishment are to be expected in the end of this Gospel Age. The great Time of Trouble, or **Day of Wrath** is the 'recompense of the controversy of Zion' – the saints, the true Church. For eighteen hundred years Jesus has prophetically declared that the Kingdom class would suffer violence; and the violent have usurped the place of the true by force.

"... the sin of their persecutors must be liquidated, even though the persecutors themselves will all eventually be forgiven. From this viewpoint, the 'Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation' and which is now beginning gradually to be consummated, will be the squaring of God's accounts with the world, preparatory to handing the Kingdom over to Messiah for the blessing of all." (OV345, 346)

### The Ten Egyptian Plagues

"... these plagues upon Egypt were intended to foreshadow, to illustrate the plagues with which this Gospel age will end, the **first three** and '**the seven last plagues.**' (Rev. 15:1)" (F175)

"It is well worthy of note that the first three plagues were shared by the Israelites as well as by the Egyptians, but in **the succeeding plagues**, as Moses pointed out in advance, the Israelites were spared. The land of Goshen was protected." (R5272:2)

"Noting that these ten plagues prefigured the time of trouble in the end of this age, we are not surprised to find similarly ten plagues mentioned in connection with the time of trouble portrayed in

Revelation as constituting the consummation of this present age and this 'present evil world.' There **the first three plagues** are called the **woe trumpets**, and following them come **the 'seven last trumpets.'** The first three apparently affect all, the last seven are restricted to those who are in opposition to the Lord. And so it was in the plagues of Egypt: the first three affected the Israelites as well as the Egyptians, but from **the last seven** the Israelites were exempted." (R3994:4)

**15:2-4** – "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.<sup>1</sup> 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."

The "victors" (the Church of the Gospel dispensation – the saints) who stand atop of the "sea of glass mingled with fire" we are told sang a song – the "song of Moses and the Lamb." And, while it is true, that all of God's saints have sung this song, **the "sea of glass mingled with fire"** is indicative of the fact that only such saints as are living in the end of the age, during the "time of trouble" are a part of this vision of John's; and these are said to **sing above it!**

"These overcomers sing a song. A song symbolizes a beautiful and harmonious expression. It is the song of Moses and the Lamb. That is, the song, or preaching of these overcomers is in perfect accord with the Law and the Gospel. It is the same which Jesus (the 'Lamb') taught, and which Moses taught in the Law and types. Not only does the description of the overcomers indicate that they are but a little fragment of the nominal Church, but the words of the song teach us the same – that the class who proclaim these things are few." (R497:3)

"... the sea of glass mingled with fire.... Sea ... we understand to symbolize the masses of the people, and fire, the judgment, or trouble.... **Above** the troubled people are the overcomers – calm, serene, untroubled. Their position shows that their standing is by faith. (Matt 14:29) To the eyes of faith all is transparent as glass." (R497:3)

### **The Song Which the Saints Now May Sing!**

"The word 'song' has a wider meaning than simply a musical cadence: it is used in the Scriptures and elsewhere to indicate a joyful message of any kind. For instance, we say, referring to the Gospel, the

knowledge of the divine plan, 'Thou hast put a new song into my mouth, even the loving-kindness of our God.' And it is a fact that those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, those who have received the joy which no man can take from them, those who have tasted of the grace of God in Christ, will not only rejoice and literally sing musical songs with their lips, but they will also rejoice to have their entire lives a song of praise and thanksgiving unto God. The song will bubble over on every occasion, wherever hearing ears are found: so fully will the cleansed, justified and consecrated heart appreciate God's goodness and so greatly will it desire to:

"Tell the whole world these blessed tidings,  
And speak of the time of rest that nears'."

(R2232:2)

The "harps" of these overcomers, as already suggested (Rev. 14:2, 3) are the Scriptures themselves, the Old and New Testament.

"Only those who have learned to play upon the harp of God, who have all its strings attuned to perfect harmony, can properly render this 'Song of Moses and the Lamb.' Never until today has it been possible to produce such melody from this wonderful harp; for never before have all its chords been properly placed and attuned. Now its music is entrancing! Then let us take this wonderful harp of the ages, and as we sweep its chords, let us sing with the spirit and with the understanding this wondrous, glad new song." (R5441:6)

### **The "Harp of God"**

"... the harp of God, we believe to be the Bible, its many strings or chords are the Law, Prophets, Psalms, Gospels, etc." (R497:5)

"... thank God! we find that harmony existing, so that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament constitute what the Lord himself designates 'the harp of God.' (Rev. 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." (F233)

### **The Harps on the Willows in Babylon**

"Many of the Lord's dear children in mystic Babylon's captivity, have sat down beside her rivers so defiled by the mire of worldliness and error, and wept when they remembered God's favor to Zion in times past. They laid aside the harps of God, hanging them on the willows that wept over the grave of truth in Babylon. They that carried them away captive (the Babylon system) require of them a song and mirth,

<sup>1</sup> Greek: *ethnon* = nations

saying, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion.' Yes, Babylon would like to see Zion's captives happy beside her muddy stream; and in the midst of her worldliness, would like to hear an occasional song of Zion, that she might boast of the Lord's favor. But 'how shall the captive daughters of Zion sing the Lord's song in a strange land?' (Psa. 137:1-6) To all such we cry: Take down your harps from the willows: flee out of Babylon into full liberty of thought and expression; tune your harps and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Sing of God's mighty love and the 'restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all of his holy prophets.'" (R497:6)

The Harp's Ten Strings:

- |                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1) Creation            | 6) Ransom Sacrifice |
| 2) Permission of Evil  | 7) Resurrection     |
| 3) Divine Condemnation | 8) Election         |
| 4) Abrahamic Covenant  | 9) New Covenant     |
| 5) Law Covenant        | 10) Restitution     |

(See Psa. 33:2, 3; 92:3; 144:9; Rev. 14:1-3; 15:2-3)

As for the words of this song that the overcomers sing:

"The words of the song are given, or the leading points of the preaching which will be done by the overcomers – 'Saying, Great and wonderful are Thy works, O Lord God, the Omnipotent.' Alas! how few are sufficiently acquainted with God's plans to recognize the fact that they are great and wonderful. Very few can sing this first note of the song, and fewer yet can sing it to its close. The second note is, 'Righteous and true are Thy ways, O King of nations.' (*Diaglott*) Look at this; we can sing of the righteousness and justice of God's dealing with the nations, since we have come to see how He has permitted evil and death to come upon all, as a lesson, to teach us to appreciate life and righteousness. We can see righteousness, justice, mercy, and love in God's dealing, since we see in His Word that there is to be a 'restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy Prophets since the world began.' (Acts 3:21) Who, but those who see the restitution to be accomplished in the next Age, could sing this part of the song? Not one: Christendom in general fears to think of God's justice in dealing with the nations in general, the great majority of whom have gone down into death without any knowledge of the only name whereby we must be saved. The righteousness, and justice, and love of God's dealing, can be seen only by looking at the work of the next, as well as that of the present and past Ages. Yes indeed, we rejoice to proclaim to all who have an 'ear to hear' – Just and true are Jehovah's ways in ruling the nations.

"The next note is in perfect harmony with the last – 'Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? since Thou alone art bountiful.' Our great Creator's every dealing is an act of favor – even the evil which man was permitted to bring upon himself is to be overruled for good; and we ask ourselves the question, Who shall not fear and glorify God when, in the coming age, His wonderful goodness is manifested, and when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth? We would be inclined to believe that every one should praise His love everlastingly, were it not that Scripture clearly discloses a Second Death, which tells of some who will be accounted worthy of it.

"For all the nations shall come and worship in Thy presence, because Thy righteous acts are manifested.' This is the last note of the song, and is full of force and meaning. How few are proclaiming, either publicly or privately, this part of the song. Some believe that many of the nations now dead are in a place of mental or physical torture, there to remain to all eternity. Others claim that they are dead, and will never again have life; others that those who are dead will be raised from death to pass a mock trial, and be destroyed. But how few can sing this song of restitution, declaring that all nations shall yet come from death, and shall worship their Lord and Redeemer, when brought to a knowledge of the Truth. (1Tim. 2:4) Even Sodom, a nation long since destroyed, shall come and worship. (Ezek. 16:48-63)" (R497:3)

### The "Song" ... Restitution!

"All who are true Watchmen can at this time see clearly, as one man, and can together harmoniously sing the new song of Moses and the Lamb – **the song of restitution**, so clearly taught, not only in the Law of Moses, which was 'a shadow of the good things to come,' but also in the clearer revelation of the Lamb of God contained in the writings of the New Testament, saying, 'Just and true are Thy ways.' 'All nations shall come and worship before Thee.' (Rev. 15:3, 4)" (C237)

### "Who Shall Not Fear Thee?"

"The righteous dealings of God will bring a sure penalty to every one in proportion to his degree of knowledge and wilfulness, but it will bring a just, and not an unjust penalty, and it will be remedial—with a view to the recovery of the penitent and his everlasting blessing. Otherwise it will terminate in his everlasting destruction. (2 Thes. 1:8, 9)" (OV170)

**15:5-8** – "And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.



And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth 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.”

The true Church, throughout the Gospel age, has been made up of “overcomers” (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21), many of whom were also “victors” over the beast and his image, etc. (Rev. 15:2) To these, as already suggested, it was granted that they might learn and sing the new song – the Song of Moses and the Lamb! (Rev. 15:3) And, as prophetically foretold, **all** of them (those already glorified, as well as those still sojourning in the flesh) are to have part in executing “vengeance upon the heathen,” and “punishments upon the people,” and in the “binding of their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron.” (Psa. 149:7-9)

It was Bro. Russell’s thought, back in 1883, that this whole company – the Temple Class (1 Cor. 3:16) was to be represented by the “feet members” of the Christ (those still in the flesh), whom John – (who “tarries” – as Jesus prophetically declared “he” might – speaking of a John class – John 21:22) – now sees as the “seven angels” appearing in the ecclesiastical “heaven” with the seven plagues filled with the wrath of God, to be visited upon the world of mankind.

“Since it is the saints who are to ‘execute the judgments written’ (Psa. 149:9), we interpret these ‘seven angels’ to mean the saints – the living saints, they being the representatives or active agents of the entire company – as ‘the feet of Him.’ It is the feet, or last part, who sing the restitution song of Moses and the Lamb, above the sea mingled with fire. ‘How beautiful are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.’ (Isa. 52:7) These same feet as representatives on earth of the entire body, are to pour out the seven vials, **or be associated more or less directly**, with the judgments coming. These are clothed with white linen; these have kept their wedding garments; they are robed in the righteousness of Christ ‘justified by his blood.’ They are the servants of God; the girdle representing a servant, and the gold of it representing divinity. They, as the servants of God, have a divine service to accomplish.” (R498:1)

It is possible that, as the years of the Harvest moved along, Bro. Russell’s view, as here expressed, may have undergone some slight modifications. We do know that in his latest writings, especially with regard to Psa. 149:7-9 he seemed reasonably sure that all the saints were to take part in this work; nor was he sure as to how, i.e., in what manner the living saints were to participate. (RS451:1-5)

### “This honor have all his saints” (Psa. 149:9)

“We know not why this prophecy (Rev. 19:14) speaks of heavenly armies – in the plural. We merely suggest that the heavenly army may possibly be in two divisions – one on this side of the veil, the other on the other side of the veil. We are waiting to see, and merely watching while we wait, and noting with possibly still greater care our Father’s Word ...

“Just how the kings and nobles – financial, political and social will be bound, and just what kind of fetters of strength will be used, we may not know until qualified; but the outworking of all these will be, as expressed in Psa. 149:9, ‘to execute upon them the vengeance written; this honor have all the saints.’ Whether we participate in this work on this side of the veil or on the other side makes no difference to us.” (RS451:4)

So, what and if, God should grant one part of **the Christ**, the major role, and to the other the minor, in the closing scenes of this drama of the Age; in the ultimate, will it not be **the Christ** (Jesus, and all the “overcomers” of the Gospel age) who usher in the new order – the new heavens and the new earth for the world of mankind, thus, becoming their blessers? (Gen. 22:18)

And now we are told as to who it is that gives unto these seven angels the golden vials filled with the wrath of God: it was one of the “living ones.” We believe it to be **Divine JUSTICE!** Among other things, surely there has been the cry of much righteous blood shed throughout the Age, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (Rev. 6:10)

“... the martyrs of the past, ‘the souls under the altar,’ are represented symbolically as crying out for the vindication of justice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, **dost thou not judge and avenge** our blood upon them that dwell on the earth!’ They were bidden to wait until others of their brethren should be similarly killed, when the guilt of all will be avenged. (Rev. 6:9-11)” (RS462:6)

The **true Temple** – the “cleansed Sanctuary Class” (see comments on Rev. 10:11; 11:1, 2), as represented in the “seven angels” is pictured as coming out of the nominal church temple – the ecclesiastical temple, “open” to let these come out, in response to the call, “Come out of her, my people.” (Rev. 18:4) This very “coming out” is, in a sense, a part of the judgment of God, which begins with the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17), separating first of all, the wheat from the tares (R605:6), and secondly, and as a result of this, judgment falls upon the nominal temple, and it is filled with confusion!

“The term judgment may be properly applied to the process of trial or to the result of trial – the decision or verdict. In the former sense the judgment of the

Church began over eighteen hundred years ago, and has been progressing ever since. But in the latter sense, it is due in the end or harvest of the Gospel age. **Hence the separating of wheat and tares, and also of the ripe and unripe wheat**, now going on.

“And if the judgment of the Church, as to who is fit or unfit to receive the Gospel prize offered to us, has begun, what shall the end or decision of this judgment be concerning them that had a hearing ear, that did once hear with gladness and appreciate the Gospel and then, for various reasons, did not obey it – the ungodly, not necessarily vicious and in direct opposition and defiance of God, but those claiming to be his and yet not fully obedient. There are very many such.” (R605:6)

### **The True Temple – The Cleansed Sanctuary Class**

“In his wisdom, God did not overpower them with the great flood of light now granted to the saints. Gently he led them on, step by step, cleansing them first from the papal pollutions which still clung to them. And as God thus drew them, **the Sanctuary class** followed on, recognizing the voice of the Good Shepherd in the accents of truth which exposed the old errors, until 1846, which prophecy marks as the date when a nucleus of the ‘holy people,’ the ‘Sanctuary,’ would become free from the errors of Papacy, cleansed of defilements, and ready to replace the unclean theories of men with the clean and beautiful principles of truth, on which the Lord and the Apostles had founded the Church. Gradually they were led to expect the great culmination of blessing when the Lord himself should come, in the harvest of the age. Their diligent study of God’s Word, and commendable desire to know what even the angels desired to look into (1 Pet. 1:12), were greatly blessed, though their desires were not fully granted.

“A faithful few were thus instructed in the Word of truth, filled with the spirit, purified and more fully separated from the world, purged of pride and, through the discipline of the disappointment of 1844, brought to more humble reliance upon God; ... until the watchers at the end of the ‘1335 days’ (1874, harvest time) received, and were sent forth to announce to all the Sanctuary class, the glad message, ‘Behold the Bridegroom!’” (C123)

### **Separating Wheat from Tares!**

“It should be a great encouragement to us all to find so clearly expressed in the type what we had vaguely and indistinctly hoped for, viz., that the Lord’s people of the Royal Priesthood on this side the veil are being used of him in various ways in the accomplishment of his purpose of separating the people of God from others – the wheat from the tares.” (R4060:5)

### **The Real Temple Class**

“... the chiseling, shaping and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ’s atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these ‘living stones,’ elect and precious,’ shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and **the Temple** shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium. (Rev. 15:5-8)” (“To Us The Scriptures Clearly Teach” – R1750:1; 5822:1)

“When they had all gone out of the temple, it was filled with smoke, so that none could enter it. The temple symbolizes the nominal church. The coming of the messengers out of the temple symbolizes the coming of the overcomers out of the nominal church. When all such have come out, the temple (church) will be so full of smoke (confusion), that no man would care to go into it. It was ‘with smoke from the glory of God and from his power’; that is, the overcoming class, shows the deformity and confusion of man-made creeds. As the truth, though rejected, shines out with increasing glory, the whole nominal temple is seen to be full of smoke – confusion and darkness; and all who remain in it become so blinded by it, that they cannot see the glory of God either as displayed in his Word, or its fulfillment in passing events.

“The messengers are now nearly all out, and already the smoke or confusion in the church is considerable. Few care to enter even now. ... The nominal church will be in this confusion until the seven plagues are poured out; during that time the Babylon, or confusion element, will be destroyed, and the cleansed temple of truth be again opened to receive justified believers – then as heirs of the earthly promises.” (R498:1)

**16:1** – “And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.”

The “great voice” which now speaks to these “seven angels” is that of the nominal Temple Class, telling them to go their ways and to do their worst; for the nominal Church feels that it has nothing to fear, and nothing to lose by getting rid of them.

“The nominal systems are anxious to retain every member, for each one counts, and their boast is in numbers and wealth; but when they find any who count all earthly considerations but loss and dross, and who will not be fettered and bound by manmade creeds they thrust such out, saying, Go, then, do your worst, ‘Go Your Ways.’”

“The unfettered, the overcoming class, have nearly all gone forth, we believe, now. These do not require the plagues since the truth has made them free. This little flock by no means constitutes the whole house of God. No, the house of God the household of faith – is a large class, the majority of whom are still in the nominal Church, fettered by its creeds and dwarfed by its worldly conformity. For their sake – that they may be brought into the liberty of sons of God, even through great tribulation (Rev. 7:14) – we are told that ‘judgment must begin at the house of God.’ They must be liberated first, and the overcoming class shall be the instruments in striking off the shackles of error. The plagues are really blessings in disguise, just as an amputation is a blessing though a trying ordeal of suffering to those who require it.” (R498:3)

**16:2** – “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.”

“These evils, called plagues or bowls of wrath, are designed to rid the world of every form of evil and wrong. The class symbolized by the land or earth, we understand to mean all people under religious restraint, of whatever name or order. Land or earth as a symbol represents settled, organized religious society, as sea represents the restless, irreligious, unsettled masses of humanity. Those having the mark (characteristics) of the Beast (Papacy) and those worshiping his Image (Protestantism) ... are the great mass of non-overcoming and nominal Christians.

“It is upon this class that the trouble first comes. While Roman Catholics constitute an important portion of this earth class, yet the trouble does not affect them at first, as shown from the fact that the ulcer (*Diaglott*) is not upon those worshiping the Beast, but on those worshiping the IMAGE and having the marks or characteristics of the Beast (Papacy), which indicates clearly the various shades and degrees of Protestantism.

“Their trouble is compared to an ulcer – ‘an evil and malignant ulcer.’ To appreciate the symbol let us consider the literal: An ulcer is a running sore; it is an evidence of constitutional disorder, and very painful. A CANCER in its worst stages, becomes a malignant ulcer. An ulcer is a cankerous sore, that is, one which eats, corrupts and destroys. Now carry the thought – what an ulcer or bad cancer is to a man will illustrate the character of the consuming, life-draining trouble coming upon the systems constituting Protestantism, so called, which ultimately will destroy it. It arises from within itself; it is a constitutional disorder, caused by the errors inherited and retained from the ‘Mother of harlots and abominations.’ There is no

cure for this evil – the blood is poisoned, it has permeated the entire body, and death must ensue.

“There was a time – in the days of Luther and reformation – when the daughters might have been radically healed, but her false ministers ‘healed the hurt of my people slightly, saying, peace, peace, when there is no peace.’ (Jer. 8:11) Now there is no balm in Gilead, there is no physician there – therefore, she is not healed. Her king is not in her, she is spewed out of his mouth. (Jer. 8:22, *Young’s Translation*; see also Rev 3:16; 18:23) There is no remedy, these systems must die. The disorder comes from within. Already these disorders have broken out, and though the canker is carefully concealed, the bad odor and distress are noticeable.” (R498:4)

**16:3** – “And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.”

“Bear in mind that the sea symbolizes the irreligious masses of mankind – those not under religious restraint.

“To appreciate the trouble upon this class we must study the symbol. Blood in a living creature is full of vitality, but the blood of a dead person is the very reverse. After death, the blood rapidly begins to separate into two parts – a watery liquid called serum and a more solid substance termed clot. As soon as this separation has been accomplished the CLOT begins to PUTREFY or corrupt. Applying this, we understand it to teach that a great and thorough disintegration will occur in this large class of humanity, after which, one element will rapidly corrupt and putrefy. Among the irreligious masses have been numbered such noble specimens of humanity as Stephen Girard, George Peabody, and Peter Cooper, beside many less noble, honestly skeptical souls. The result of the commingling of such with the masses imparted a life principle and vitality. But reading this plague, we realize that a separation of these two elements is due, the result of which will be decay and death to every principle of morality and virtue in this class – when every living thing (active element of virtue and benevolence) in this sea class will perish. In other words, remove the element which advises prudence, morality, and right-doing, from the counsels of the restless masses – from the Labor Leagues and other associations, and let the lower element control itself, and the result would quickly be the destruction of life, property, laws, and peace a grand reign of anarchy in the name of communism.

“From other Scriptures we are taught to expect just such an uprising – which eventually shall overthrow the kingdoms of earth. But the beginning of this is all we must look for now – the separation of the serum

from the clot – of the vital from the corrupting element. This seems to be now in progress. Men of noble minds who realized the oppression of the masses by money and governments and desired to assist in their amelioration, are forced to withdraw because of the spirit of recklessness which pervades the masses, leading to assassinations in other countries and threats of the same in this land. In England, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Parnell and others, have attempted to provide some relief for Irish oppression, but must disown all fellowship with the dynamite and assassination policy of hot-headed leaders among the masses.

“But we should remember that the full results of this evil or plague will not be felt for many years. It has its beginning only now. It is well also to remember that one plague or evil goes on increasingly after a second and third, etc., are added, until in the end the entire seven forms of evil will be operating simultaneously.” (R498:5)

**16:4-6** – “And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, O Holy One (RSV) 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.”

“This third element of trouble results from the turning of the rivers and fountains of water into blood. Running waters symbolize truth. The river channels through which water (truth) has flowed, symbolize the various sects or denominations. The fountains symbolize the founders and schools of these various systems – the place or men in whom these channels had their start or beginning.

“For a long time water – truly very muddy in some, but nevertheless a mixture of water – has flowed in these various systems, of which many have partaken and have been refreshed. But a change comes, and that which once refreshed, will (gradually) become loathsome as blood. (Blood has been advised as a medical remedy, but in such cases it is taken immediately on being drawn from the animal, else it would be poisonous for its change is rapid – hence a river of blood could symbolize only loathsomeness and death).

“This we understand to be a picture of a change rapidly taking place in religious channels – their creeds, though containing as much truth and error as ever, they are coming to regard differently. General enlightenment is greater, and what was once received without question, is now becoming loathsome and death-like. As in a similar plague (literally) upon Egypt, the people digged wells for water because they could no longer drink of the bloody rivers, so

here – independent thinkers are digging for themselves, for purer waters than the regular channels afford. Truly this turning of the waters of their channels into blood, is among the causes of anxiety and great annoyance to the sectarian, but only the few yet realize this trouble.

“The angel of waters – or the messenger of the REAL truth – is able to see in this a righteous judgment of God against those systems, as expressed in vss. 5 and 6. The direct cause of this trouble is mentioned – they poured out the blood of the saints and prophets.

“Is it inquired in what sense this was done? We answer that the blood in a person is life and to pour it out is to waste it. The life of the saints is truth – God’s word – as it is written: ‘The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life,’ and ‘The testimony of Jesus is the spirit (vitality, life) of prophecy.’ Hence to have wasted the life-principle of saints and prophets, would be to have wasted the words and testimony of Jesus. This they did by neglecting his word, and receiving instead the traditions of men, which errors have corrupted and defiled the truths they possess to such an extent that the thinking ones are fast coming to that condition where they cannot drink from those channels.

“In these very channels, or systems, where the teaching of Satan has been preserved, viz., that man has an existence which can never cease, and hence must continue forever (Gen. 3:4), nine-tenths of them in misery, in these same channels, the teachings of the Prophets, that the wages of sin is death, but that God had provided for ‘times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began’ (Acts 3:21) is neglected, cast aside, WASTED. And hence it is that they will get blood to drink shortly. The creeds of these systems being so mixed with error by the retaining of Satan’s lie and the rejection of the Lord’s testimony, both through the words and example of prophets and saints, they will soon come to recognize them as too obnoxious and nauseating to be palatable to either themselves or the world.” (R499:1)

**16:7** – “And I heard the altar cry (RSV), Yea, Lord God the Almighty, true and just are thy judgments.”

“The altar represents the class of prophets and saints whose testimonies for truth were sealed with their lives, the testimony of whose lives had been wasted. These speak not audibly, but in that figurative way in which Abel’s blood is said to have cried out. The testimony of these condemns the present systems as worthy of having this trouble or plague; because of their previous disregard of truth. While nominal Church systems have become great and popular in

worldly favor, both in the days of the prophets and ever since, in the days of the saints, yet now as ever, this success and popularity has been the result of an alliance with the world and a participation of its spirit. Since, as well as in the days of the prophets, to live separate from the world and to boldly advocate the truth in opposition to the worldly mixture of error, has cost persecution and either literal or symbolic beheading – or cutting off. The testimony of every sacrifice for truth acceptable to God is represented as condemning the course of these systems and justifying the retribution represented in this third plague – ‘FOR THEY ARE WORTHY.’ (R499:3)

### The Righteousness of God’s Judgments

“If the deliverance of the church meant eternal suffering to the non-elect, how could we rejoice in it? But as our eyes of understanding are opening, we see with astonished wonder the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of the great Creator’s love and mercy. We perceive that the glorification of the church means the blessing of all then alive by the inauguration of the reign of righteousness and peace, and by the breaking of the shackles of sin and ignorance, and by the binding of Satan for a thousand years. And oh, so much more, the release of the thousands of millions of heathens, who, for the past six thousand years, have been going down into the great prison house of death – the Bible hell – the tomb! With this rosy view of the future, which the Bible so surely gives, darkness and clouds, sorrows and tears for the immediate present cannot daunt us. Our souls do magnify the Lord! **We sing daily, hourly, the new song, ‘True and righteous are thy judgments, O Lord God Almighty! Who shall not come and worship thee, when thy righteous dealings shall be made manifest?’** (Rev. 15:3, 4; 16:7)” (R5799:5)

“Obedience will be enforced from the beginning, and only those who positively refuse to make progress will be cut off even after a hundred years of trials, such as make even outward progress, and conform outwardly to the laws of the Kingdom, will be permitted to go on, and be granted opportunities of growing in grace, in knowledge and in love ... The final test will be in respect to their heart loyalty to the principles of righteousness... But how gracious the divine provision thus made! How long-suffering does this divine plan show our heavenly Father and our Redeemer to be toward the children of men! Surely such patience and forbearance will attract to the Lord all who will be worthy of life everlasting; and as respects the destruction of others, all in accord with the Lord will be prepared to say, in the language of inspiration, ‘True and righteous are thy judgments, Lord God Almighty!’ (Rev. 16:7)” (F712)

### The Effects of Increasing Light

“The effects produced in the world by the darkening of the Truth by Papacy was the bringing in of what is generally called the Dark Ages – a period of ignorance and superstition, affecting both nations and individuals. The Reformation of the sixteenth century caused the Gospel sun to shine in a measure; but the formation of the Protestant sects prevented it from shining in its fullness. There was a sufficiency of light, however, shed by the Reformation to liberate to a large extent the nations from the yoke of Papal bondage, bringing in as the nineteenth century dawned a gradual increase of knowledge. In the opening years of the nineteenth century the Bible began to come into the possession of the people in general. It was not, however, until about 1874 that the full blaze of Gospel sunlight began to shine for the benefit of the Lord’s consecrated. About this time also the masses of mankind, because of a more general diffusion of knowledge, were aroused to more independent thinking. Matters pertaining to the rights and wrongs of man then began to be discussed, and this has gone on increasingly up to the present time. The various organizations of labor and capital, etc., existing today began to be formed in those days. This increase of knowledge has caused discussions and contentions over the rights and wrongs of the classes and has become more and more heated as the days have come and gone. The tendency is at the present time towards a concentration of all these organizations into two classes, in opposition one to the other. The shaking and unsettling of the present order of things is causing conditions that are bringing great trouble and disturbance of mind to mankind in general as the various remedies provided by legislators are tried and fail to bring the hoped-for cure. All this, it is generally admitted, has been caused by an increase of knowledge, described in this symbol as an unusual increase and diffusion of sunlight. This seems to be what is portrayed in this fourth plague symbol.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Streeter – Vol. 2 p. 295)

**16:8, 9** – “And the fourth angel poured out his vial 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.”

“Here the misery of some is caused by the increase of sunlight. As the moon symbolized ‘THE LAW,’ so the sun symbolizes the GOSPEL LIGHT. The former was but a shadow or reflection of the latter, and the relationship of the two to the Church (the woman) is beautifully symbolized in Rev. 12:1. The increase of the sunlight means an increased brilliancy of Gospel light and knowledge.

“This increase of light is to affect all classes, as indicated by its not being limited to a certain class as are the other plagues – to ‘sea,’ ‘land,’ ‘rivers,’ etc. It comes upon men – mankind in general and upon representative leaders of men in particular. It is the increase of light – knowledge – which is causing independence of thought and action among all classes of society. It causes differences between kings and subjects, between capital and labor, between clergy and laity; the increasing light is doing it all. It is Gospel light too; for no matter how Infidels may scoff at the Bible and affect to have superior liberty to that which it teaches, it nevertheless remains a fact, that the grandest liberty is that where Christ makes free; and the essence of Gospel light is in the Master’s words; ‘Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.’ It is truth that is spreading – truth on every subject: truth relative to the rights and authority of kings; truth relative to the rights of both capital and labor; truth relative to the claimed superiority and lordship of a self-elevated class termed the clergy.

“The conflict is between truth and superstition – light and darkness; it will be a severe struggle, but TRUTH is mighty and shall prevail; debasing the proud and exalting the humble. Those whose deeds are evil – all who are in the wrong – hate the light, is the Master’s testimony. It would curtail their power and lower their position to elevate all others to equality. These are scorched or troubled by the increase of light, and none more so than religious lords, for it is the increase of light which doubtless helps to turn the waters of their cherished channels into blood – corruption – making their doctrines and creeds, which emanated from fountains of the sixteenth century, distasteful and obnoxious.

“After preaching for years doctrines which called God just and loving, but proved him to be worse than the gods of the heathen – after having defended for years their sectarianisms, some of which teach that God has foreordained the salvation of a ‘little flock’ and their children, but has also foreordained eternal misery as the lot of the great mass of humanity and their offspring – thus teaching that ‘there are infants in hell not a span long,’ etc. – no wonder that such who worship and honor their sect and such teachings, more than they do God and His Word, would feel scorched and annoyed with the great light and heat of truth, as it is now beginning to shine out and reach them.

‘And they blasphemed the name of that God.’ Blasphemy, as the word is used in Scripture, does not signify profane swearing, but rather a misstatement of character. For instance Jesus was accused of ‘blasphemy’ because he said he was the Son of God. (John 10:33) These zealous sectarians become so

angry against present unfoldings of truth which prove the Love and Mercy of God as well as his Justice, that they go to the very extreme of opposition and grossly misstate God’s character and often wrest his Word from its true import to sustain their theories.

“This, which is a plague to others, is a wondrous boon to those who are out of Babylon and humbly enjoying the leading of God’s Spirit from the one fountain direct – the Word of God. This increase of Gospel light, and consequent increased light thrown upon the Law – shadows – showing the true teachings of the Tabernacle and its services and sacrifices, are pointedly foretold in symbol by the prophet (Isa. 30:26) who says: ‘The light of the Moon shall be as the light of the Sun, and the light of the Sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.’ It is the same day (period) in which He assembles the outcasts, and makes up His Jewels.” (R499:4-6)

**16:10, 11** – “And the fifth angel poured out his vial 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 – is omitted by the Sinaitic MS] and repented not [of their deeds – is omitted from the Sinaitic MS].”

“This pictures to us trouble coming upon Papacy (the Beast); not so much upon the masses of Romanists as upon those in authority – the throne power – their clergy. Papacy’s walls are higher, its claims are stronger, and its claims to divine authority and infallibility of longer standing than those of the protestant system – her daughters; therefore, she the longer escapes ... the trouble consequent to her errors.

“But she shall not escape the trouble. It comes on the throne or ruling class, and their kingdom is filled with darkness – uncertainty – absence of former unity and harmony, and in their trouble the pain will be increased by tongue-biting. The tongues of Papacy are its decrees and utterances, past and future. To bite, then, implies contradiction and denial of former utterances. Whether this signifies a contradiction and reversal of previous utterances of the Papal hierarchy, or whether it means controversy and differences between the living rulers of the Church, we may not decide, but it will probably include both of these difficulties, and in their attempt to justify their contradictory teachings, God’s character will be further dishonored, misrepresented, or blasphemed.

“As an illustration of this symbol, ‘biting their tongues,’ we note Papacy’s present humiliating

concessions and contradiction of her former teachings in her present recognition of the Protestant governments of Europe, which Papacy not only did not create, but actually cursed, and encouraged her faithful to use every means to destroy. This biting is occasioned by the pain and humbled condition in which Papacy finds herself. She has lost all temporal power, and to maintain long her spiritual influence, feels that she must not antagonize the governments which she can no longer claim the right to control.

“When we remember that it was this same Papal system which in its prosperity had ‘a mouth speaking great things’ (Dan. 7:8-25; Rev. 13:5), making boastful claims, it should not surprise us that God should ordain as part of its reward that it should eat its own words.” (RS09:3, 6)

**16:12** — “And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.”

“Literal Babylon was built upon the river Euphrates. Its wealth, supplies and sustenance came largely from this source. It had immense walls and strong gates over the river. Within the city, in bondage, were Israelites, God’s covenant people, and to overthrow Babylon and deliver these God appointed Cyrus the Median General. (Isa. 45:1-5; Dan. 5:30, 31). He, coming to this strong city, did not attack it directly, but by digging another channel for the waters of the river, he dried up the old channel, through which he marched his army under the gates and captured the city.

“That this historic fact is used as the basis of a symbol in Revelation, none can question. Babylon and her fall are frequently mentioned, and here the drying up of the Euphrates adds to the correspondence. While ‘Babylon’ is used as a general name for the entire nominal Church, it is used and is specially applicable to that portion of it called ‘mother of Harlots.’

“This sixth plague, or form of evil, is upon Babylon, the mother, and while other systems have channels or rivers, her system is built upon the ‘GREAT RIVER.’ ‘And in her forehead was the name written BABYLON THE GREAT, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.’ (Rev. 17:5) Following the literal, and applying it to the symbol, we reason that the waters of this great river represent the people who, by their influence and money, support Papacy — from which Babylon the great draws her revenues. And to this agrees the explanation by the angel: ‘The waters which thou sawest where the harlot sitteth are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.’ (Rev. 17:15)

“The millions of Papacy’s subjects are of every tongue and clime, and this symbol shows that a disaffection is to spring up between the subjects of the church authorities which will turn aside her support and ‘dry up’ her revenues, and thus speedily lead to Babylon’s complete destruction. The ‘drying-up’ will probably require years for its accomplishment.

“The direct cause of the drying, will be the relationship existing between Papacy and the kingdoms of earth. Papacy, under the claim that it was Christ’s vicegerent — His representative — in the days of her prosperity claimed the right to appoint the kings of earth, and did so; and subjects had a right TO REBEL against any government or king not thus recognized by Papacy. Since she has lost her power over the kingdoms of earth, she does not press this old claim, but would rather conciliate all the kingdoms; both those which she appointed and those appointed and sanctioned by other daughter churches. In this she is arraying herself directly on the side of these kingdoms, and in opposition to the increasing desire and effort of the people for liberty.

“Therefore, when present tendencies have produced a closer affiliation of religion and State than has existed for some time, it will result in leading the masses to throw off the yoke of the Church as well as the State, since both will be leagued against their cherished ideas of liberty and equality. The support of the people — the waters of the Euphrates — being thus withdrawn, the Babylon Church organization will become weak and helpless, by reason of the drying up of the waters from its channel.

“A hint in this direction is furnished in the history of the past month. Though the rulership of Great Britain is not of Papacy’s appointment, and in fact was created in violation of her laws and claims, yet the Pope has issued a ‘bull’ or edict to its faithful in Ireland commanding both priests and people to desist from hostility toward the laws and government of England. Not to speak of the merits of the question, this action is certainly contrary to the previous claims and theories of this Church; and from their words it is evident that some of the Irish people are not slow to see this. At a public meeting held to consider the Pope’s edict, a famous orator among them (Charles O’Brien) said, ‘The Irish people will neither be ruled by Rome nor Westminster.’ (The Protestant Irish are mostly Presbyterian, ruled by the principles of the ‘Westminster Confession of Faith.’) And among the masses it was freely proposed to ‘Boycott the Pope,’ by refusing to pay ‘Peter’s pence’ (a regular collection among Romanists the world over, for the support of the Pope). Does not this look like a beginning of the turning away or drying up of one of the tributaries of that ‘great river’? As surely as God has



given the symbol, so surely will it be fulfilled, and even now it hasteth greatly.

“The ‘drying up’ is ‘to prepare the way of the kings from the Sun-rising.’ These kings, we understand, to be the saints – those who, with Christ will be ‘kings and priests’ to reign over the earth. (Rev. 10:5) They come, not to the Sun-rising, but from the Sun-rising. They come bringing light with them. This is a beautiful symbol of how ‘the righteous shall shine forth as the Sun in the kingdom of their Father.’ They bring with them light, liberty and joy to the groaning creation, for ‘The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings.’ The object of all these changes is to prepare mankind for the rule of righteousness – the kingdom really of God’s appointment which is to take the place of these which Anti-Christ has attempted to authorize.” (R509:6)

### The Two Babylons

“Another marked feature of this correspondency as type and antitype, noted in the Scriptures, is that both the houses of Israel (fleshly and spiritual) were carried away captives into Babylon... Fleshly Israel was taken captive into literal Babylon, which was built upon the literal river Euphrates, while in the Gospel age mystic or figurative Babylon, which carried away Spiritual Israel, is portrayed as sitting upon the mystic Euphrates. In the type, the golden vessels of the Temple were carried away and profaned by literal Babylon; in the antitype, the precious, divine (golden) truths, pertaining to the service of the true Temple, the Church (1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Rev. 3:12), were far removed from their proper places, perverted and misapplied by mystic Babylon. Literal Babylon being built upon the river Euphrates, which materially contributed to its wealth and resources, its overthrow was accomplished by the turning aside of those waters. So mystic Babylon sits upon, is supported by, many waters (peoples, nations), and its fall is predicted, through the turning aside of its supporters and sustainers, the people. (Rev. 16:12)” (B208)

### The Euphrates (Rev. 9:14; 16:12; Jer. 50:38)

“In Revelation we read of the drying up of the Euphrates River, that the way of the Kings of the East may be prepared. (Rev. 16:12) This is symbolical, of course. It calls our attention back to the typical Babylon and her fall before Cyrus. Babylon was built upon the River Euphrates, which ran through the midst of the city. Her wall was impregnable, but Cyrus’ army turned aside the river into a new channel, leaving the old channel dry and enabling him to march his army under the Babylonian gates, which otherwise served as the city’s defense.

“We are to expect a parallel to this in connection with mystical Babylon – Christendom. In the symbolical

language of Revelation, waters symbolize people; hence the turning aside of the ‘waters’ would represent the alienation of the people and the alienation of the people would be indicated by their withholding of financial support... The result would be the drying up of the Euphrates and the ultimate collapse of mystic Babylon! The matter is under the control of the Mystical Cyrus, of whom it is written, ‘Thus saith the LORD to his anointed [typical], to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him.’ (Isa. 45:1-3; 44:27, 28)” (R4699:4)

### The “Kings of the East”

The expression “**the kings of the east**” undoubtedly has reference to the glorified Church – those who are to “**reign with him**” (2 Tim. 2:12), a “**thousand years.**” (Rev. 20:6)

The “east” is for the earth the direction of **the sunrise** – the place where the “day” begins. For the world of mankind, the glorified Church will be identified with the sunrise of **that grand – Millennial “day!”** Commenting on this, Bro. Russell had this to say:

“... great as will be the accumulating glory of those perfect men (the Ancient Worthies) who will constitute the earthly phase of the kingdom, **the glory of the heavenly** (the Church) **will be the glory that excelleth.** While the former will shine as the stars forever, **the latter will shine as the brightness of the firmament – as the sun.** (Dan. 12:3)” (A292) and –

“**The kings of the East, or kings from the sun-rising,** are, we understand, **the kings of Christ’s kingdom,** who are also priests – the body of Christ, the royal priesthood. ‘Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.’ From this standpoint of view, Cyrus and his army, overthrowing literal Babylon, was a figure or illustration of Messiah, King of kings and Lord of lords, who will with his faithful shortly overthrow mystic Babylon, and take possession of the world in the name of Jehovah, to establish the Kingdom for which he taught us to pray, ‘Our Father ... thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.’” (R2498:4)

**16:13, 14** – “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.”

“The DRAGON ... symbolizes civil government (especially that which once constituted civil Rome). The BEAST, still and always, means Papacy. The FALSE PROPHET is a new symbol, and takes the

place of both the 'two-horned beast' and 'the image of the beast,' and we believe, is a still more comprehensive symbol representing all systems teaching error – those called 'orthodox,' as well as many considered heterodox. These three classes will all give forth one kind of teaching, called symbolically unclean spirits (impure, erroneous teaching) like frogs.

"This harmonious teaching in which these can all unite, we believe to be the dogmas of 'the divine right of kings,' the 'authority of the clergy,' and the claim that mankind is bound to submit to these and be controlled by them. Many of these – kings and clergy – and many of those who will recognize their claims, will doubtless be honest, but will be thus in opposition to God, because they know not that they are in the hour of his judgment and that the time for the displacement of these Anti-Christ and the governments of their appointing has come. It is a blessed fact that these beastly governments will eventually give place to the kingdom of God; that the times of the Gentiles will END by being FULfilled; and while this is now due to be understood and appreciated by the saints – those entirely consecrated to God's word and will – yet 'none of the wicked shall understand'; hence they will be found fighting against God and his arrangements.

"Frogs have a very wise look, large mouths, are much puffed up, and utter only croakings. These doctrines, called spirits in symbol, which are to be common to these three classes froglike – much puffed up – are proclaimed with great swelling words, with a show of superior wisdom – wise look – and with much croaking.

"In brief, this indicates that when these systems give forth these unclean spirits or doctrines of the divine right of kings and clergy and submission of the people as to God, it will be with boastfulness an attempt to overawe with dignity, superior wisdom, and ability, and with continual allusion to the disasters which must attend any change of present arrangements. This croaking, already beginning, as this darkness of trouble draws on, will increase with it. It will be heard from every mouthpiece, large and small, religious and political, officers and press. In fear they will be uttering warnings and threats, and few will be the independents to plead the cause of right, or to show that the time for the reign of righteousness has come, and hence the conflict.

"These are the 'spirits of demons, working signs,' i.e., doctrines of devils – the devil's theory relative to present evil governments, indirectly of Satan's appointment, through his agencies. These doctrines show signs in proof of their authority. They will give evidences and seemingly plausible reasons for the right of kings and clergy; chief among these will

doubtless be God's appointment of kings and priests over fleshly Israel – which, however, was typical of the church and not of worldly systems. (1 Pet. 2:9)

"These unclean spirits, erroneous doctrines, 'go forth to the kings of the whole habitable earth, to gather them together for the war (conflict between right and wrong) of the great day of the omnipotent God.' (Rev. 16:14) The kings of the whole world may properly be supposed, in symbol, to include not only kings, but princes, generals, also those termed financial kings and merchant princes, and the GREAT ONES among religious teachers. These classes influence and encourage each other with this impure doctrine of Satan – hence they gather or unite them all together on the one side of the conflict already drawing nigh. Were it not for this harmony and unity inspired by this teaching, each of these classes of kings and rulers would have felt the weakness and erroneousness of their claims, and truth might have prevailed more easily against them; but in their union they find strength and hope for success in retaining their hold upon the people." (RS10:4)

### **The "Three Unclean Spirits like Frogs"**

"The Scriptures tell us that this result is to be brought about by the utterances of the combined power of Church and State. 'Three unclean spirits like frogs came out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the False Prophet.' In this passage, the spirit is a doctrine – an unclean doctrine – a false doctrine. Each of these systems will utter the same things, and these utterances will have the effect of gathering the kingdoms of earth together to the great Battle of Armageddon.

"The symbolism of Scripture, rightly understood, is very forceful, and there is always a close resemblance between the symbol itself and the thing symbolized. When the holy Spirit uses a frog to represent certain doctrines or teachings, we may be sure that the application will fit well. While a frog is a small creature, yet it puffs itself up until it almost bursts with the effort to be somebody. A frog has a very wise look, even though it does not know very much. Then a frog croaks whenever it utters a sound.

"The three most prominent characteristics of a frog, then, are pomposity, an air of superior wisdom and knowledge, and a continual croaking. Applying these characteristics to the picture given in the Divine Word, we learn that from the civil power, from the Catholic Church and from the Federation of Protestant Churches will go forth the same teachings. The spirit of all will be boastful; an air of superior knowledge and wisdom will be assumed; and will foretell dire results to follow any failure to obey their counsels. However conflicting the creeds, the differences will be ignored in the

general proposition that nothing ancient must be disturbed, or investigated, or repudiated.

“The Divine authority of the Church, and the Divine right of kings, aside from the Church, will not be allowed to conflict; for both will be endorsed. Any persons or teachings in conflict with these boastful, unscriptural claims will be branded as everything vile, at the mouths of the frogs, croaking from pulpits and platforms, and through the religious and secular press. The nobler sentiments of some will be strangled by the philosophy of the same evil spirit which spoke through Caiaphas, the high priest, respecting our Lord Jesus. As Caiaphas declared it expedient to commit a crime in violation of justice, both human and Divine, to be rid of Jesus and His teachings, so this frog-like spirit will approve of any and every violation of principle necessary to self-protection.” (Dx, xi)

“The croaking of the frog spirits, or doctrines, will gather the kings and princes, financial, political, religious and industrial into one great army. The spirit of fear, inspired by the croaking, will scourge the passions of otherwise good and reasonable men to fury – desperation. In their blind following of these evil spirits, evil doctrines, they will be ready to sacrifice life and everything on what they mistakenly suppose is the altar of Justice, Truth and Righteousness under a Divine arrangement.” (Dxii)

**16:15** – “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.”

“The fifteenth verse is abruptly thrown in as a parenthesis. It reads literally thus: ‘Lo, I come AS A THIEF! Blessed the one WATCHING, and keeping the garments of himself; so that not naked HE may walk, and they see the shame of HIM.’ This is very significant. It declares that at the time when this evil doctrine will be apparently uniting all upon the side of law and order – upon the side of kings and clergy – our Lord will then be PRESENT, but secretly and unknown except to the watching ones. Only those who are truly his and watching in the light of his Word will not be deceived by this impure teaching, but will realize his presence and the necessity of the foretold fall of all these things, because the rightful king is present to remove these out of the way of his kingdom.

“The position of this declaration – thrown in disconnectedly – is significant. It teaches that our Lord will be present before the impure teaching begins to GATHER them to their destruction.” (RS10:6)

### **As A Thief In the Night!**

“The Day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night [unobservedly], in the which the heavens [present powers of the air, of which Satan is the chief

or prince] shall pass away with a great [hissing] noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth [social organization] also, and the works that are therein [pride, rank, aristocracy, royalty], shall be burned up. The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens [the new spiritual power – Christ’s kingdom] and a new earth’ [earthly society organized on a new basis – on the basis of love and justice, rather than might and oppression]. (2 Pet. 3:6, 7, 10-13)” (A318)

**16:16** – “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”

“Armageddon means mount of DESTRUCTION; and this describes what will be the result of this doctrine. It will unite all these systems in one cause as against the masses of the people and their liberties, and the result will be the total destruction of all those erroneous systems of Church and State. They shall fall.” (RS10:6)

### **“Armageddon”**

“... divine power will step forward and God will gather the marshalled hosts to Armageddon – to the Mount of Destruction. (Rev. 16:16) The very thing which they sought to avert by their union, federation, etc., will be the very thing that they will hasten. Other Scriptures tell us that God will be represented by Messiah, and that He will be on the side of the masses. ‘At that time shall Michael [the Godlike one – Messiah] stand up.’ (Dan. 12:1) He will assume authority. He will take possession of His kingdom in a manner little looked for by many of those who erroneously have been claiming to be His Kingdom, and authorized by Him to reign in His name and in His stead.” (OV275)

**16:17** – “And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and their came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, [from the throne – missing in Sinaitic MS.] saying, It is done.”

“Seven is often used as the symbol of completeness; so this seventh plague completes the trouble coming, and will result in the complete unveiling of Satan’s deceptions and the binding or destruction of his power and influence. The result of this trouble brings conviction to some. This is shown by the great voice from the Temple saying, ‘It HAS been done!’ (Literal translation) When last we saw the Temple, or the nominal Church, it was filling with smoke and casting out the faithful messengers of truth, saying, ‘Go your ways; pour out the plagues; do all you can’ (Rev. 18:8; 16:1), boastfully relying on internal strength. But now, when the seventh has been poured out, we hear this nominal temple saying, ‘It has been done’; we are now convinced of the truths

uttered by the faithful messengers whom, in our ignorance and pride, we cast out from us: Who told us that we were in darkness and great distress was coming upon us, and that our systems, which we so fondly cherished, were to crumble to dust. It has been done even as they declared; Babylon is utterly destroyed; as a great millstone cast into the sea, she shall rise no more.

“This temple class, which finally recognizes God’s dealings when these systems are entirely destroyed, is the same which we found elsewhere mentioned in Scripture, and which we have designated the second company, who though losing the prize promised to overcomers of the Beast, etc., (Rev. 20:4), are ‘saved so as by fire [these severe judgments] in the day of the Lord Jesus.’ This blessed result upon this second company gives us an intense interest in and longing for the destruction of the enslaving systems mentioned in succeeding verses as the result of this seventh trouble.” (R511:2)

### The “Air”

“... ‘air’ ... symbolizes spiritual control or power. Satan has long occupied the position of ‘prince of the power of the air’ (Eph. 2:2), and has used for his co-workers and joint-rulers in it many of the great ones of Babylon, who under his blinding errors, verily think they are doing God service. But in due time the present ‘prince of the air’ shall be bound, and shall deceive no more; and the present heavens, the great Antichrist system, will ‘pass away with a great noise,’ while the new prince of the air, the true spiritual ruler, Christ Jesus, will take the dominion and establish the ‘new heavens,’ uniting with himself in this power or ‘air’ his bride, the ‘overcomers’ of the Gospel age. Thus the ‘new heavens’ will supersede the present ‘air’ powers.” (C238)

**16:18** — “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.”

“This describes the general effect on mankind; lightning signifies diffusion of knowledge. ‘His lightnings enlightened the world.’ (Psa. 97:4) Voices signify proclamations and general discussion of subjects by those being enlightened. Thunderings signify tumults accompanying the increased enlightenment.” (R511:2)

### The “Earthquake”

“Free speech, free mails, and other liberties which have come to be the very breath of the masses in our day, will be ruthlessly shut off on the plea of necessity, the glory of God, the commands of the Church, etc. The safety-valve will be sat upon, and thus will cease to annoy earth’s kings with the sound of escaping steam; and all will seem to be serene – until the

great social explosion described in the Revelation as an earthquake will take place. In symbolic language an earthquake signifies social revolution, and the Scriptural declaration is that none like it ever before occurred. (Rev. 16:18, 19) See our Lord’s reference to it in Matt. 24:21.” (Dxiii)

“According to the Divine Word the present great European war (W.W.1) is but the prelude to Armageddon, as Armageddon will be the prelude to Messiah’s Kingdom. According to the Bible the present war, without bringing special advantage to any nation, but bringing discontent to all, will prepare the world for the most wonderful revolution ever known, symbolically styled in the Bible ‘a great earthquake.’ (Rev. 16:18) Following this revolution will come the symbolical ‘fire’ of the Bible, not a literal fire that will literally burn the earth, but the fire of Anarchy, which will consume our present civilization; and except those days be shortened, no flesh would survive. (Matt. 24:22) But our Lord assured us that those days will be shortened – that the Elect will take the Kingdom and establish righteousness and peace on the firm foundation of Justice. Man’s extremity will become God’s opportunity, wisely provided before the foundation of the World.” (OV386)

“Now we who are living in this day see the beginning of these foretold events. We see the prelude to the great Battle of Armageddon. Our thought is that the Armageddon itself will be the mighty ‘Earthquake’ spoken of in Revelation. (Rev. 16:16-18) In this great revolution and in the succeeding anarchy all earthly institutions will be swept away. The result of the anger, hatred and strife if permitted to continue indefinitely, would be so terrible that it would bring about the destruction of the race; but for the elect’s sake, that they may begin their glorious reign, God will cut short the carnage, and will set up his own kingdom under Christ and his elect church. Christ and his bride will take over the kingdoms of this world, and thus will hinder the strife of men from going to the extreme that it would otherwise go. But it will not be stopped until the present order shall have been wholly dissolved.” (R5735:3)

**16:19** — “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.”

“An earthquake would symbolize a revolution, and here brings to our attention the greatest revolution which ever has or ever will take place on earth. This is the great revolution mentioned by the Prophet, in which every mountain and hill (the high ones) should be brought low, and the valleys (humble ones) be exalted, bringing all humanity to a common level as a preparation for the righteous

reign of the Lord's Anointed. Each of the previous plagues has tended toward this end, and this last results in the utter overthrow of the triple alliance or association between the Beast (Papacy), the False Prophet (other religious systems teaching error), and the Dragon (civil power), shown under the sixth plague.

"The Great City here evidently represents these three elements which attempted in union to rule over or control the world. This union and power will continue for awhile, but as here shown, they will again separate – be divided into three parts. Seeing that their alliance and mutual support has failed to control and keep subject the restless and turbulent masses, each will attempt to adopt an individual policy in their effort to adjust and settle society; but their efforts will be fruitless, and will only hasten the crisis of the hour; as a consequence, we read, 'The city of the nations fell down.'

"But, though the kingdoms shall fall, the religious element of the union shall not escape. Under the name Babylon they all seem to be included (as elsewhere), saying, 'Babylon the great was remembered before God, to have given her the cup of wine of the indignation of the wrath.' (Rev. 16:19) This signifies that the fiercest of the trouble – the wine or extract of the wrath – will be upon the Babylon systems more than upon the political division." (RS11:3)

### The Apostate "Woman's" Cup

"Thus it came about that the poisonous draught was mixed which was poured into the 'golden cup' of truth, and held out to the world by the apostate 'woman,' the professed Church of God. And she 'made all nations drunk with the wine of her fornication.' (Jer. 51:6-13; Rev. 17:1-5, 15) As error spread, the spirit of ambition superseded the spirit of humility and loyalty to God, bringing the desire to avoid suffering and to be esteemed of men, the church, as conditions favored her advancement, organized itself as the Papal hierarchy. The Bishop of Rome was declared pope, and claimed to represent our Lord Jesus to the church and to the world. The pope sat upon a throne of glory and became an autocrat in power; commanding kings, and ruling as both a spiritual and temporal prince. The pagan doctrine of the immortality of the soul, combined with the idea, also imbibed from paganism, of the torture of the wicked after death, was made the basis of the doctrine of the eternal torture of heretics and of the Purgatorial sufferings after death of practically all Catholics to fit them for heaven." (RS910:3)

**16:20** – "And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found."

"(Islands seem to symbolize Republican governments – organizations of people above the 'sea' level.) This would be the natural result of the overthrow of monarchies or kingdoms, symbolically called mountains, as indicated in Psa. 97:5. 'The hills (literal mountains) melted and flowed down like wax at the PRESENCE OF THE LORD, at the Presence of the Lord of the whole earth.' This is a grandly expressive illustration of the passing away of earth's dominion. In this day of the Lord – the day of His presence, the day of the establishment of his kingdom in the earth – some of the mountains (kingdoms) will melt, or gradually come down to the level of the people, by the fire and great heat, caused by increase of truth and knowledge, while others remaining firm will be overwhelmed – by the 'sea' – in revolutions. This last form is described in Psa. 46, which seems to give a complete picture of this seventh plague. It reads thus: 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore, will we not fear though the earth [society] be removed and though the mountains [kingdoms] be carried into the midst of the sea [overthrown by the ungovernable masses]: Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled [in great commotion], though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.'

"While kingdoms (mountains) shall give place to republics, (islands) so the islands in due time shall also flee away, as we find it here records. (Rev. 16:20) That is, the spirit of liberty will overleap all bounds and order, and end in anarchy. But notice that when the republics are swept away, it will be after kingdoms have all been overturned, as indicated by the expression – 'No mountains were found.'

"It is in a similar manner that the Master speaks of the 'sea and waves roaring' as the beginning of trouble and cause of fear. And Peter refers to this time of trouble, which shall burn as an oven, as the time when the earth and all earthly elements shall be consumed and give place to a new earth (society) and new heavens (government), then there shall be no more sea (people not religiously restrained)." (RS11:4)

**16:21** – "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 hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great."

"Hail is solidified water. If water or rain, causing fruitfulness and refreshing to earth, be a symbol of truth, refreshing and causing gracious fruits in humanity, then hail must signify truth delivered in such a way as to be dangerously destructive to things with which it comes in conflict. These will be heavy – a talent each – about the weight of a man – sufficient to break down everything before it. This recalls the symbolic use of this same word by Isaiah,

‘And the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies and the waters [truth] shall overflow the hiding place.’ (Isa. 28:17) Untruth – error – falsity, is the bane of the world, and the time of trouble would be incomplete, and the world still unprepared for the reign of righteousness, were it not for this hail. Recalling a similar plague which came literally upon Egypt, we find that it injured only those Egyptians who had not respect to the words of Jehovah. (Exod. 9:19-21); and we may safely reckon the same of this symbolic hail; it will smite down and subdue only those who are in opposition to it, and that for their good.

“We need not suppose that this hail comes last, for in giving an account something must be mentioned last if all occurred simultaneously. These various things described will occur, or be in process at once – voices, thunderings, hail and lightning among the people, causing the earthquake, fall of Babylon, and mountains, etc. This is more than hinted at, in the fact that these same events, mentioned under the seventh seal and seventh trumpet, are mentioned indiscriminately as one event.

“The hail, be it remembered, ‘comes down from heaven’; heaven, as already defined, symbolizes spiritual powers, but not any longer corrupt and vitiated spiritual powers, for these have passed away. Babylon has been cast as a millstone into the ‘sea’ to rise no more. This is the new ‘heavens’ which shall gradually take the place of the old, which is to ‘pass away with a great noise’ or tumult – voices, thunderings, etc. Yes, thank God, he that in verse 15 announces his presence as a thief will have not only broken down the kingdoms of the present, but will also have set up that kingdom for which our Lord taught us to pray: Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as in heaven. ‘Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness; for his anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.’ (Psa. 30:4, 5)

“Blessed be his glorious name forever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen’.” (RS11:5)

**17:1, 2** – “And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: 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.”

As suggested, the “seven angels which had the seven vials” represent the Lord’s people still in the flesh in the end of the gospel age, i.e., during its Harvest. Perhaps, then, the “one” **of the seven**, now referred to (Rev. 17:1), as ready to show John, the judgment of the “great whore,”

was Pastor Russell, and the staff of pilgrims associated with him. Surely, he through the pages of *Zion’s Watch Tower*, and the *Scripture Studies* and they, as his representatives, by way of lectures, etc., were instrumental in making known to the whole household of faith – the John Class, the judgments being visited upon the false Church system, guilty of spiritual fornication, and making the inhabitants of the world “drunk” with her “spiked wine” (evil doctrines)! As long ago as 1879, Pastor Russell wrote:

“As originally planted by Jesus and his apostles, the church was a ‘chaste virgin espoused to one husband, even Christ.’ For some time she maintained her purity and suffered persecution of the world, but gradually became enamored of the world and the prospects it offered, and finally united with it, constituting the system of Papacy. This system church, living in union with the world constitutes ‘the abomination’ – ‘the harlot,’ and the name Babylon, meaning confusion, is applicable because the world is called a beast and the church a woman. This then was the union of the woman and beast which is expressly forbidden in type. (Lev. 18:23) ‘It is confusion.’ We feel sure that we have the name Babylon properly applied since in Rev. 17, we see the church seated on the beast – i.e., supported by and controlling the world. ‘And in her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.’ – (Rev. 17:5)” (R45:2)

### **The Whore ... Sitteth Upon Many Waters**

“In the symbolic language of the Scriptures the word ‘water’ has two distinct interpretations: (1) Water is a symbol for Truth; (2) Water also symbolizes revenues from outside peoples and kingdoms. In harmony with this latter thought we read that the woman with the golden cup sits upon many waters; ‘and the waters which thou sawest are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.’ (Rev. 17:1-15) This ‘woman’ does not reign over one nation or people alone; her rule is catholic, or general; for all nations were made more or less ‘drunk with her false doctrines.’ The water of the River Euphrates, flowing through Babylon, might, therefore, be understood to symbolize the peoples and nations supporting Mystic Babylon by contributions, offerings.

“... If ... the waters of that river signify revenues ... the drying up ... implies a cessation of the revenues of Babylon ... millions coming every year from rich and poor of all nations, for her support.” (*Sermon Book 409, 410*)

### **Babylon’s “wine”**

“Concerning this symbolic wine and intoxication, the Lord declares that Babylon has ‘made all the nations [inhabitants of the earth] drunken’ with the wine of

her incontinency and unfaithfulness to Him. (Rev. 17:2; 18:3) The stimulating power is not of the spirit of a sound mind, but the delusion of a false doctrine: as the Prophet declares, they are 'drunken,' but not with wine. (Isa. 29:9-13)" (R2904:6)

"She neglected the heavenly Bridegroom, and mingled in her 'cup' a stupefying potion that has intoxicated the world; even the Lord's saints were bewildered. (Rev. 16:1-6)" (R5478:1)

"Babylon has had indeed the golden cup of the Lord's Word in her hands and has affected to give from it to the people the spirit of the Lord, but instead she has filled the cup and presents as the teaching of God's Word intoxicating errors which have misled the so-called Christian world. Thus the Adversary has used the nominal Church of God as his tool to deceive all that dwell upon the face of the whole earth – to misrepresent the divine character and plan. (Rev. 14:18)" (R3104:3)

**17:3-5** – "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. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

The John Class is "carried away in the spirit into the wilderness" to see this "vision"; for none, really, save the truly consecrated children of God can have it. Neither Catholics, nor Protestants are able to see it, because of their identification with it.

"... this fact is recognized by the Revelator, who shows that all who would get a true view of Babylon must, in spirit, take their position with the true people of God 'in the wilderness' – in the condition of separation from the world and worldly ideas and mere forms of godliness, and in the condition of entire consecration and faithfulness to and dependence upon God alone. 'So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness; and I saw a woman ... Babylon.' (Rev. 17:1-5)" (D27)

"The vesture and decorations of this woman ... are in striking harmony with the application made of this symbol; for purple and scarlet are the chief colors in the robes of popes and cardinals; and among the myriads of precious stones which adorn her service, according to an eyewitness, silver is scarcely known, and gold itself looks but poorly. And from the golden cup in her hand – symbol of purity of doctrine and profession, which should have contained only that which is unadulterated, pure, or, explaining the figure, only that which is in full accordance with truth – there

came forth only abominations, and wine of her fornication, fit symbol for her abominable doctrines, and still more abominable practices." (Uriah Smith – *Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation*, p. 658)

"The Revelator intimated that it would not be difficult to discover this great mystical city, because her name is in her forehead, that is, she is prominently marked, so that we cannot fail to see her **unless we shut our eyes and refuse to look** – 'And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the great, the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth.' (Rev. 17:5)" (D23)

### The Harlot's Name!

"The Revelation of our Lord to St. John is a book of signs, in which the things stated symbolize the things meant. To illustrate: In this book a woman is used to represent a church – a pure woman, a pure church – a false woman, an apostate church. In Rev. 17:1-6 a picture is given of a false woman, disloyal to her engagement, and therefore no longer worthy to be the bride of Messiah. This unfaithful woman is branded '**Babylon.**' We read that she sat upon a beast, a symbolic statement of her control of the power of Rome.

"In her hand this woman held a golden cup full of abominations, and thus symbolically she is represented as making all nations drunk with the wine of false doctrine. The cup suggests that the unfaithful church, symbolized by this woman, had once been the receptacle of divine truth – '**Babylon** hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hands.' (Jer. 51:7) In Rev. 17:5 she is called '**The Mother of Harlots**' – a term suggesting a mother church, and daughter churches which are said to closely resemble the mother. As the mother was called 'Babylon,' the daughters – so like their mother – bear also the family name." (R5092:1)

"The term Babylon seems to signify a concentration of the various errors in apostate church systems, personified in Revelation as mother and daughters. '**Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots**' is the name given by the Lord to the original system, thus intimating that the whole brood is illegitimate in every sense of the word." (R5478:1)

### Babylon the Great!

"The depravity attributed to 'Babylon the Great,' the peculiarly solemn adjuration to God's people to come out of her, and the utter and awful destruction denounced against her, all combine to attach great practical importance to the inquiry, What system is intended by this symbol?

"A perusal of the 17th and 18th chapters of Revelation shows that 'Babylon the Great' represents a system which should last long, exert a subtle and



extensive influence, and be guilty of exceeding iniquity and cruelty. This system must still be in existence seeing its destruction takes place simultaneously with 'the marriage of the Lamb,' an event which we know to be still future; and seeing also that up to the moment of its destruction or very nearly so, children of God will be found more or less connected with it, so that a need will exist for the urgent call 'Come out of her, my people.' This system is prefigured as a cruelly persecuting one, as one that would 'shed the blood of saints and martyrs of Jesus,' one on whom the Lord God would 'avenge the blood of his servants.'" (R471:3)

### Some Additional Thoughts Anent Babylon!

"The history of the building of the city and its tower (Gen. 11:1-11) called Babel (*Akkad, Bibulu, 'Gate of God'*) is explained by popular etymology based on a similar Hebrew root *Babal* which means 'to mix, confuse.' Babel, therefore, became a synonym for the confusion caused by the language barriers which God imposed because of the human pride displayed in the building." (*The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Vol. 1, p. 438)

According to *Young's Analytical Concordance* to the Bible, **Babylon** is the Greek mode of spelling what in the Hebrew is uniformly Babel.

"The name **Babylon** originally signified God's gateway; but afterward, in derision, it came to mean mixture or confusion. In the Book of Revelation this name is applied specifically to the church nominal, which, from being the gateway to glory, became a gateway to error and confusion, a miserable mixture composed chiefly of tares, hypocrites, a confused mass of worldly profession in which the Lord's jewels are buried, and their true beauty and luster hidden." (C153)

"It is clear, therefore, that while many faithful souls, ignorant of the real state of the case, have reverently and devoutly worshipped God within these – Babylon systems, nevertheless, this does not alter the fact that they are, one and all, 'harlot' systems. Confusion reigns in them all; and the name **Babylon** aptly fits the entire family – mother, daughters and accomplices, the nations styled Christendom. (Rev. 18:7; 17:2-6, 18)" (D35)

"The word '**Babylon**' means confusion. It is here used symbolically, since the literal city by that name was at the time of this writing 'a mass of ruins.' ...

"Now let us inquire what is represented by the symbol. As originally planted by Jesus and his apostles, the church was a 'chaste virgin espoused to one husband, even Christ.' For some time she maintained her purity and suffered persecution of the world, but gradually became enamored of the world and the

prospects offered, and finally united with it constituting the system of Papacy. This system church, living in union with the world constitutes 'the abomination' – 'the harlot,' and the name Babylon, meaning confusion, is applicable because the world is called a beast and the church a woman. This then was the union of the woman and the beast which is expressly forbidden in the type. (Lev. 18:23; 'It is confusion.') We feel sure that we have the name **Babylon** properly applied since in Rev. 17 we see the church seated on the beast – i.e., supported by and controlling the world. 'And in her forehead was a name written, Mystery, **Babylon** the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.' (Rev. 17:5)" (R45:2)

**17:6** – "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."

### This "Woman's" Thirst for Blood!

"Charles V., Emperor of Germany and King of Spain and the Netherlands, persecuted the friends of the Reformation throughout his extensive dominions. ... In the Netherlands the men who followed Luther were to be beheaded, and the women buried alive or if obstinate, to be committed to the flames ... The Duke of Alva boasted of the execution of 18,000 Protestants in six weeks. Paolo reckons the number who in the Netherlands were executed on account of their religion at 50,000; and Grotius gives the list of the Belgic martyrs at 100,000." (B337)

"The massacre in Paris on St. Bartholomew's day, August 24th, A.D. 1572, equalled in cruelty, but exceeded in extent, the massacres of Merindol and Orange. This has also been detailed by Catholic historians, one of whom, Thuanus, stigmatizes it as a 'ferocious cruelty, without a parallel in all antiquity.' The tolling of the tocsin at midnight, August 23rd, gave the signal of destruction, and the dreadful scenes of Merindol and Orange began to be re-enacted against the hated Huguenots. The carnival of death lasted seven days; the city flowed with human blood; the court was heaped with the slain on which the King and Queen gazed with extreme satisfaction. The body of Admiral Coligny was dragged through the streets; and the river Seine was covered with floating dead bodies. Accounts of the number killed vary from 5,000 to 10,000. The work of destruction was not confined to Paris, but extended very widely through the French nation. On the succeeding day special messengers were dispatched in every direction ordering a general massacre of the Huguenots. The same scenes were accordingly enacted in nearly all the provinces, and estimates of the number slain vary from 25,000 to 70,000." (B338)

“A picture of St. Bartholomew’s Massacre was hung in the Vatican. It had a scroll at the top, on which was inscribed, in Latin, words signifying, ‘The Pontiff approves the fate of Coligny.’ Coligny was a prominent leader of the Huguenots and one of the first to fall. After he was killed, his head was severed from his body and sent to the queen (who had it embalmed and sent as a trophy to Rome), while his body was dragged by the populace through the streets of Paris.” (B340)

“Under his commission from Pope Innocent, to punish with confiscation, banishment and death the heretics who would not receive his gospel Dominic stimulated the civil magistracy and populace to massacre the heretical Waldenses; and he at one time committed one hundred and eighty Albigenses to the flames. It was for such faithfulness in the service of Antichrist that he was canonized a saint, and is today adored and prayed to by Roman Catholics ...

“It would be impossible briefly to convey any adequate conception of the horrors of the Inquisition, or of the dreadful fear which it inspired among the people. Those not loud in their praise of Antichrist, or who ventured a criticism of his methods, were suspected of heresy; and such persons, without warning or redress, were liable to imprisonment in a dungeon for an indefinite time until a convenient season for trial – both the accuser and the accusation often being equally unknown to them. The proceedings of these trials were conducted secretly, and tortures were often employed to extort confessions. The tortures inflicted were almost too appalling to be credited in this age and land of freedom, yet their reality is confirmed by evidence which even Catholic historians cannot deny; and their fruitless attempts to apologize for them only tends to substantiate the evidence.” (B342, 343)

“Torquemada, another famous Inquisitor General, furnished a marked illustration of the spirit of Antichrist. Roman Catholic writers admit that he caused ten thousand, two hundred and twenty (10,220) persons, men and women, to be burned alive. Llorente, who was for three years the Secretary General of the Inquisition, and had access to all the documentary evidences in his Reports, published A.D. 1817 (4 vols), shows that between the years 1481 and 1808, by order of this ‘Holy Office’ alone, no less than 31,912 persons were burned alive, and nearly 300,000 tortured and condemned to serve penances. Every Catholic country in Europe, Asia and America had its Inquisition.” (B345)

**17:7** – “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.”

We, the John Class, living in the end of the Gospel age, are privileged to recognize the facts of history, which incriminate this “woman” (the Papacy, also designated, the “Man of Sin” (2 Thes. 2:3, 4; and the “Anti-Christ” – 1 John 2:18; 4:3), herself “drunk” with the blood of the saints, and the martyrs of Jesus.

“The Waldenses and Albigenses were the most numerous bodies of Protestants against Papacy; and when the literary awakening of the thirteenth century came, it was mainly from these that the truth shone out, though reflected and intensified by Wycliffe, Huss, Luther, and others. And their doctrines, backed by simplicity and morality, shone out with the greater luster in contrast to the pompous pride and flagrant immoralities of the then exalted Papacy.

“Then it was that popes, councils, theologians, kings, crusaders and inquisitors combined their fiendish powers to exterminate every opponent, and to extinguish the faintest rays of dawning light. Pope Innocent III, first sent missionaries to the districts in which the doctrines of the Albigenses had gained foothold, to preach Romanism, work miracles, etc.; but finding these efforts unavailing, he proclaimed a crusade against them and offered to all who would engage in it the pardon of all sins and an immediate passport to heaven without passing through purgatory. With full faith in the Pope’s power to bestow the promised rewards, half a million men – French, German and Italian – rallied around the standard of the cross, for the defense of Catholicism and the extinction of heresy. Then followed a series of battles and sieges covering a space of twenty years. The city of Beziers was stormed and taken in 1209, and the citizens, without regard for age or sex, perished by the sword to the number of sixty thousand, as reported by several historians. The blood of those who fled to churches, and were murdered there by the holy crusaders, drenched the altars and flowed through the streets.

“Lavaur was besieged in 1211. The governor was hanged on a gibbet, and his wife was thrown into a well and crushed with stones. The citizens were without discrimination put to death, four hundred ... burned alive. The flourishing country of Languedoc was devastated, its cities burned, and its inhabitants swept away by fire and sword. It is estimated that one hundred thousand Albigenses fell in one day; and their bodies were heaped together and burned.

“All this rioting **in blood** and villainy was done in the name of religion: professedly for the glory of God and the honor of the church, but really to uphold Antichrist, sitting in the temple of God (the church), showing himself that he is a God – a powerful one – able to conquer and destroy his enemies. The clergy thanked God for the work of destruction, and a hymn

of praise to God for the glorious victory at Lavaur was composed and sung. The dreadful carnage at Beziers was accounted as the 'visible judgment of heaven' on the heresy of Albigensianism. The crusaders attended high mass in the morning, and proceeded throughout the day to waste the country of Languedoc and murder its inhabitants.

"In these dreadful scenes of carnage Antichrist found extreme satisfaction. The pope and his court exulted at the victory of Catholicism over Waldensianism at Merindol, and the impious Oppeda was styled 'the defender of the faith and hero of Christianity.' The French King went to mass, and returned solemn thanks to God for the victory over, and massacre of the Huguenots at Paris. This carnage, sanctioned by the French King and Parliament and Roman Catholic subjects, was probably at the direct instigation of the pope, and the Papal Hierarchy. That it was highly approved, at least, is evident from the fact that at the Papal Court the news was received with great rejoicing. The Pope, Gregory XIII, went in grand procession to the church of St. Louis to render thanks to God for the signal victory. He at once proclaimed a jubilee, and sent a nuncio to the French court, who in the pope's name praised 'the exploit so long meditated and so happily executed for the good of religion.' ...

"In horror and wonder we ask ourselves, why did kings, and princes, and emperors, and the people at large, permit such atrocities? Why did they not arise long ago and smite down Antichrist? The answer is found in the scriptures (Rev. 18:3); The nations were drunk (stupefied), they lost their senses in drinking the mixed wine (doctrine, false and true mixed) given them by the apostate church. They were deceived by the claims of Papacy." (B348, 335, 336, 339)

At this point, we fear the *Authorized Version*, gives an erroneous impression concerning the Apostle John – the seer of Patmos, for it says that on seeing this "woman," he wondered with great admiration! The thought of the Greek text, however, is better expressed by the rendering of the *Revised Standard Version*: "When I saw her, I marvelled greatly." And this too, we know, that the anti-typical John, now living, has no admiration for this "woman" though they do marvel, perhaps, at all this very loose "woman" has been able to accomplish, seeing that she hates instruction, and casts the Word of the Lord behind her. (Psa. 50:16, 17)

Though the "mystery of iniquity" was already present and working in the early church (2 Thes. 2:7; see also R711:1) it was not until about the fourth century (during the Pergamos period) that it developed into the "woman" here depicted. Thus to the Apostle John this vision was really in the nature of a prophecy, to be recorded in the interests of those who **in due time** were to recognize the

"woman" – and that most definitely! And, that there might be no doubt about the matter, the angel subsequently identifies "her" with the city of the seven hills – Rome! (Rev. 17:9)

In response to John's wonderment, the angel says in effect, "Don't wonder or marvel any longer John, about this mysterious 'woman' for I will tell you more about 'her' and also about the beast that carries her, which latter has seven heads and ten horns." For the John Class in the end of the Age, as already set forth, the "woman" is the Papacy, and the beast, civil Rome, which supported her and over which she in time obtained full control. Anent the terms "beast" and "horns," Bro. Russell had this to say.

"It should not be forgotten that these are figurative expressions descriptive of the character and claims of a symbolic 'beast' (government) and 'horn' (power) out of the old Roman beast or empire. In some respects, Papacy was a new government ('beast'), distinct from the old Roman empire; and in others, it was a horn or power among others out of that empire, which for a time held superior control over the other horns or powers. It is presented in symbol from both these standpoints so as most thoroughly to locate and designate it." (B305)

### The "Mystery of Iniquity"

"The 'Mystery of Iniquity' came into place gradually, and it was not until it had sat for a long time in the holy place, ruling and governing it, that its abominable and detestable character was seen, and still it is not seen by all the saints, many of whom still bow to the teachings and commands of that system which God calls abominable.

"The god of this world – Satan – has by many devices blinded the eyes of many, while exalting and keeping in power this system, which is 'after' or like him, whose child it is. When his power begins to fail because the stronger than he begins to spoil his house (Matt. 12:29), then this system will begin to be seen, to be revealed and recognized in its true character as 'The Mystery of Iniquity.' Of this time when the abomination shall be seen occupying and ruling in the Church, the Apostle says: 'Then shall that wicked be revealed (literally uncovered or exposed) whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming' (literally destroy with the bright shining of the present one. – 2 Thes. 3:6)

"This accords perfectly with Jesus' words: 'When ye shall see the abomination;' that is, when the mask shall be pulled off and you shall be enabled to see 'The Mystery of Iniquity' as such, then you may know that you are in the consummation of the age, in 'the time of the end.' Your knowledge will be the sign of this." (R711:1)

**17:8** — “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.”

The beast, of course, is the fourth universal empire of which Daniel the Prophet of old speaks saying how it was:

Dan. 7:7, 8 — “... dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and break in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it; and it had ten horns ... I considered the horns, and behold there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.”

Concerning it, Bro. Russell had this to say:

“Here the Roman Empire is shown; and the divisions of its power are shown in the ten horns, a horn being the symbol of power ...

“To this fourth beast, representing Rome, Daniel gives no descriptive name ... John, the Revelator, seeing in vision the same symbolic beast (government), was also at a loss for a name by which to describe it, and finally gives it several. Among others, he called it ‘the Devil.’ (Rev. 12:9) He certainly chose an appropriate name; for Rome, viewed in the light of its bloody persecutions, certainly has been the most devilish of all earthly governments. Even in the change from Rome Pagan to Rome Papal it illustrated one of Satan’s chief characteristics for he also transforms himself to appear as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14), as Rome transformed itself from heathenism and claimed to be Christian – the Kingdom of Christ...

“This beast or Roman Empire in its horns or divisions still exists, and will be slain by the rising masses of the people and the overthrow of governments, in the ‘Day of the Lord,’ preparatory to the recognition of the heavenly rulership.” (A258)

In Daniel’s vision, the earthly governments are depicted as “beasts” – thus, there was the lion to represent Babylon; the bear to represent Medo-Persia; the leopard to represent Greece. (Dan. 7:1-6) And while Daniel called the fourth animal representing Rome, a beast (Dan. 7:1, 7), it was so terrible that he could not find a name for it. In the Revelation John refers to it as a dragon (Rev. 12:3) and again as a beast. (Rev. 13:1) In all instances, it should be noted, it was said to have “ten horns.” (Dan 7:7; Rev. 12:3; 13:1) Thus is the fourth, and last of the earthly universal empires – Rome, designated in the Scriptures. The ancient pagan Rome was

inextricably identified with its religion, of which Caesar was not only the Head, but often also the god of its worship! It is this phase of the Roman Empire that is referred to as the beast that thou sawest which “was,” and “is not,” (Rev. 17:8), for during the reign of Emperor Constantine it began undergoing a change from its pagan worship to that which purported to be of Christ Jesus! – the Rome which “yet is.” (Rev. 17:8) Despite the change which thus began in the reign of Constantine, the title, Pontifex Maximus, (chief religious teacher) remained with the Emperor, until during the reign of Justinian (in A.D. 533) it was relinquished by him to the bishop of Rome, for like Constantine he sensed an advantage in throwing the weight of the Empire to the side of the so-called Christian Church. Thus was it that the **red dragon** – the Roman Empire, gave “his power and his seat and great authority” to the beast the new Roman Empire, as it was represented by the Papacy. (Rev. 13:2) And so too, we read of “the whore” of Rev. 17:1, that she sits “upon a **scarlet colored beast.**” (Rev. 17:3)

Let it be noted also, that both the dragon and the beast are said to have “seven heads and ten horns.” (Rev. 12:3; 13:1)

### “Beast” and “Horn” – Figurative Expressions

“It should not be forgotten that these are figurative expressions descriptive of the character and claims of a symbolic ‘beast’ (government) and ‘horn’ (power) out of the old Roman beast or empire. **In some respects, Papacy was a new government (‘beast’), distinct from the old Roman empire; and in others, it was a horn or power among others out of the empire,** which for a time held superior control over the horns or powers. **It is presented in symbol from both these standpoints so as most thoroughly to locate and designate it.**” (B305)

### Pontifex Maximus

“The Apostle Paul foretold that this iniquitous principle would work secretly for a time, while some opposing thing stood in the way until the hindrance being removed, it could have a free course and progress rapidly to the development of the Anti-Christ. He says, ‘Only he that now hindereth will hinder, until he be taken out of the way.’ (2 Thes. 2:7) What does history have to show in fulfillment of this prediction? It shows that the thing which hindered a rapid development of Antichrist was the fact that the place aspired to was already filled by another. The Roman empire had not only conquered the world and given it politics and laws, but recognizing religious superstitions to be the strongest chains by which to hold and control a people, it had adopted a scheme which had its origin in Babylon, in the time of her greatness as ruler of the world. That plan was that the emperor should be esteemed the director and ruler in religious as well

as in civil affairs. In support of this, it was claimed that the emperor was a demigod, in some sense descended from their heathen deities. As such he was worshipped and his statues adored; and as such he was styled Pontifex Maximus – i.e., Chief Priest or Greatest Religious Ruler. And this is the very title claimed by and given to the pontiffs or popes of the Roman Hierarchy since this Antichrist obtained ‘the power and seat and great authority’ of the former ruler of Rome. (Rev. 13:2)” (B288)

### The Merger of Church and State

“Constantine discovered that the support of the Church was politically valuable. The result was a sort of informal concordat, the Church cementing its association with an emperor who was almost persuaded to be a Christian **by appealing to him as arbiter on certain pressing questions of Church discipline on which it was divided**; with the further effect that on the one hand what had been a purely religious brotherhood acquired a great and increasing political influence, while on the other the state invested itself with powers of ecclesiastical legislation.” (*The Illustrated World History* – Hammerton and Barnes, p. 326)

### Constantine

“It is not likely that Constantine gave much thought to the truth of Christian doctrine, and we know that he did not practise Christian virtues. But he was wise enough to recognize the good policy of allying this rising power to himself against his rivals.

“... it is not correct to say that he made Christianity the state religion. At the most, he seems to have given it an especially favored place among the religions of the empire. Constantine himself, as Pontifex Maximus, continued to make the public sacrifices to the pagan gods; but partly as a result of the favor he showed the church, both court and people passed rapidly to the new religion.” (*Ancient World* – West, p. 551, 552)

The eventual destruction of this Satanic Masterpiece, which arose, as it were, from the bottomless pit, will cause consternation and wonderment to all; save the true saints of God – foreknown of Him, and thus those whose names were written in the Lamb’s “book of life” from the foundation of the world – “the wise shall understand.” (Dan. 12:10)

### Names Written in the Book of Life

“... we ... understand it to mean that the book or scroll covenanting life to an elect number was prepared from the foundation of the world, and that the names in it have been written as the individuals have made consecration of themselves, coming under the terms of the divine call. In this view of the matter the book or scroll would represent the original divine purpose – God’s intention to have a

church, of which our Lord Jesus would be the Head. Such interpretation would be in perfect harmony with the various figures of speech which represent the writing of the names of the believers in the Lamb’s Book of Life, and in harmony also with the other records which speak of blotting out the names of such as prove unfaithful to their consecration. (Rev. 3:5)” (R2540:5)

**17:9** – “And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.”

To help John (the John Class) identify the beast and the woman, he is told that the woman sits upon seven mountains (hills)! No simpler means of identification than this could have been given; For the city of Rome rests upon seven hills – Palatine, Capitoline, Quirinal, Viminal, Esquiline, Caeline and Aventine!

“And Rome was seated on seven hills – ‘the seven mountains on which the woman sitteth.’ Her common name with the classic writers of St. John’s age is ‘the seven-hilled city’; an annual festival used to be held in honor of the ‘seven-hilled city’; every Latin poet of note, during a period of five hundred years, alludes to Rome’s seven hills. The medals and coins of the day represent Rome as a woman sitting on seven hills: and her titles show, with sufficient clearness, how thoroughly she reigned. She was styled ‘the Royal Rome’; ‘the mistress of the world’; ‘the queen of nations.’ Her sway was all but universal. She was the metropolis of that fourth great empire which Daniel foretold would break in pieces and subdue all things, ‘dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly’; and at the time of the Apocalyptic visions, her power was at its height. Rome, and no other city can be intended here; the woman is in some way identified with Rome.... The harlot is the Church of Rome; for simple minds there seems no escape from this conclusion. ‘The woman which thou sawest is that great city’ ‘which reigneth over the kings of the earth.’

“... If the woman be identified in some way with Rome, why is her brow emblazoned with the name of Babylon (Rev. 17:5)? The answer is evident; the Apocalypse is a book of mysteries; things are represented by signs; realities are veiled; and it would have been altogether inconsistent with the whole style of this prophecy to have written Rome on the harlot’s brow. The woman is a figure of the church, a corrupt, idolatrous church; that is, the symbol seen by John was suggestive of something widely different from itself; so the name with which the symbol was stamped, was also suggestive of something widely different from itself, though mysteriously similar. The harlot is ‘Mystery, Babylon the Great.’” (R472:5)

### The Rise of Antichrist

“... in 533, one of the most significant events in connection with the rise of the Papal Antichrist occurred. It was in this year that Justinian, the Eastern Roman Emperor, issued a decree constituting the bishop of Rome the head of the Church on earth. Thus do we have the fulfillment of the expression, ‘and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.’ For some time previous to this there had been a rivalry – indeed, a dispute between the bishop of Rome, and other ambitious, aspiring bishops of other cities, concerning which of them could, as they expressed it, rightly claim the honor of Apostolic succession, etc. This decree of Justinian settled the matter in favor of the bishop of Rome. The decree was not enforced, however, until the armies of Eastern Rome under Belisarius overthrew the Ostrogothic power, that under Theodoric ruled Italy. This was in 538 or 539 A.D., and without doubt, marked the beginning of the period of the twelve hundred and sixty years, when the saints were delivered into Papacy’s hand. (Dan. 7:25) It was the beginning of the Papal Antichrist; also the time when the ten kings began to give their power and strength unto the beast, as represented in its Papal head.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*—Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 81)

“On Christmas day (A.D. 800), at the conclusion of the service held in St. Peter’s to celebrate the holy day, as the unconscious king (Charlemagne) knelt before the high altar, Leo, moved, as he declared, by a sudden inspiration, set a crown upon his head, and proclaimed him Augustus, Emperor of the Romans, crowned by God. The words were taken up with a universal shout. The Holy Roman Empire had sprung into being.” (*The Illustrated World History*—Hammerton and Barnes, p. 410)

**17:10-14** — “And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdoms as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen and faithful.”

The “seven kings” of Rev. 17:10, do not here, in this book of symbols, represent seven kings, per se: but rather, seven types or forms of government, which may

be said to have had a “headship” (be that civil or ecclesiastical, or both) in the city of Rome.

The time referred to in this prophecy, we believe, was that when the full, clear revelation of the “woman” was made to the “John” class – sometime after the Fall of A.D. 1874. At that time five of these seven forms of government had already “fallen” – passed away. Nor is it important to know exactly what these forms of government were; except, perhaps, that the sixth, which then was (“is”), was that of Victor Immanuel – i.e., the Victor Immanuel dynasty, which in unifying Italy, took away from the Papacy practically all of its temporal properties (territories). In 1896 Bro. Russell wrote as follows:

“To our understanding, the present Italian government is the seventh head of the ‘beast’ (Rev. 17:9-11), which has continued ‘a short space,’ represented in the present monarch and his father, Victor Immanuel. According to prophecy, Rome will never have another head – the eighth condition will be the beast without a head – either a republic or anarchy. If a republic, we shall shortly expect anarchy, ‘perdition’.” (R2062:6)

It will have been noted that Bro. Russell, at the time, understood that the Victor Immanuel dynasty was the seventh – the last “head” of the Roman Empire; and that he expected a republic or anarchy to supersede it. But, Bro. Russell died before Benito Mussolini came upon the scene. Perhaps, had he been living then, he might have recognized the Dictatorship of Mussolini, which preceded the present republican government, to be the seventh and last; and that the Victor Immanuel dynasty was really the sixth, followed by the seventh “head” which continued for “a short space.”

About six years after Bro. Russell’s death (in 1916), Benito Mussolini<sup>1</sup> became Italy’s Premier (in 1922); which premiership he soon worked into a Dictatorship. In 1929, he negotiated the Lateran Treaties, by way of which some of the territories that the Victor Immanuel dynasty had taken away from the Papacy were restored; thus creating the Vatican an independent state. Mussolini’s rise to power runs a deadly parallel to that of the first real emperor or caesar of Rome – Julius Caesar! Julius Caesar had crossed the Rubicon on Italy’s border or frontier, at the head of his victorious legion of soldiers; and, declaring “the die is cast,” marched on the city of Rome where he overawed the authorities, inducing them to appoint him Dictator! Mussolini, at the head of his black-shirted hordes, also marched on the city of Rome. This was in 1922, at the time he was made Premier; but he gradually amassed more and more power unto himself, till he became like Julius Caesar, Dictator. However, his empire did not last too long, for it collapsed in 1943; and, in 1945, he was executed! Thus did he continue but “a

<sup>1</sup> See Re: “Mussolini” page 188



short space.” And then as Bro. Russell had anticipated, a republic was set up. This eighth condition, a virtually headless government, has much of the communistic element in its present makeup; and is, of course, “of the seven” that preceded it, a part of the “beast” “that was and is not” and yet is – a part of the same old Roman empire, and still more or less pagan, and like those before it, slated for “perdition.”

“Ten horns,”<sup>1</sup> is but a symbolic expression or representation of the complete cycle of disintegration of the original Roman empire into its numerous divisions and powers. The “ten” therefore, is not to be taken literally; nor are the original “ten” divisions, necessarily the same as the “ten” of the final phase! Thus there is a difference between the “ten horns” of Dan. 7:7, 8, and the “ten horns” of Rev. 17:12, though all are involved in the one disintegration.

Of the former “ten” it will be recalled that there was one “horn” – the Papacy which subdued three other “horns” (Dan 7:24) – the Heruli, the Eastern Exarchate, and the Ostrogoths. (A258) The latter “ten” at the time had not yet received their respective powers (Rev. 17:12); but did do so subsequently. At first, these “ten” were of “one mind” inasmuch as they supported the new “beast” – the Papacy; and thus, they reigned (exercised power and authority) “one hour,” – i.e., simultaneously with it! However, the time was to come (and now is, since A.D. 1800), when they would hate the “woman” that had so long sat upon the old “beast” and by identification with it, controlled it, when recognizing her whoredoms, etc., they would make her desolate and naked; yea, they would even “eat her flesh, and burn her with fire” – bring her unto utter ruin and destruction.<sup>2</sup>

This brings us again to the final disintegration of the Roman empire – the time for the establishment of earth’s fifth universal empire, the Kingdom of Jehovah God<sup>3</sup>, who will be represented in it by his vicegerent, Christ Jesus. The last vestiges of the old Roman empire, now functioning without the unifying headship of the Papacy at Rome, are endeavoring to maintain a status quo; yea, to even establish universal peace among its many divisions. The first attempt of these “ten horns” to accomplish this was through the League of Nations, which, of course, utterly failed. Their second attempt is by way of their international organization – the United Nations; and this is likewise doomed to failure, because they are warring against the Lamb of God, whom Jehovah has already set up “upon my holy hill of Zion.” (Psa. 2:6)

Prophetically, the Psalmist David, portrayed for us, these very times in which we are living, when he declared:

<sup>1</sup> See “Ten Horns” page 190

<sup>2</sup> See “The Hatred of the Whore” page 192

<sup>3</sup> See “Overthrow of fourth by fifth Universal Empire” page 189

Psa. 2:1, 2 – “Why do the heathen [the nations] rage, and the people imagine a vain thing [the establishment of universal peace without recognizing the great Prince of Peace]? the kings of the earth [civil and ecclesiastical authorities] set themselves [in opposition], and the rulers [their mighty ones] **take counsel together**, against the LORD [Jehovah] and against his anointed [Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God].”

But, as the Revelator was privileged to prophesy, “the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with him (the saints – the ‘very elect’) are called, and chosen and faithful.” Not only are they with him, but they share the honor of “executing vengeance upon the heathen (the nations), and punishment upon the people,” and in the binding “of their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron,” and in executing “upon them the judgments written,” for “this honor have all the saints.” (Psa. 149:7-9)

### Mussolini

“In 1929 Mussolini paid the Vatican \$92 million in return for Italy’s previous takeover of the Papal States.” (*Time magazine*)

“After the war he organized his followers, mostly war veterans, into the aggressively nationalist Fascist party. Strikes and general unrest gave him a pretext for ordering the fascists to march on Rome (Oct. 28, 1922). King Victor Emmanuel III, called on him to form a cabinet. By degrees, Mussolini transformed his government into a ruthless dictatorship, particularly after the murder of Matteotti (1924). Parliamentary government was suspended 1928 and replaced by the Fascist Corporative State. He signed the Lateran Treaty with the Papacy (1929) and initiated public projects, such as the draining of the Pontine Marshes. He conquered Ethiopia (1935-36), annexed Albania (1929), and allied himself with Hitler. ... In 1940 he entered World War II ... established a puppet government in N. Italy. He was captured and shot by Italian partisans after the collapse of German army.” (*The Columbia Viking Desk Encyclopedia*)

### Julius Caesar

“Plainly Caesar had not made preparation for civil war. He had only one legion with him in Cisalpine Gaul. The other ten (an irresistible force) were far distant. But the Senate had at last made him choose between civil war and ruin both to himself and to all his noble



hopes for the Roman world. Promptly he chose war, and in January 49 B.C., he led his one legion into Italy.

“A Roman proconsul was strictly forbidden by law to bring an army into Italy; and the story goes that as Caesar crossed the Rubicon – the little stream between his province and Italy – he exclaimed, ‘The die is cast!’ He never again looked back. With audacious rapidity he moved directly upon the much larger forces that ponderous Pompey was mustering slowly; and in sixty days, almost without bloodshed, he was master of the peninsula.

“Pompey still controlled most of the empire; but Caesar held the capital and the advantage of Italy’s central position. Turning to Spain, in three months he dispersed the armies of Pompey’s lieutenants there. Then following Pompey himself to Greece, in a critical campaign in 48 B.C. he became master of the world.” (*Ancient World* – West, p. 447)

### **Overthrow of Fourth by Fifth Universal Empire**

“No matter what may be the means or instrumentality used, the cause of this fall will be the establishment of the Fifth Universal Empire of earth, the Kingdom of God, under Christ, whose right it is to take the dominion. The transfer of the kingdom from the fourth beast, which for its appointed time was ‘ordained of God,’ to the fifth kingdom, under Messiah, when its appointed season has come, is described by the Prophet in these words: ‘And behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given unto him (the Christ – head and body complete) dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.’ This the angel interpreted to mean that ‘the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and all dominions shall serve and obey him.’ (Dan 7:13, 27)

“Thus seen, the dominion of earth is to be placed in the hands of Christ by Jehovah (‘the Ancient of days’), who shall ‘put all things under his feet.’ (1 Cor. 15:27) Thus enthroned over God’s kingdom, he must reign until he shall have put down all authority and power in conflict with the will and law of Jehovah. To the accomplishment of this great mission, the overthrow of these Gentile governments is first necessary; for the ‘kingdoms of this world,’ like the ‘prince of this world,’ will not surrender peaceably, but must be bound and restrained by force. And thus it is written, “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.’ (Psa. 149:8, 9)” (A260)

### **The King of Kings – The Lord of Lords**

1 Tim. 6:15 – “Which in his times ... shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the **King of kings, and Lord of lords.**” (See R2747:4)

#### **Re: 1 Timothy 6:14-16**

“We understand that the Apostle here refers to our Lord Jesus. Our reasons for so concluding are as follows:

“(1) While immortality belongs exclusively to the divine nature, we are to remember that the Apostle Paul declared that the entire church is called to ‘glory, honor and immortality,’ and the Apostle Peter says that God has given us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ‘we might become partakers of the divine nature.’ This implies, therefore, that the church of God is to possess this divine attribute of immortality or deathlessness. But only our Lord Jesus had yet been made partaker of this quality at the time of the Apostle’s writing. The church, his body, would not be thus honored and glorified until their due time, in the first resurrection, when they shall be like him, sharing his divine nature, glory, honor and immortality, etc.

“(2) That our Lord Jesus already possessed this divine nature and, therefore, possessed immortality at the time of the Apostle’s writing, is fully attested by the Scriptures, which assure us that ‘as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.’ This describes immortality, for no other condition of life is inherent life; all other conditions are derived or imparted life. The statement here that our Lord will give this same inherent life to his followers, is in agreement with the Apostle’s assurance that all who have part in the first resurrection are raised in incorruption in immortality (1 Cor. 15:52, 53), and remembering that it could have meant no less to him, the Head, than it is by and by to signify to the members of his body. We are to remember the same Apostle’s declaration that our Lord Jesus’ resurrection was as a ‘first-fruits,’ that thus he became the ‘first-born among many brethren.’ We are to remember also that the Apostle, in harmony with the above, expressed the desire that he might have a share in ‘his resurrection,’ ‘the resurrection,’ ‘the first resurrection,’ in which all the overcomers are to share. (Phil. 3:10, 11; 1 Cor. 15:20; James 1:18)

“(3) If, therefore, sharing in ‘his resurrection’ is to bring his faithful members to immortality, our Lord’s own resurrection can have no inferior condition. Hence, to apply the text in question to the heavenly Father would not be consistent with the testimony of Scripture, that the heavenly Son possessed immortality at the time, as well as the heavenly Father.

“(4) That the passage relates to our Lord Jesus and designates him the only Potentate, King and Lord, does not imply any disregard or disrespect of the heavenly Father and his attributes, kingship, etc., as the same writer (St. Paul) elsewhere points out. When speaking in similar strain about Christ’s kingdom and the subjugation of all things under him, he says, ‘It is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him.’ In other words, comparisons which show dignity and honor pertaining to Christ, Head and body, are never understood to be comparisons with Jehovah, who is beyond all comparison. (1 Cor. 15:27, 28)

“(5) The correctness of this application is further attested by our Lord’s own application to himself of the same titles. (Rev. 17:14; 19:16)

“(6) The Apostle’s entire discourse is along the line of showing the faithfulness of our Lord Jesus, his humility and high exaltation and how servants and all of us should be likewise humble and lowly and faithful to the truth as servants of God, and in due time be exalted – manifested to the world – in glory, honor and immortality in the Kingdom.” (R2746:4)

### The “Ten Kings”

“Whatever was their number afterwards, as some of those kingdoms at length fell, and new ones arose, they are still (in the prophecy) called the ten kings from their first number.” (Isaac Newton, *Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse*)

### The “Ten Horns”

A Rev. T. H. Birk, wrote a book entitled *The Four Prophetic Empires* in which he had a list of kingdoms for each century from the ninth to the nineteenth, which he introduced with the remark: “it is sometimes doubtful whether a kingdom can claim an independent sovereignty on account of the complex and varying nature of its political relations.” Those kingdoms in the lists below, where an interrogation is inserted by Mr. Birk are the ones he thought contained some elements of doubt as to whether they should be included:

- A.D. 860** Italy, Provence, Lorraine, East France, West France, Exarchate, Venice, Navarre, England, Scotland – (10)
- A.D. 950** Germany, Burgundy, Lombardy, Exarchate, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Navarre, Leon – (10)
- A.D. 1050** Germany, Exarchate, Venice, Norman Italy, France, England, Scotland, Aragon, Castile, Normandy (?), Hungary (?) – (9 to 11)

- A.D. 1150** Germany, Naples, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Aragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary, Lombardy (?) – (10 or 11)
- A.D. 1250** Germany & Naples, Venice, Lombardy, France, England, Scotland, Aragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary – (10)
- A.D. 1350** Germany, Naples, Venice, Switzerland (?), Milan (?), Tuscany (?), France, England & Scotland, Aragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary – (9 to 12)
- A.D. 1453** Austria, Naples, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland (?), Savoy (?), Milan (?), Tuscany (?) – (11 to 14)
- A.D. 1562** Austria, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Spain, Naples, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland (?), Lombardy (?) – (9 to 11)
- A.D. 1648** Austria, Venice, France, Britain (?), Spain and Naples, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland (?), Savoy, Tuscany, Holland – (8 to 11)
- A.D. 1750** Austria & Hungary, France, Savoy and Sardinia, Venice, Tuscany, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland (?), Naples (?), Britain (?), Holland – (8 to 11)
- A.D. 1816** Austria, Bavaria, Wurttemberg (?), Naples, Tuscany, Sardinia, Lombardy (?), France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Britain (?), Switzerland (?) – (9 to 13)

“An examination of this list reveals the surprising fact, which would only become more apparent were the list lengthened ten times, so as to present a census of each decade instead of each century, that amidst unceasing and almost countless fluctuations, the kingdoms of modern Europe have from their birth to the present day averaged ten in number. They have never since the breakup of old Rome been united into one single empire; they have never formed one whole even like the United States.” (Excerpted from *Daniel, the Beloved of Jehovah* – Streeter, p.187, 188)<sup>1</sup>

### Anent the “Called, Chosen and Faithful”

“... the statement that the final overcomers of the bride class will be those who were not only called, but also chosen, and also found faithful. (Rev. 17:14) All can readily recognize that, while sinners are called to repentance, **only justified believers are called of God to this high calling**, this heavenly calling of joint-heirship with their Lord in the kingdom. If we assume that throughout the age all the justified ones were granted that privilege in order that they might be ready, we must admit the

<sup>1</sup> (1) Austria, (2) Belgium, (3) Britain, (4) France, (5) Germany, (6) Holland, (7) Italy, (8) Portugal, (9) Spain, (10) Switzerland — those surviving to our day!

force of the declaration that ‘many are called, but few are chosen.’ This Scripture shows us a wide distinction between merely a position of justification by faith and a position of acceptance with God. **Only such called ones as accept the call by making a full consecration of themselves belong to this ‘chosen’ class.**

“The chosen ones, begotten of the holy Spirit and adopted as Spirit-begotten sons of God, are forthwith in the school of Christ, with a view of their development in grace, knowledge, love, and with a view to their testing as respects the thoroughness of their consecration even unto death. We well know that not all who reach this chosen place will prove faithful and win the crown. The great majority of the exhortations in the New Testament are addressed to this chosen class, accepted of God as probationary members of the bride company, the little flock, the body of Christ. To these come the exhortations to ‘fight the good fight,’ to ‘bear much fruit,’ to ‘let their light shine,’ to ‘so run that they may obtain,’ to ‘lay aside every weight,’ to ‘strive to enter in,’ to be ‘faithful unto death, that ye may receive the crown of life,’ to be ‘filled with the Spirit.’ They are exhorted that if the various fruits and graces of the Spirit be in them and abound, an entrance shall be ministered to them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Pet. 1:11)” (R4078:2)

**17:15** – “And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.”

#### **Ancient vs. Mystic Babylon**

“Literal Babylon being built upon the river Euphrates, which materially contributed to its wealth and resources, its overthrow was accomplished by the turning aside of those waters. So Mystic Babylon sits upon, is supported by, many waters (peoples, nations), and its fall is predicted through the turning aside of its supporters and sustainers – the people. (Rev. 16:12)” (B208)

#### **The Fall of Ancient Babylon**

“Under Nabonnadus, the last king, B.C. 538, Babylon was taken by Cyrus, after a siege of two years, in the dead of the night. Having first, by means of its canals, turned the river into the great dry lake west of Babylon and then marched through the empty channel he made his way to the outer walls of the fortified palace on its banks, when finding the brazen gates incautiously left open by the royal guards while engaged in carousels, he entered with his train. ‘The Lord of Hosts’ was his leader, and Babylon as an empire was no more.” (McClintock & Strong’s *Cyclopedia*, Vol. 1, p. 595)

#### **Christ, the Antitypical Cyrus**

“As Cyrus, a type of Christ, overthrew Babylon, so a part of the work of the second advent will be the overthrow of anti-typical Babylon. (Jer. 51:6; Rev. 18:21)” (R5092:3)

Already, by the mark in her forehead, is the “whore” identified as the mystical Babylon (Rev. 17:5), the apostate Roman Catholic church; and like the ancient city of Babylon, this one too is depicted as situated upon a great “river” – the mystical Euphrates – “peoples, and multitudes, and nations and tongues” (Rev. 17:15); i.e., those who through their membership, influence, money, etc., have supported the PAPACY.

It will be recalled that Cyrus of old, in order to lay the ancient city low, did it by way of diverting the waters of the river. So is it also to be with the mystical Babylon, the antitypical Cyrus – Christ Jesus, will be responsible for diverting the “waters” of the modern Babylon.

“Babylon and her fall are frequently mentioned, and here the drying up of the Euphrates adds to the correspondence. While ‘Babylon’ is used as a general name for the entire nominal Church, it is used and is specially applicable to that portion of it called ‘the mother of HARLOTS.’

“... Babylon, the mother ... while other systems have channels, or rivers, her system is built upon the ‘GREAT RIVER.’ ... Following the literal, and applying it to the symbol, we reason that the waters of this great river represent the people who, by their influence and money, support Papacy – from which Babylon the Great draws her revenues. And to this agrees the explanation by the angel: ‘The waters which thou sawest, where the harlot sitteth are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.’ (Rev. 17:15)

“The millions of Papacy’s subjects are of every tongue and clime, and this symbol shows that a disaffection is to spring up between the subjects and the Church authorities which will turn aside her support and ‘dry up’ her revenues, and thus speedily lead to Babylon’s complete destruction.

“The direct cause of the drying will be the relationship existing between Papacy and the kingdoms of earth. Papacy, under the claim that it was Christ’s vicegerent – His representative – in the days of her prosperity claimed the right to appoint the kings of earth, and did so; and subjects had a right to REBEL against any government or king not thus recognized by Papacy. Since she has lost her power over the kingdoms of earth, she does not press this old claim, but would rather conciliate all the kingdoms; both those which she appointed and those appointed and sanctioned by other daughter churches.” (R510:1)

**17:16, 17** – “And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.”

As previously set forth, the “ten horns” (divisions) of the Roman empire were once of “one mind,” in their support of the new “beast” (Papacy). However, after Napoleon had defied the Papacy, taking the Pope a prisoner to France where the latter in due course died; seeing that there was no divine malediction invoked against Napoleon, these “ten horns” (since A.D. 1800), have once again “one mind” in their resistance to any domination of the Papacy over them or their people. But what was on their part at first but a calculated indifference, and, as the light gradually revealed the “woman’s” intrigues and whoredoms, it became disgust and hatred. Yet all these attitudes on the part of these “ten horns” we are told, are instilled by Jehovah himself – “God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will ... until the words of God be fulfilled” (Rev. 17:17)! This fact, however is to be understood in the same way as is the statement to the effect that God hardened Pharaoh’s heart. (Exod. 4:21; 7:3; 10:1; 14:4) In neither instance did God interfere with the freedom of the will of those concerned; they did as they wished; and it was made easy for them to do just that. Yet, in the ultimate, the foreknown will of God is ultimately always accomplished.

### The Hatred of the “Whore”

“As, prior to the year 800, Papacy was rising, supported by the Roman ‘beast’ (people) and by its ‘horns’ (powers), so since 1800 it has been cast off from temporal authority over kings and peoples, and has been torn and pillaged by those who formerly gave it support. (Rev. 17:16, 17) Today, though still the recipient of honors, and still possessed of a wide influence over the consciences of the people, Papacy bemoans its loss of everything resembling temporal dominion.” (B354)

**17:18** – “And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”

The “woman” of Rev. 17, is identified with the seven-hilled city – Rome. This “city” for centuries exercised political, as well as ecclesiastical control over so-called Christendom. This is what is implied by the words, “and the woman ... is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” It is this so-called Christendom, which today corresponds to the “ten horns” of the disintegrated Roman empire!

“In the Revelation Jesus prophetically pictures the greatness of this City, this spiritual empire. It is essentially religious, although it includes the great kingdoms of earth, which unitedly are styled Christendom. This great ‘city,’ Babylon, is represented as

being divided into ten different wards, each of which represents one of the kingdoms of Christendom, and which corresponds to the ten horns of the symbolic ‘beast’.” (SM405)

### Could These Prophecies Have Reference to this Great City too!

Zeph. 3:1-4 – “Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city!\* She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the Lord; she drew not near to her God.\*\* Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow. Her prophets are light and treacherous persons; her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.”

Nahum 3:1-6 – “Woe to the bloody city (Christendom) it is full of lies and robbery; the prey departeth not: The noise of the whip, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the prancing of horses, and the jumping of chariots.\* The horseman lifteth up both the bright sword and the glittering spear, and there is a multitude slain and a great number of carcasses; they stumble upon their carcasses. Because of the multitude of the **whoredoms of the well-favored harlot** (Papacy), the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcraft. Behold, I am against thee, saith the Lord of hosts; and I will discover thy skirts upon thy face, and I will show the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame.\*\* I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazing stock.”

\* Rev. 18:2; 17:1-6; 17:16

\*\* Rev. 2:21; 3:17; 17:16

Note: Of course, this prophecy of Nahum concerned Nineveh of old; but might it not also have reference to a more modern “Nineveh” Christendom, and its paramour, the Papacy?

### The “Woman” and The “City” The “Woman” and Babylon (“Systems” including the Nations)

“... many faithful souls, ignorant of the real state of the case, have reverently and devoutly worshipped God within these Babylon systems, nevertheless, this does not alter the fact that they are, one and all, ‘harlot’ systems. Confusion reigns in them all, and the name Babylon aptly fits **the entire family** – mother, daughters and accomplices, **the nations styled Christendom**. (Rev. 18:7; 17:2-6, 18)” (D35)

Could it be, that this “woman” (Rev. 17:18) is also in some way identified with the one depicted in Zechariah’s prophecy (Zech. 5:5-11)? In that prophecy it says that the “woman” is “wickedness” (verses 7 and 8)!

**18:1-4** — “And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”

Perhaps this has reference to the second advent of our Lord, the Messenger of the Covenant (Mal. 3:1), whose day came in A.D. 1874; if so, we suggest that **he is the angel** “come from heaven, having great power.” (Rev. 18:1; 4:11; 5:12; Matt. 28:18) It says that “the earth was enlightened with his glory!” And while his coming was to coincide with the great “time of trouble”; it also was to bespeak the increase of knowledge prophesied by Daniel. (Dan. 12:1-4) For the Church – the “cleansed sanctuary” class – there was to be the special enlightenment and revelation of many aspects of the truth to that time, not too clearly understood.

“It was about that time, 1880, that the Lord drew our attention to other features of his plan previously unseen by us and, so far as we are aware, unseen by others since the days of the Apostles. We realized that this further light was Harvest light for the ripening of the wheat, and by no means an evidence of greater wisdom or ability in Bible interpretation on our part. **The due time had come and the unfolding came with it.** The Master who had already been serving us brought forth from the storehouse ‘things new and old,’ respecting the Covenants and the Atonement sacrifices. We were astonished at the length and breadth and height and depth of the Divine Plan ...

“We then understood for the first time the meaning of the Apostle’s words respecting the ‘Hidden Mystery,’ namely, that close, intimate relationship between Christ and his faithful followers, the ‘more than conquerors.’ It was then that we understood the Apostle’s words, ‘God hath given Christ to be the Head over the Church, which is his Body,’ and ‘We are members in particular of the Body of Christ.’ ‘This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and his Church.’” (R4434:2)

But there were still other aspects of the truth which began then to be more clearly understood. Among these

was that which concerned the rejection and eventual overthrow of Mystic Babylon!

The “voices” of Rev. 18:2, 4 we suggest, represent separate and distinct messages, proclaimed by the present Lord himself, by way of his Laodicean messenger – Bro. C. T. Russell! Both of these messages were very early proclaimed by the messenger as is set forth in the following:

“As at the end of his three-and-one-half years’ ministry, Jesus wept over that church, gave them up and said: ‘Your house is left unto you desolate,’ so we believe that at the parallel point of time – the Spring of 1878, the nominal gospel church was given up and their house left desolate. Until the harvest of their age, all outward Jews – ‘wheat and chaff’ were spoken to and of as Israel, but Jesus did a separating work – ‘His fan is in his hand’ to winnow the chaff from among the wheat and when the work of separation is accomplished, the wheat only is recognized. So here, true and false grow side by side in the church and together they are nominally ‘The Kingdom of Heaven’ – ‘Let both grow together until the harvest’; but in the harvest of this age, ‘He will gather out of his kingdom all things that offend,’ etc. (Matt. 13:30, 41) But since the Spring of 1878, we believe that the nominal church is cast off, and now only the wheat – ‘the little flock’ – is to be considered the church; and we believe this to be the date of the beginning of the fall of Babylon church, the parallel to the date of the fall of the church of the Scribes and Pharisees – hypocrites, who ‘encompass sea and land to make one proselyte.’ Their fall was gradual, so is Babylon’s.

“The rejection of the nominal – Babylon church – by the Lord seems to be illustrated in the picture of the church in its seven stages. (Rev. 3:16) The seventh or last, boasting of her being rich, increased in goods, etc., is pronounced by the Lord, poor, naked, miserable, wretched and blind, and is spewed from his mouth. Once she was the mouthpiece of God; he spoke and taught through her, but now she is spewed out. ‘Babylon is fallen.’ Who cannot recognize that Babylon is now falling in the esteem of the world, which points to its children as more honorable, honest and faithful than the many Pastors and great ones in the church, of whose fall into great sins we hear almost daily ...

“There was much wheat in the Jewish church, when given up, so too there is much wheat among the chaff and tares of the Babylon church. As God cared for, and separated every true grain of wheat in that given-up church (among them was Paul) and called them out into the true Gospel church, so now in this harvest he cares for every grain and now calls to them by his word (Rev. 18:4) ‘COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE, that ye be not partakers of

her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues'.  
(R46:1, 2, 4)

And this "Babylon," we are told, has become "the habitation of demons, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird!" (Rev. 18:2)

"How true it is, that the most execrable of society seek and wear the garb of Christian profession and ceremonialism, in some of the various quarters (sects) of Babylon. Every impure principle and doctrine, somehow and somewhere, finds representation in her. And she is a 'cage' which holds securely not only the Lord's meek and gentle doves, but also many unclean and hateful birds. Of all the defaulters, and deceivers of men and of women, how many are professedly members of Christ's Church! and how many even use their profession as a cloak under which to forward evil schemes! It is well known that a majority of even the most brutal criminals executed die in the Roman Catholic communion." (C162)

"The vicious were ... allured and enlisted as its devotees, while those of nobler cast were engaged by other means – by an outward and hypocritical show of piety, self-denial and charity manifested in its monastic institutions, but which served only to lead many such, far from the paths of true virtue. The gay and the frivolous found ample satisfaction in its parade and show, its pomp and ceremony; the enterprising and chivalrous in its missions and crusades; the profligate in its indulgences; and the cruel bigot in its enterprises for oppressing its opponents.

"In horror and wonder we ask ourselves, Why did kings, and princes, and emperors, and the people at large permit such atrocities? Why did they not arise long ago and smite down Antichrist? The answer is found in the Scriptures (Rev. 18:3): The nations were drunk (stupefied); they lost their senses in drinking the mixed wine (doctrine, false and true mixed) given them by the apostate church. They were deceived by the claims of Papacy. And, truth to tell, they are only partly aroused from their stupor yet; for though the ambassadors of kings, falling before the pope, do not as of old address him as the 'Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world' nor think of him as 'a God with power over all things on earth and in heaven,' yet they are still far from realizing the truth – that Papacy has been, and is, Satan's counterfeit of the true Kingdom." (B348)

One reason for Babylon's rejection, is her most unbecoming behavior; for, not only did she get herself drunk, but she made the nations drunk too, so that they committed fornication with her.

"Concerning this symbolic wine and intoxication, the Lord declares that Babylon has 'made all the nations

[inhabitants of the earth] drunken' with the wine of her incontinency and unfaithfulness to Him. (Rev. 17:2; 18:3) The stimulating power is not the spirit of a sound mind, but the delusion of a false doctrine; as the Prophet declares, they are 'drunken,' but not with wine. (Isa. 29:9-13)

"'Because the people have no knowledge,' they are consumed with thirst at the present time. The wine of false doctrine has produced erroneous views of various questions, and with the incidental befuddled condition of the mind there comes at the present time a thirst for more knowledge and for explanations and for consistency which their teachers cannot satisfy. The people in general have lost their taste and appreciation for the water of life, the truth; and false teachers warn them against it, as poison. The wine of false doctrines now being manufactured at all the Theological Seminaries is the wine of evolution and higher criticism, which does not satisfy the thirst, but increases the confusion of mind, and makes null every attempt to appreciate and comprehend the divine plan, as set forth in God's Word. Even Babylon's notables are dissatisfied, famished. (Amos 8:11)" (R2904:6)

### The Merchants Who Wax Rich

Perhaps the "merchants" referred to who wax rich through the abundance of her (Babylon's) delicacies, are the popes, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, presiding elders, reverends, doctors of divinity, doctors of the law, etc. This "wealth" we suggest, consists of the income, etc., derived by them in many ways; sometimes by way of services rendered – christenings, baptisms, confirmations, weddings, funerals, etc. Or perhaps as they are called upon to serve as toastmasters at civil functions, or as speakers at graduations, etc. Then too, this "wealth" may result from what these "merchants" receive in the way of donations, gifts, often made directly to them, or by way of "left-overs" from picnics, church suppers, fairs, bazaars, etc. Surely they have fared very well!

Then too, there are those "merchants" in the commercial world, who in manufacturing and supplying her needs, were made rich in her remuneration. But there are also those "merchants" in the political world, who in donating to her and her causes, were made rich by way of the votes, etc., of Babylon's communicants! (See also Rev. 18:11, 15)

"... a certain class today who are financially identified with the worship of 'the image of the beast.' (Rev. 13:14-17) These support various religious systems from which also they draw goodly compensation of honor, praise, titles, money and respect. These likewise often oppose the truth, and go as far as public sentiment and civil government will permit in opposing the truth and those who serve it,

and in inciting opposition among the masses.” (R2207:6)

**“Come out of her, my people”**

“Of this faithful Church the Lord declares, ‘My sheep know My Voice and they follow Me.’ We hear His voice assuring us that it is His will that we who belong to His chaste, espoused virgin class should all be one – should no longer be separated into sects and parties by creedal fences. The Lord declares that He gave Babylon time for repentance and she repented not. He declares that His sentence against the Babylonian system has already gone forth – that, from the Divine standpoint, already ‘Babylon is fallen is fallen!’ from Divine favor. What would be the wish of our Beloved, to whom we are betrothed? What is His message to us? It is written. ‘Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues’ – her troubles. (Rev. 18:4; John 10:27)” (SM125)

**Babylon – Her Time to be Cast Off!**

“With the declaration that Babylon is fallen comes also the command to all of God’s people still in her, to come out – ‘And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.’ (Rev. 18:4) The expression, ‘Babylon is fallen: Come out of her, my people,’ clearly marks two thoughts which should be distinctly remembered. It indicates that at one time Babylon was not fallen from divine favor; that for a time she retained a measure of favor, notwithstanding her mixed character; that, however large the proportion of error which she held, and however little of the spirit of Christ which she manifested, she was not entirely cast off from God’s favor until the harvest time of separation. It indicates that at some time a sudden and utter rejection is to come upon Babylon, when all favor will forever cease, and when judgments will follow – just such a rejection as we have shown was due in 1878. It indicates, also, that at the time of Babylon’s rejection many of God’s people would be in and associated with Babylon; for it is after Babylon’s rejection, or fall from favor, that these are called to – ‘Come out of her, my people.’” (C155)

“Mark that Babylon had long been in existence as an abomination, and had even become a mother of other harlots and abominable systems (all of which bear her name – Babylon) and had been drunken with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus (Rev. 18), and yet it is not until the time of her complete overthrow that the message is sent by the Lord who is about to destroy her utterly (not reform her), saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.’ (Rev. 18:4) We are not ashamed to be

the Lord’s mouthpiece in this timely but unpopular message: and what timely truth has not been unpopular?” (R986:4)

**Babylon’s Golden Cup – the Wine**

“Under the figure of ‘a woman clothed in purple and scarlet’ the Mother System of Babylon long centuries ago ‘made all the nations drunk with her wine,’ the doctrines which she had in her Golden Cup. (Rev. 17:1-6) The Golden Cup represents the Bible, the Divine Standard, or authority. It was misused when the wine of false doctrine was put into it – when the Bible was claimed as authority for various erroneous teachings of the Dark Ages. The intoxicating ‘wine’ which made the nations drunk, and which led them to support the ‘woman’ and to call themselves Christian nations, Papacy still holds in her hand, and still offers to whoever will receive it. But the nations are gradually sobering up.

“It is not necessary to suppose that every doctrine presented by Papacy was false and intoxicating. The thought is, rather, that a stupefying potion was put into the wine already in the Cup. As the Golden Cup represents the Word of God and its Message, the stupefying potion may well be understood to be some of the doctrines; for instance, that God’s Kingdom has already been set up, that the papal throne is the Throne of Christ, and that the Pope reigns as Christ’s vicegerent, or substitute and representative. Other poisonous elements threatened the people with purgatorial torture or with eternal torment if they failed to keep in line with the papal authority – this claimed vicegerent authority of Christ.” (SM407)

**18:5-8** – “For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.”

“The great nominal church has long taught for doctrines, the precepts of men; and, ignoring in great measure the Word of God as the only rule of faith and godly living, it has boldly announced many conflicting and God-dishonoring doctrines, and has been unfaithful to the measure of truth retained. It has failed to cultivate and manifest the spirit of Christ, and has freely imbibed the spirit of the world. It has let down the bars of the sheepfold and called in the goats, and has even encouraged the wolves to enter and do their wicked work. It has



been pleased to let the devil sow tares amongst the wheat, and now rejoices in the fruit of his sowing – in the flourishing field of tares.

“The Church of Rome, with assumed infallibility, claims it to be the divine purpose to eternally torment in fire and brimstone all ‘heretics’ who reject her doctrines. And for others she provides a limited torment called Purgatory, from which a release may be secured by penances, fasts, prayers, holy candles, incense and well-paid-for ‘sacrifices’ of the mass. She thus sets aside the efficacy of the atonement sacrifice of Christ, and places the eternal destiny of man in the hands of scheming priests, who thus claim power to open heaven or close it to whom they please. She substitutes forms of godliness for its vital power, and erects images and pictures for the adoration of her votaries, instead of exalting in the heart the invisible God and his dear Son, our Lord and Savior. She exalts a man-ordained priestly class to rulership in the church, in opposition to our Lord’s teaching, ‘Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father which is in heaven.’ (Matt. 23:8, 9) In fact, the Papacy presents a most complete counterfeit of the true Christianity, and boldly claims to be the one true church.” (D159)

“It is estimated, by those who seemingly have given the subject thorough investigation, that Papacy, during the past thirteen hundred years, has directly or indirectly caused the death of fifty millions of people, and it may safely be said that human and Satanic ingenuity were taxed to their utmost to invent new and horrible tortures, for both the political and religious opponents of Antichrist; the latter – heretics – being pursued with tenfold fury. Besides the common forms of persecution and death, such as racking, burning, drowning, stabbing, starving and shooting with arrows and guns, fiendish hearts meditated how the most delicate and sensitive parts of the body, capable of the most excruciating pain, could be affected; molten lead was poured into the ears; tongues were cut out and lead poured into the mouths; wheels were arranged with knife blades attached so that the victim would be slowly chopped to pieces; claws and pincers were made red hot and used upon sensitive parts of the body; eyes were gouged out; finger nails were pulled off with red hot irons. Holes, by which the victim was tied up, were bored through the heels; some were forced to jump from eminences onto long spikes fixed below, where, quivering with pain, they slowly died. The mouths of some were filled with gunpowder, which, when fired blew their heads to pieces; others were hammered to pieces on anvils; others, attached to bellows, had air pumped into them until they burst; others were

choked to death with mangled pieces of their own bodies; others with urine, excrement, etc., etc.

“Some of these fiendish atrocities would be quite beyond belief were they not well authenticated. They serve to show to what awful depravity the human heart can descend; and how blind to right, and every good instinct, men can become under the influence of false, counterfeit religion. The spirit of Antichrist degraded and debased the world as the spirit of the true Christ and the power and influence of the true Kingdom of God would have elevated and ennobled men’s hearts and actions.” (B346)

These, Babylon’s sins, have reached unto heaven itself; and God is not unmindful of all her iniquities; and so, the time has come for His wrath and vengeance to be visited upon her:

“... The hour of judgment is come, and even now upon her walls the warning hand of divine providence is tracing the mysterious words, ‘Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.’ – **God hath numbered thy Kingdom and finished it! Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting!** And the Prophet (Isa. 47) now speaks, saying –

“Come down, and sit in the dust, O Virgin daughter of Babylon (said in derision of her claim to purity); sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.... Thy nakedness shall be uncovered; yea, thy shame shall be seen: **I will take vengeance**, and I will not meet thee as a man.... Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou shalt no more be called, the lady of kingdoms.... Thou saidst, I shall be a lady forever, so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it.’

“Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasure; that dwellest carelessly; that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children. But these two things shall come to thee, in a moment in one day, the loss of children and widowhood (compare Rev. 18:8): in their full measure shall they come upon thee despite of the multitude of thy sorceries, despite of the very great abundance of thy enchantments; for thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy (worldly) wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee: and thou hast said in thy heart, I am, and none else beside me. Therefore shall evil come upon thee; and thou shalt know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee: thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not (previously) know.’ (Isa. 47:9; Rev. 18:7)

“Such being the solemn declarations against Babylon, well will it be for all who heed the warning voice and the instruction of the Lord to his people yet within her borders; for ‘Thus saith the Lord: ... Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for **this is the time of the Lord’s vengeance**: he will render unto her a recompense.... Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed.... We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed. Forsake her: ... **for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies**.... My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul **from the fierce anger of the Lord.**’ (Jer. 51:1, 6, 8, 9, 45; compare Rev. 17:3-6; 18:1-5)” (D42)

### **Babylon (Social, Political and Ecclesiastical)**

“Yes, as the day of trouble draws on, ecclesiasticism will endeavor to use its power and influence more and more to secure its own political welfare, by its control of the turbulent elements of society; but in the crisis of the near future the lawless element will spurn all conservative influence and break over all restraints, the red hand of Anarchy will do its dreadful work, and Babylon, Christendom, social, political and ecclesiastical, shall fall.

“‘Therefore,’ says the inspired writer – i.e., because she will violently struggle for life and power – ‘shall her plagues come in one day (suddenly), death and mourning and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire (symbolic fire – destructive calamities), for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.’ (Rev. 18:8)

“‘Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will raise up against Babylon, and against them that dwell in the midst of them that rise up against me (all in sympathy with Babylon), a destroying wind; and I will send into Babylon fanners that shall fan her, and shall empty her land: for in the day of trouble they shall be against her round about.... Destroy ye utterly all her host.’ (Jer. 51:1-3)

“‘And I will render unto Babylon [**to the Papacy specially**], and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea [or Babylonia – Christendom – to all the nations of the so-called Christian world] all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the Lord.’ (Jer. 51:24) As we call to mind the long train of evils by which Babylon has oppressed and worn out the saints of the most High (the true Zion), and how it is written that God will avenge his own elect, and that speedily; that, according to their deeds, he will repay recompense to his enemies; that he will render unto Babylon a recompense (Luke 18:7, 8; Isa. 59:18; Jer. 51:6), we begin to realize that some fearful calamity awaits her. The horrible decrees of

Papacy – the reproach and reward of which Protestantism also is incurring by her present compromising association with her – for the burning, butchering, banishing, imprisoning and torturing of the saints in every conceivable way, executed with such fiendish cruelty in the days of her power by the arm of the State, whose power she demanded and received, await the full measure of just retribution; for she is to receive ‘double for all her sins.’ And the nations (of Christendom) which have participated in her crimes and guilt must drink with her that bitter cup.” (D38)

### **The Nominal Church Today**

“We should not look for light where little remains, but the fading reflections of a former glory. The sickly hue which now appears is only the smoke illuminated by the piercing rays from the Hand which, high upon the wall, is writing, ‘MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.’ (Dan. 5:25-29) Unknown to the Laodicean church, our Lord has returned. He has stood at the door and knocked. Had they been awake, they would have heard. Our Lord clearly foretold that he would come as a thief; but he did not tell at what hour.

“While the nominal church is still seemingly in power, while the old glory still hangs about her, while it is still respectable and honorable to be a church member, the Little Flock of truth-seekers are despised and rejected. They are covered with reproach because they dare to point out the faults of a worldly church. They are looked down upon by her who sits as a proud queen, lifted up in order that she may have the greater fall. (Rev. 18:7, 21)” (R5993:6)

### **Babylon and Bel**

“‘And I will punish Bel in Babylon [the god of Babylon – the Pope]; and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: [He shall repudiate in his extremity the ‘great swelling words’ and blasphemous titles which he has long appropriated to himself – that he is the infallible vicar, ‘vicegerent of Christ,’ ‘another God on earth,’ etc.] and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him. Yea, the wall of Babylon [the civil power that once defended it, and that in a measure does so still] shall fall.... ‘Thus saith the Lord of hosts; the broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire [shall be destroyed]; and the people shall labor in vain, and the folk in the fire [to prop and save the walls of Babylon], and they shall be weary.’ (Jer. 51:44, 58) This shows the blindness of the people, and the hold Babylon has on them, that they will labor to uphold her against their own best interests; but notwithstanding her desperate struggle for life and to conserve her prestige and influence, like a great millstone cast into the sea,

Babylon shall go down, never again to rise; 'for strong is the Lord God that judgeth her.' Only then will the people realize their wonderful deliverance, and that her overthrow was by the hand of God. (Rev. 19:1, 2) (D40)

**18:9, 10** – “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. Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.”

“These kings or governments here mentioned are, of course, the ones that have succeeded those who in the Dark Ages supported this great Mother of Harlots; and in view of the fact that in the great Reformation, and especially since 1799, until quite recently, they have manifested a hatred toward her, by robbing her of her power and influence, the following deductions bearing on future events seem indeed reasonable:

“(1) That another change in the attitude of these governments toward Papacy is yet to come – one that will be favorable toward her. Indeed, we see this already fulfilling to a considerable extent.

“(2) That these governments will in considerable measure survive her punishment – in fact, will witness and lament over it.

“(3) That through fear these governments will stand as it were at a distance, leaving the executors of the Divine wrath to fulfill their commission without obstructing them. This shows that this final plague of God's wrath will be accomplished by the lawless masses, as is taught in other Scriptures, of whom the governments at the time will stand in fear.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 398)

**18:11** – “And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more.”

“A great part of chapter XVIII, is taken up with the lamentations of the kings of the earth, and the merchants, and those who trade by sea, over the fall of Babylon. It may seem strange that the secular power should destroy her, and yet that there should be such general grief over her fall. I suppose that the consequences of her overthrow will not be realized until the deed is done. She has appropriated to herself all the glory and luxury of the world, and has ministered in an immense degree to the commercial prosperity of the world. Men will not realize how deeply she has become part of the whole system of the world, socially and commercially, until they have destroyed her. ... Men will have been the instruments of the action, but the destruction of Babylon will be the irreversible judgment of God. 'Rejoice over her,

heaven, and ye saints and apostles and prophets; for God has judged your judgment upon her.'” (*An Outline of the Revelation* – Coats, p.191)

### The “Merchants”

“... the march of progress in recent years has linked all nations in various common interests, which, if seriously unsettled in one or more of the nations soon affect all. Hence when Babylon, Christendom, goes down suddenly, the effects will be most serious upon all the more or less dependent nations, which, in the symbolic language of Revelation are therefore represented as greatly bewailing the fall of that great city Babylon. (Rev. 18:9-19)

“But not alone in Babylon's fall will the heathen nations suffer; for the swelling waves of social and political commotion will quickly spread and engulf them all; and thus the whole earth will be swept with the besom of destruction, and the haughtiness of man will be brought low; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord.' (Rom. 12:19; Deut. 32:35) And the judgment of the Lord upon both Christendom and Heathendom will be on the strictest lines of equity.” (D73)

“The merchants ... symbolize the nobles and dignitaries of this system, who have held her patronage and benefices. These, and others who have grown rich or have obtained a livelihood in serving the peoples by holding the cup containing her idolatrous rites, ceremonies, etc., will witness the overthrow of this great religious hierarchy without being able to interfere or intercept it. These also are to lament over her.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 399)

**18:12-14** – “The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble. And cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves [bodies], and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.”

While it is true that gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, etc., have long constituted the adornment of the Babylonish church (Rev. 18:16); her altars, statues, chalices, platters, crucifixes, censers, etc., it is to their spiritual counterpart, rather that reference is here made. The “gold” representing the deeper aspects of the divine truth; the “silver” representing those Truths which center in the redemptive work of Christ Jesus; the “precious stones” representing the precious “jewels” of our High Priest, Christ Jesus' breastplate – the Lord's “jewels” (Mal. 3:17); the “pearls” representing “heavenly treasures” too precious to cast before swine; the “fine linen”

representing the righteousness of Christ Jesus, whose merit as such is imputed to the saints; and so on.

All these treasures once belonged to the early church, but later were (mis)appropriated by that matrices “woman,” from whom, however, they now (since 1878) “are departed”!

It will also be recalled that “Babylon” lusted for (inordinately desired), and in due time appropriated to herself, such portions of the rituals as involved Israel’s ancient priesthood, in its anointing, and the offering of the sweet incense at the golden altar. This “merchandise” seemingly, is reflected in the ointment, oil, censers, frankincense, odors (other fragrant spices), here mentioned. These items have their spiritual counterparts in the true anointing of the antitypical priesthood of this Gospel age; and in the offering by these priests of “the sweet incense” upon God’s golden altar! But, this “ritualism” can mean nothing any more to her; she might once have been healed, i.e., she might have come to the deeper understanding of the true significance of these things; but she would not be healed (Jer. 51:8, 9); and now, there is no balm in Gilead! (Jer. 8:22) It is too late; her opportunities “are departed from her,” and she “shall find them no more at all.” (Rev. 18:14)

### Babylon Would Not be Healed

“... the warnings of the righteous are steadily ignored by the world, and the nations walk on in darkness, and in consequence all the foundations of the earth (of the present social structure) are out of course (Psa. 82:5), so endangering the whole social superstructure which is now being terribly shaken. ‘We would have healed Babylon,’ says the prophet, ‘but she is not healed; forsake her (‘come out of her my people’ – Rev. 18:4), for her judgment reached unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies.’ – (Jer. 51:9)” (D542)

**18:15-19** – “The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing. And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off. And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.”

Whether we consider the “merchants” as those within the ecclesiastical systems, or those of the social or political world, really makes no difference, for all men will bewail the fall of Babylon. Perhaps it is the **suddenness**,

or the rapidity with which the fall is accomplished that so sorely amazes them. “One hour” is, however, but a short period in God’s time, with whom a thousand years are but a single day! (2 Pet. 3:8)

“That her destruction will be **sudden**, violent and complete is ... forcibly stated: – ‘And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus, with violence, shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.’ (Rev. 18:8, 21; Jer. 51:63, 64, 42, 24-26) And yet that it was to undergo a gradual consuming process is shown by Daniel (7:26) – ‘But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end.’ The Papal dominion (and much of the abject reverence of the people for ecclesiasticism in general) ... was broken down at the beginning of the Time of the End – 1799; and, though the subsequent process of consumption has been slow, there have been occasional signs of apparent recovery, which never seemed more flattering than at present, the assurance of Papacy’s final destruction is positive, and its death-struggle will be violent. **First**, however, **she must attain more of her old-time prestige**, which will be shared with a confederated association of her daughters. **Together they will be lifted up, that together they may be violently thrown down.**

“That the punishment of Babylon will be great is assured. It is written prophetically that, ‘Great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.’ ‘And he hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.’ ‘Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her, even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works. In the cup which she hath filled, fill her double. How much she hath glorified herself and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.’ (Rev. 16:19; 19:2; 18:5-7) While the broad application of this language is, of course, to Papacy, it also involves all who are in any degree in confederation or sympathy with her. All such will be sharers in her plagues. (Rev. 18:4) Although the kings of the earth have hated the harlot and cast her off (Rev. 17:16), still she says, ‘I sit a queen, and am no widow,’ loudly boasts of her right to rule the nations, and claims that her former power will soon be regained.” (D37)

“Doubtless temporary aid will come from the sources whence it is so enthusiastically sought; but it will be only a preparatory step which **will involve the whole world** in the impending doom of Babylon, causing the kings and the merchants and traders of the whole

earth to mourn and lament for this great city. (Rev. 18:9, 11, 17-19)" (D186)

**18:20** – "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her."

In 1878, the sleeping saints of the Gospel age were resurrected. Among them were the original Apostles, and, many of the "prophets" (orators, expounders). To these, and such of the saints as were still living on "this side of the veil," the Lord now addresses himself, saying, "Rejoice over her (Babylon), thou heaven (ye saintly ones), and ye apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her."

"The term heaven as employed here, would seem to symbolize the true heavenly, righteous, spiritual class – those who are right with God, who are true co-workers together with Him and who recognize the righteousness of His cause; and this spiritual class is made up of such as those mentioned in the text – 'ye holy apostles and prophets.' 'There is a strong contrast between this language and that which precedes. Kings, merchants, and seamen, who had been countenanced and sustained by her in the indulgence of corrupt passions, or who had been enriched by traffic with her, would have occasion to mourn. But not so they who had been persecuted by her. Not so heaven itself. The great oppressor of the Church, and the corrupter of the world, was now destroyed; the grand hindrance to the spread of the Gospel was now removed, and all the holy in heaven and on earth would have occasion to rejoice. This is not the language of vengeance, but it is the language of exultation and rejoicing in view of the fact that the cause of the truth might now spread without hindrance through the earth'." (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 399)

### Babylon's Judgment

"The appointed time for its overthrow having come, the great Judge of all the earth lifts up the scales of human reason, points to the weights of truth and justice, and, turning up the light of increasing knowledge, invites the world to test and prove the righteousness of his decision in condemning to destruction the hollow mockery of Christendom's false pretensions. Gradually, but rapidly, the world is applying the test, and in the end all will arrive at the same decision; and as a great millstone, Babylon, the great city of confusion, with all her boasted civil and ecclesiastical power, with all her assumed dignity, her wealth, her titles, her influence, her honors, and all her vain glory, will be cast **into the sea (the restless sea of ungovernable peoples)** to rise no more. (Rev. 18:21; Jer. 51:61-64)" (D110)

"The plagues coming upon Babylon are sore troubles, which will result in the complete overthrow of

the present order of things – political, social, financial and religious. This order of things in its various phases, is one cause, under different uniforms; these interests are all united in one great policy. The princes and kings of the earth and their supporters are Babylon's great army, and pitted against it is another vast army, composed of the masses of the people. The conflict between these two great armies will ere long precipitate the present order of things of the world into anarchy." (R5478:5)

**18:21-24** – "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee, and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

Perhaps the mighty angel of Rev. 18:21 is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ himself; and we suggest, that the lifting-up of Babylon, like a millstone, violently to be cast into the midst of the sea (the restless, rebellious, uncontrollable masses) may have special reference to the temporary exaltation of the Papacy, when in 1929, Mussolini restored to it, some of those territories which the Victor Immanuel dynasty had taken away from it. But, this casting down of Babylon does also involve the Protestant portion – the "other side" of **this great "city."**

We are reminded here of the words which Jeremiah of old was instructed to proclaim to the ancient and doomed city of Babylon: "that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast ... that it shall be desolate forever" (Jer. 51:62); and that he was, figuratively, to bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates. (Jer. 51:63)

Already, it is quite evident that the "voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters" – the happy testimony of the saints, whose hearts overflowing with the sweet and harmonious cadences of the Song of Moses and the Lamb – now, in response to the call of the Lord, "Come out of her, my people," are no longer heard at all in her, nor shall it ever be heard in her again any more!

So complete will be the desolation of Babylon, that because the true light (the saints) have left her, there will be no light within her at all – yea, all will be darkness! And, it seems that the prophecy of old, concerning ancient Judah, will also find a fulfillment in her: " ... (I) will cause to cease from the cities ... from the streets of

Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for the land shall be desolate.” (Jer. 7:34)

“As for the old institutions, they have served a purpose, partly good and partly bad. Their work so far as the divine plan is concerned is at an end, ‘The voice of the Bridegroom and of the bride shall no more be heard in Babylon at all.’ (Rev. 18:23)” (R2592:6)

“Not only shall her traffic, her merchandise cease, but there shall be no sign of life in her at all; no pleasant sound of music, no merchant’s craft, no light of lamp, no voice of bridegroom and of bride – all of which is designed to teach that her destruction is to be final and complete. As a millstone when thrown into the depths of the sea sinks forever from the sight of men, so she is to be swept from the earth and leave not a trace of her greatness or mischievous dominion; because she is a sorceress, whose whole agency has been to seduce men from God; and a murderess who has shed the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain in the empire for the Word of God during her sway.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 401)

### No “Light of a Candle”

“The church is losing its power and falling into disrespect. The stars are falling: some one way, some another. Soon the lights will be all out – not even a candle left. (Rev. 18:23) Already the merchants (priests) complain that ‘no man buyeth their merchandise any more.’” (R341:2)

### The Voice of the Bridegroom

“The voice of the Bridegroom and of the Bride shall no more be heard’ in Babylon at all. (Rev. 18:23) Babylon will not permit them to be heard. The voice, the teaching of present truth is consequently outside her walls; and whoever has an ear for the truth, whoever desires to be filled with present truth must come outside of sectarianism before he can thus be filled and blessed and used as a vessel in bearing the blessing to others. (Rev. 18:4, 23)” (R2592:6)

“This fallen condition of Babylon signifies, **not her destruction, but her complete rejection** from God’s favor, so that God will use her no more as a channel for the bestowment of his best blessings – ‘The voice of the Bridegroom and the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee.’ (Rev. 18:23)” (R3884:2)

### Jucan (Judaism) = Christendom (“Babylon”)

“... our Lord in A.D. 33 ... his first official act in rejecting the national church of fleshly Israel, taken in connection with all the striking parallels of the two ages, indicate very clearly that at the parallel point of

time in the present harvest, i.e., 1878, mystic Babylon, otherwise called **Christendom**, the antitype of Judaism, was cut off; and there went forth the message ‘Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.’ (Rev. 18:2)” (C152)

**19:1-3** – “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 rose up for ever and ever.”

The “much people” with the “great voice ... in heaven” surely has reference to that “great multitude” – a spiritual company – whose place will eventually be “before the throne” (Rev. 7:9), which, on seeing, in the end of the Gospel age, the overthrow of that great system (Babylon, Christendom, Churchianity), will feel itself called upon to praise Jehovah God.

“Even in ‘the harvest,’ while the living members of the Bride are being separated from others (this class) will be dull of hearing. They will be slow to act in that time of separation. They will, no doubt, be greatly dismayed when they afterward realize that the Bride has been completed and united to the Lord, and that they, because so listless and overcharged, have lost that great prize; but the beauty of God’s plan, which they will then begin to discern as one of love, both for them and for all mankind, will quite overcome their grief, and they will shout ‘Alleluia!’ for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” (A240)

“We think there is good reason to believe that a considerable number who have made a consecration are still in Babylon. We do not know this, however. We are near to the battle of Armageddon, near the time of the overthrow of Babylon; and we are seeking to give the Message of the truth as wide a circulation as possible, to the intent that this class may hear and come out, even though too late to win the great prize. That they are considerable in number is intimated in the 19th chapter of Revelation, where we are told that when Babylon falls, the number of those released at the time will be a great multitude, that the voices of these will be ‘as the voice of many waters.’” (R5411:6)

As has been suggested, this class will have much to praise Jehovah for; but it would seem their first great shout of praise unto him will be because of the overthrow of that system that had so long held many of God’s true saints in bondage and oppression. The Revelator seems to indicate this, when for the second time he puts the

word “Alleluia” into their mouths, following it up with, “and her smoke rose up for ever and ever.”

This “Babylon” while including both Catholicism and Protestantism, has for its chief offender, the Papacy, here called “the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication.” This Papacy is already identified by the Revelator, when he speaks of her as “the mother of harlots” (Rev. 17:5), having particular reference to the fact that she has Protestant “daughters” who have followed closely in her footsteps!

“... a harlot, a fallen woman (an apostate church – for the true Church is a virgin), exalted to power and dominion, and backed to a considerable degree by the kings of the earth and civil powers, which are all more or less intoxicated with her spirit and doctrines. The apostate church lost her virgin purity. Instead of waiting, as an espoused and chaste virgin, for exaltation with the heavenly Bridegroom, she associated herself with the kings of the earth and prostituted her virgin purity—both of doctrine and character—to suit the world’s ideas; and in return she received and now to some extent exercises a present dominion in large measure by their support, direct or indirect.” (D25)

#### “Her Smoke”

“Rev. 19:3, speaking of one of these systems, says, ‘Her smoke rose up forever and ever.’ That is to say, the remembrance (‘smoke’) of the destruction of these systems of deception and error will be lasting, the lesson will never be forgotten – as smoke, which continues to ascend after a destructive fire, is testimony that the fire has done its work. (Isa. 34:8-10)” (R2609:6)

**19:4** – “And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts [living ones] fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.”

The twenty-four elders – the personification of the testimonies of the twenty-four prophets who foretold the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God (R529:4), and the four beasts (living ones – *Emphatic Diaglott*) – the personification of the four cardinal attributes of God, viz., Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power (R529:6), seemingly rejoice over the wonderful display of Jehovah’s glorious character and his triumph over the forces of evil, cry aloud, “Amen,” and “Alleluia!”

**19:5** – “And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.”

This, it would appear, would be the voice of The Christ – the glorified saints, then seated upon the throne (Rev. 3:21), calling for all of God’s creatures who reverence him now, also to break forth in his praise.

**19:6, 7** – “And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the

voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.”

The voice of the “great multitude,” is surely that of the Great Company, as the voice of “many waters.” (See R5411:6)

#### The Voice of Many Waters: A Shout!

“... ‘great company’ begotten of the Spirit, but who have built with wood, hay and stubble – wheat, but not fully ripened at the time of the gathering of the first-fruits ... lose the prize of the throne and the divine nature, but will finally reach birth as spirit beings of an order lower than the divine nature. Though these are truly consecrated, they are overcome by the worldly spirit to such an extent that they fail to render their lives in sacrifice.” (A240)

“A beautiful picture of this is given us in Rev. 19:6-9. There also, we are told of the Great Company who will praise God eventually that the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready – even though they will not be part of the bride class. Awakened from their slumber and stupor, and separated from Babylon the Great by its fire, these, finally recognize what they have missed; but they thank God that his plan, so full of blessings, will be carried out, though the true bride class have gone before. Then the Lord gives to them the precious Message, ‘Blessed are they who can go to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ But they can go to that marriage supper of the Lamb only through much tribulation which will test their full devotion to the Lord – even unto death.” (R5865:6)

#### The Bride ... Made Ready

“The Gospel Age makes ready the chaste virgin, the faithful Church, for the coming Bridegroom. And in the end of the Age, when she is made ‘ready’ (Rev. 19:7), the Bridegroom comes, and they that are ready go in with him to the marriage – the second Adam and the second Eve become one, and then the glorious work of restitution begins.” (OV224)

#### The Tribulation Saints (the “Great Company”)

Rev. 7:9, 13, 14 – “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.... And 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.”

“Foolish virgins!’ They let slip their opportunity for becoming members of the Bride; but they are, nevertheless, virgins, pure in their heart intentions. They miss the prize, but gain later, through severe testings, a share at the nuptial feast with the Bridegroom and Bride as ‘the virgins her companions that follow her’; they also shall be brought near before the King. ‘With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought; they shall enter into the King’s palace.’ (Psa. 45:14, 15) As Levites they have failed to get the prize of Royal Priesthood, but they are still Levites and may serve God in his glorified temple, the Church, though they cannot be either ‘pillars’ or ‘living stones’ in that temple. (Rev. 3:12; 19:6,7)” (F127)

“In the tribulation time which will follow the church’s glorification we anticipate crucial tests upon all the Lord’s true people, and faithfulness then will mean ‘great tribulation’ ending in death, which to these will signify change to spiritual conditions. On the other hand failing to meet the trials devotedly will mean full, intelligent rejection of Christ, and will bring the full penalty of such a course; viz., second death.” (R3089:5)

Isa. 34:6, 8 – “The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats ... for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. For it is the day of the LORD’s vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion.”

Psa. 45:14, 15 – “... the virgins, her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the King’s palace.”

**19:8** – “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.”

John, the Revelator, breaks off here for a moment as it were, to comment on the vision he has had of the Church, the Bride of Christ, in her glorious garments. How exquisitely beautiful must have been this vision. No longer was her righteousness an imputed one – the righteousness of her blessed Lord and Master; but now, she was granted to have a righteousness all her very own!

“Under the symbol of white raiment the Lord throughout his Word represents the righteousness of those whom he accepts as his people. Their righteousness in the future state will be personal

righteousness or holiness; and the guarantee of this is the promise that all who are accounted worthy, as ‘overcomers’ of the world to be joint-heirs with Christ in the heavenly kingdom, will in the resurrection be granted new, perfect, spiritual bodies, free from sin and impurity of every kind, and fully in harmony with their new wills or characters developed during the trial-time of this present life. That will be the time of which the Apostle speaks, saying, ‘When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.’ Those who attain to that glorious condition are symbolically represented as being clothed in white linen, representing their personal purity, completeness and perfection at that time: as it is written, ‘to her (the bride, the victorious church) was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.’ (Rev. 19:8)” (R2159:3)

“... we are to prove ourselves overcomers ‘more than conquerors.’ The Lord has arranged that at the conclusion of our trial, at the end of the present life, all the overcomers shall receive the new body. This new body will be a body of actual purity. Thus, the Apostle says, we shall ‘be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.’ So our raiment will be changed from a garment of imputed perfection, our justification by faith, to that which represents actual perfection. At the resurrection we shall receive that body of inherent purity, without blemish, without spot, which is here pictured as ‘white raiment!’” (R5669:2)

#### **Anent: The Bride-to-be’s Garments (Psa. 45:14)**

“She shall be led unto the King in raiment of needlework.’ This word ‘led’ properly enough applies to the present life. All through this Gospel Age, from Pentecost until now, the Lord has used various instrumentalities to call out from the world this peculiar people; and by various instrumentalities He has led them from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, and changed them from glory to glory, to prepare them for their final acceptance, in the First Resurrection, of the clothing of gold – glory, honor and immortality.

“It is in full accord with this that the Scriptures represent that all accepted of the Lord throughout this Gospel Age have been granted a wedding garment clean and white, ‘pure linen which is the righteousness of the saints.’ (Rev. 19:8) That robe figuratively represents justification, the covering of our blemishes; and it is a wedding garment because it constitutes a basis of our ultimate acceptance by the Lord in the end of this Age, when the marriage of the Lamb shall come. These espoused ones are cautioned that their treatment of the robe will determine whether or not they will ultimately be of

the Bride class: (1) They must keep their garments unspotted from the world (Jas. 1:27), and (2) must embroider them with fine needlework. Painstakingly they must endeavor to fix and establish in their robes the glorious pattern outlined for them by the word and example of their Bridegroom and His mouthpieces, the Apostles.” (SM254)

**Another thought**  
**Anent: The Bride’s Raiment**  
**(Rev. 19:8; Psa. 45:13, 14)**

During the Gospel Age, the Church, as the espoused Virgin has been arrayed in white garments – the imputed righteousness of Jesus. This she has been privileged to “embroider” with fine needlework, so that by the time she experiences her change to the divine nature, it will no longer be considered an imputed righteousness, but her very own. (Rev. 19:8) However, these will not be the garments in which she will be married; but merely the garments in which she is brought or led, as the King’s (Jehovah’s) daughter, “unto the King” – her Lord Jesus, the heavenly Bridegroom: for the garments she will then wear will be of “wrought gold.” (Psa. 45:13)

“She shall be led unto the King in raiment of needlework.’ This word ‘led’ properly applies to the present life. All through this Gospel Age, from Pentecost until now, the Lord has used various instrumentalities to call out from the world this peculiar people; and by various instrumentalities He has led them from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, and changed them from glory to glory, to prepare them for their final acceptance, in the First Resurrection, of the clothing of gold – glory, honor and immortality.

“That robe figuratively represents justification, the covering of our blemishes; and it is a wedding garment because it constitutes a basis of our ultimate acceptance by the Lord in the end of this Age, when the marriage of the Lamb shall come.... They must keep their garments unspotted from the world (Jas. 1:27), and must embroider them with fine needlework. Painstakingly they must endeavor to fix and establish in their robes the glorious pattern outlined for them by the word and example of their Bridegroom and His mouthpieces, the Apostles.

“We shall not be married in these robes. These are merely the ones in which we are being led to the marriage. More and more they should show our love, our zeal, and patient endurance. As the Master examines the work will He not expect to find the last better than the first, even though none of it be perfect? Will this not be the basis of His approval of our endeavors and on account of which He will be willing to give us the new robe of gold?

“So it is with the matter of embroidering of our robes. If we become heedless, careless, indifferent,

overcharged with the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches and the affairs of this world, our robes will show it. Little embroidering will be done and it will be of poor quality. Spots will get on; and we shall neglect to have them cleansed away. Soon our robes will be entirely unfit for the Inspection of the Lord or for marriage. It is time, dear friends, that we awake to the responsibilities of the hour, that we realize the Bridegroom is nigh, even at the door; that the last of the wise virgins will soon enter into the marriage and the door will be shut; and that the choicest blessings of all time will soon be won or lost as far as we are concerned. (Matt. 25:1-13; Eph. 5:15-17)” (SM254; 258)

And then, as if calling John back from the contemplation of the Bride’s beautiful garments; the Lord, through an angel-messenger, instructs him to write, as it were, for the comfort of those who failed to attain membership in the Bride class – the Great Company:

**19:9** – “And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he said unto me, These are the true sayings of God.”

This Great Company class, are to be the Bride’s companions, and as such will be privileged to come into the heavenly Father’s presence, yea, unto the marriage supper of the Bride of the Lamb. (Psa. 45:14, 15)

“... a ‘great company,’ although following in a measure, and in that measure satisfactory to the Lord, are not up to the divine standard of love and zeal. Nevertheless, since they exercised a sufficiency of faith to leave the world behind with a view to accepting God’s favors, he will not permit them to suffer loss, but will give them also a share in the feast, though not in the chief seats of honor and distinction with the heavenly Bridegroom and the 144,000 constituting the bride. The ‘more than conquerors,’ we are assured, shall in this feast sit with the Lord in his throne and share his glory, honor and immortality: but to the great company, after a certain purifying and washing, tribulation, there will be granted the honor of association, not in the throne, not wearing crowns but bearing palms, not constituting pillars and living stones in the Temple, but doing service in the Temple in humbler positions. All of these are represented in Rev. 7, and again in Rev. 19, we have the intimation that although this feast is specially the nuptial feast of Christ and the church, nevertheless the ‘great company,’ (Rev. 7) the virgins, the bride’s companions, will be invited to share this nuptial feast – ‘Blessed are they that are invited to the marriage-supper of the Lamb.’ (Rev.19:9; Psa. 45:14, 15)” (R3834)

**The “Guests” at the Marriage Supper**

“After the marriage, in joyful praise a ‘great company’ of the bride’s loved companions shall say, ‘Let

us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him (God), for the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready.' (Rev. 19:7)

"These, though not of the overcomers, not of the Bride, are nevertheless beloved of both Bridegroom and Bride. They are the great company of Rev. 7:9 and in Psa. 45:14, are called, 'the virgins, her companions which followed her,' who also shall come into the palace of the King with gladness and rejoicing. (Psa. 45:15) These will be the guests at the great supper, and after the marriage is accomplished, they shall enjoy the feast with the Royal Family, as it has been written to them, 'Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.' (Rev. 19:9)" (R343)

John is so overcome by this great glory, that instinctively, he would bow down; yea, to worship the messenger. And thus, we read:

**19:10** — "And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

All who are engaged in the ministry or service of Jehovah God, are by virtue of this fact, fellowservants, whether they be men or angels! Thus it was not amiss for this messenger (of the Lord Jesus Christ) to call himself a fellowservant with John. And, since the holy angels too are sons of God, are they not in a sense "brethren"? At least, this is a reasonable inference from the words here addressed by the messenger to John. Both were ministers or servants of Jehovah God, and of his Christ, and, it would not be right for either of them to bow down in worship or praise of the other. Worship and praise, belong to HIM, for His is "the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty for all that is in the heaven and in the earth ... thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all." (1 Chron. 29:11) While we are to appreciate the servants of the Lord, it is not ours to worship them!

"... such are to be appreciated only as they are faithful and loyal to him. Repeatedly during the last thirty years we have reminded the Lord's faithful of the experience of John on the Isle of Patmos. When receiving revelation of divine things, he fell down before the angel that showed him these things, to worship him. The Apostle John in a measure represented the faithful of the Lord's people in the end of this age. The more wonderful things of the divine plan are being revealed; and some might be in danger of worshipping the angel through whom the enlightenment was sent. It is well that all should remember the lesson given in that connection, in which the angel of the Lord rebuked anything that would be in the nature of personal idolatry, saying, 'See thou do

it not: I am thy fellowservant ... worship God.' (Rev. 19:10)" (R4199:6)

The "testimony" of, or concerning, Jesus, is really God's own testimony; and in the ultimate, this is the spirit of all prophecy! Jesus could say to those of his day, "Ye search the Scriptures ... and these are they which bear witness of me." (John 5:39; A.S.V.; Matt. 3:17; 17:5)

### Judgment Beginning with the House of God

"The judgment or trial of the New Creation must take place during this Gospel age, before the Millennium shall have been fully introduced; because it is the New Creation, Head and body, which is to do the work of the Millennial age. It is in harmony with this that the Lord declares that we 'shall not come into condemnation [*krises*, judgment] with the world [not share in the world's Millennial day judgment or trial], but are [already] passed from death unto life [in advance of the world],' justified by faith and obedience as members of his body. (John 5:24) So, then, the present time, the present life, is to each of the consecrated ones his day of judgment, his day of trial, his day of testing — to determine whether or not he shall be accounted worthy of life under the terms of his call and consecration. The Apostle's words agree with this: '**Judgment** [*krima*, final decision] **must begin with the house of God.**' (1 Pet 4:17)" (F399)

"The Scriptures show also that the battle of the great day will **begin with the church of God**, and that the overthrow of the great nominal church systems will precede the overthrow of the present civil powers; for the Lord is about to shake not only the earth (the civil organization of society), but heaven (the ecclesiastical powers) also (Heb. 12:26), to the end that great 'Babylon,' falsely called Christendom — Christ's kingdom — may be completely destroyed. The great counterfeit kingdom of Christ, with all its allied civil and ecclesiastical powers, must go down as a great millstone into the sea, preparatory to the final establishment of the true kingdom of Christ. Here, as in the world at large, the work of preparation is going on. The creeds, which for years have been revered and received without questioning, are now called up for inspection; and their inconsistencies and lack of Bible foundation is being discovered. As a consequence, the clergy, whose living and honors and worldly prospects in general are all bound up with the systems held together by these creeds, are in great trouble, and are looking about to see what can be done to strengthen the stakes and lengthen the cords of so-called Christianity. A general union of the various sects is suggested, with a simple creed formulated from the various points of agreement among them all and the ignoring of all

other points of doctrine to which objection might be made by some.

“This scheme meets with very general approval from all the sects, and the trend of their efforts is in this direction. This, too, is in harmony with prophecy, which shows not only that the various sects of ‘Protestantism’ will band together as one, but that there will also be a close affiliation with Roman Catholicism. These two ends of the ecclesiastical heaven will roll together as a scroll (Isa. 34:4), the two rolls, Protestantism and Romanism, coming closer together as their power over the masses of the people decreases.” (R1355:6)

Judgment, we are told, was to begin with the House of God. (1 Pet. 4:17) This, of course, has been taking place throughout the whole of the Gospel age, and, must be completed before the Millennial age is fully ushered in. (See F399) However, there is also a mystical “house of God” – the nominal church – Babylon – whose judgment had to wait the very end of the age. This has already begun, for it is being carried out by the present Lord and Master, who is also engaged in a warfare against all the forces of evil which would oppose the establishment of Jehovah God’s Kingdom, and the doing of the divine Will on earth, as it is done in heaven. The Apostle John continues with a description of this present Lord:

**19:11-13** – “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. 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. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.”

The “heaven” opened – a symbolism, bespeaks the revelation of that which is spiritual; and in the vision, John beholds a “white horse” and the “rider,” now going forth to make war against the powers of evil, which are endeavoring to resist, and thwart, this righteous One. The “white horse,” as in Rev. 6:2 has reference to the pure doctrines that are to carry our blessed Lord through to the ultimate victory over all of his foes. He, the glorified Lord, is the “rider,” here identified as “Faithful” and “True” (Rev. 19:11); and subsequently as “the Word of God” (Rev. 19:13), who is also the “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.” (Rev. 19:16) As already stated, he has come to render judgment upon “Babylon,” and to make war against all the powers of evil which would perpetuate the old order, in defiance of Jehovah God.

In John’s description of him, he declares “his eyes” were as a flame of fire. Eyes, are symbols for wisdom and understanding. Our comprehension of a thing is often expressed in the words, “I see”! The eyes of the Lord have already been described as “like flames of fire” in Rev. 1:14; and 2:14; having reference, undoubtedly

to their penetrating powers – in other words, to his omniscience!

“His eyes like a flame of fire tell us in symbol that our Master is all-seeing, omniscient; that he is not deceived by outward forms or ceremonies, but can and does read every thought and intent of the heart.” (R3569:5)

The declaration that upon his head there were “many crowns” suggests the rewards received by him for his faithfulness unto death in carrying out the many phases of Jehovah God’s plan of the ages. (Isa. 53:12; Phil. 2:9) Thus, he now wears, as it were, a crown of “glory and beauty” (Isa. 28:5; 1 Pet. 5:4); a crown of “righteousness” (2 Tim. 4:8); and a crown of “life” (Jas. 1:12); and one, such as he intends to give to the faithful overcomers of this Gospel age – a crown of “immortality.” (Rev. 2:10, 11) John also recognized that he bore a “new name” that no man knew, but himself. We do not know this name; and it is possible that it has not yet been revealed. (Rev. 2:17; 3:12)

John envisioned the Glorified Lord as clothed at this time, in a “vesture dipped in blood.” It is possible that this has reference to the work accomplished by Jesus at Calvary, when he shed his precious blood. We do know that it was because of his accomplishment of the will of God in this very way, that he gained for himself the right of (through the breaking of the seals of the scroll – Rev. 5:1-13) to carry out the remainder of the Eternal Purpose, including this eventual overthrow of all the forces of evil, and the kingdoms of this world, and the establishment of everlasting righteousness and peace in the Kingdom of God upon the earth. However, these garments “dipped in blood,” may also be a symbol for the manner in which the Lord would accomplish this latter, viz., the treading of the “winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” (See Rev. 19:15) Prophetically, this was already suggested in Isaiah’s prophecy, in which we read:

Isa. 63:1-4 – “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.”

“The symbolic Edom of Isaiah’s prophecy corresponds to the symbolic Babylon of Revelation, and of

the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Thus the Lord designates and describes that great system to which men ascribe the misleading name, Christendom – Christ’s Kingdom. As all of the land of Edom symbolizes ‘all of Christendom,’ so its capital city, Bozrah, represented Ecclesiasticism, the chief citadel of Christendom. The prophet represents the Lord as a victorious warrior who makes a great slaughter in Edom, and especially in Bozrah. The name Bozrah signifies ‘sheep-fold.’ Bozrah is even yet noted for its goats, and the slaughter of this day of vengeance is said to be of the ‘lambs and goats.’ (Isa. 34:6) The goats would correspond to the ‘tares,’ while the lambs would represent the tribulation saints (Rev. 7:14; 1 Cor. 3:1) who neglect to use opportunities granted them, and did not so run as to obtain the prize of their high calling; and who therefore, although not rejected of the Lord, were not accounted worthy to escape the trouble as matured ‘sheep’ – called, chosen and faithful.

“The reply to the Prophet’s inquiry – ‘Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?’ – is, ‘I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.’ It is the same mighty one described by the Revelator (Rev. 19:11-16), the ‘King of kings, and Lord of lords’ – Jehovah’s Anointed, our blessed Redeemer and Lord Jesus.

“For our information the Prophet inquires further, saying, ‘Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth the winepress?’ Hear the reply; ‘I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the nations there was none with me: and I trod them down in mine anger, and I trampled on them in my fury: and their blood was sprinkled on my garments and all my raiment have I stained: for the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redeemed was come. And I looked, and there was no one to help, and I was astonished; and there was no one to support; and then my own arm [power] aided me; and my fury, this it was that upheld me. And I stamped down the nations in my anger ... brought down to the earth their victorious strength.’ And the Revelator adds, ‘He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.’ (Rev. 19:15)

“The treading of the winepress is the last feature of harvest work. The reaping and gathering is all done first. So this treading of the winepress of the wrath of God into which ‘the vine of the earth’ (the false vine, which has misappropriated the name Christian and Christ’s Kingdom) is cast when its iniquitous clusters are fully ripe (Rev. 14:18-20), represents the last work of this eventful ‘harvest’ period. It pictures to our minds the last features of the great time of trouble which shall involve all nations, and of which

we are so abundantly forewarned in the Scriptures.” (D17, 18)

We are told this great warrior’s name – “The Word of God.” He had also been called “the voice” of God (Gen. 3:8; See also *RS161:5*); “The Angel of the LORD” (Ex. 3:2; See also *E43*); yet, because he was the active agent of Jehovah in all of the work of creation (John 1:3, 10) he is also called “the Word of God” (John 1:1), who was in the beginning with God. Thus, the “Word” adequately describes him, yet, not only does it describe him, but it also is his “**name**”! (Rev. 19:13)

### The “Voice of Jehovah”

“Question: It is said of Adam and Eve, ‘And they heard the voice of Jehovah.’ (Gen. 3:8) What is meant by the ‘Voice’ of Jehovah?

“Answer: We suppose that it refers to our Lord Jesus in his pre-human condition. The Logos was a god. The Logos, Word, Voice of God, communicated with man, as the representative of God.” (*RS161:5*)

“It is suggested that when it is recorded that Jehovah appeared to Abraham (Gen. 18:1), and again to Moses (Exod. 3:3-15) it must have been Christ Jesus in his pre-human condition; and hence that the name (Jehovah) would be his. We answer that such reasoning is unwarranted: that if the name were applied to another, it would merely indicate that such servant was highly esteemed of Jehovah and really treated for the occasion as a steward or representative commissioned to exercise divine power as well. In Exod. 3:2, we are distinctly informed that the one representing Jehovah and using his most distinguished name, ‘I am,’ was ‘the **angel** (messenger) of Jehovah.’ That this honored messenger was ‘the Word’ of John 1:1, our Lord Jesus in his pre-human state, we do not for a moment question, but the highest and most honored messenger should not be confounded with the one whom he represents and in whose name he speaks and whose power he exercised and bestowed upon Moses.” (*E43*)

### “The Word of God”!

“... our Lord, in His prehuman existence, is referred to as ‘The Word’ (Greek, *Logos*). ‘In the beginning was the *Logos*.’ Adam Clarke says, concerning this word *Logos*: ‘This term should be left untranslated. As every appellation of the Savior of the world was descriptive of some excellencies in his person, nature, or work, so the epithet, *Logos*, which signifies a word, a word spoken, speech, eloquence, doctrine, reason, or the faculty of reason, is very properly applied to him.’ The Evangelist, in his epistle, uses the same title in respect to our Lord again, denominating him ‘the Word of life,’ or the ‘*Logos* of life.’ (1 John 1:1)” (*E85*)

**19:14**— “And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.”

The “armies”<sup>1</sup> “which are in heaven” – must not be confused with what sometimes is called “the Lord’s army.” The former is a spiritual company (Rev. 7:5-8; 17:14; 19:14); whether its soldiers are on this or the other side of the “veil.” (Psa. 149:5-9; Rev. 19:14; See also *R5451:4*) The latter is a heterogeneous mass of malcontents – socialists, communists, anarchists, etc., who unknowingly will be instrumental in the destruction of the old order, so that the new may be established in its place.

“It is evidently not the saints who are to constitute the Lord’s great army, referred to by the prophets for the overthrow of the kingdoms of this world: nor are the weapons of their warfare sufficient to this end. Their weapons are indeed mighty, as the Apostle says, among those who are influenced by them. Among the true people of God, who diligently apply their hearts unto instruction, his Word is sharper than any two-edged sword, truly ‘casting down imaginations (human reasonings) and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ’ (2 Cor. 10:4, 5); but not so do the weapons of this warfare operate upon the world. The army of the saints is, however, not a ‘great army,’ but a ‘little flock,’ as our Lord himself designated it. (Compare Luke 12:32; Joel 2:11)” (*D543*)

“Who then are with the King of Kings in this conflict? Those close to him, his ‘regular army’ are few – a little flock. Among these his followers, all faithful and true, are not many great, or rich, or mighty, according to the course of this world; but they are all rich in faith – chosen and faithful. (Rev. 17:14) But the new and rightful King has an immense army of ‘irregulars’ in every kind of uniform (except the white of the ‘regulars’). Communists, Infidels, Socialists, Anarchists, Nihilists; all these fight in the battle of the great day, though ignorant of him whose kingdom they help establish. These are the vultures of Rev. 19:17, 18, 21, who battle for plunder and get their fill in the overturning of earth’s kingdoms; because the time is come for Messiah to take the dominion of earth and to overthrow the oppressors and corrupters of the earth (Rev. 19:15; 11:17, 18) preparatory to the establishment of everlasting peace upon the only firm foundation of righteousness and truth.” (*R817:3*)

**19:15, 16**— “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.”

“Out of his mouth,” not literally, of course, but figuratively, there goes forth a sharp “sword” – the TRUTH – with which he smites the earth, the nations, i.e., everything which in injustice and unrighteousness to this time prevailed. But let it be noted, this very “sword” will prove the means whereby all mankind will eventually be blessed.

“The sword of truth already sharpened, is to smite every evil system and custom – civil, social and ecclesiastical. Nay, more, we can see that the smiting is commenced: freedom of thought, and human rights, civil and religious, long lost sight of under kings and emperors, popes, synods, councils, traditions and creeds, are being appreciated and asserted as never before. The internal conflict is already fomenting: it will, ere long, break forth as a consuming fire and human systems and errors, which for centuries have fettered the truth and oppressed the groaning creation, must melt before it. Yes, truth – and widespread and increasing knowledge of it – is the sword which is perplexing and wounding the heads over many countries. (Psa. 110:6) Yet, in this trouble what a blessing is disguised: it will prepare mankind for a fuller appreciation of righteousness and truth, under the reign of the King of Righteousness.

“As men shall eventually come to realize that justice is laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet (Isa. 28:17) they will also learn that the strict rules of justice alone can secure the blessings which all desire. And, thoroughly disheartened with their own ways and miserable fruitage of selfishness, they will welcome and gladly submit to the righteous authority which takes the control; and thus it is written, ‘The desire of all nations shall come’ – the Kingdom of God, under the absolute and unlimited control of Jehovah’s Anointed.” (*B101*)

“... the second Psalm points out that the Redeemer will not pray for, ask for, the world until, at his second advent, he is ready to establish his kingdom, his church having first been gathered to glory. Then he will ask for the heathen. By the term heathen or Gentile is signified all out of fellowship with God, ‘enemies through wicked works.’ The Psalm proceeds to say that Messiah will deal rudely with the heathen. ‘He will dash them in pieces as a potter’s vessel,’ etc. This interpreted by other Scriptures,

<sup>1</sup> “We know not why this prophecy speaks of heavenly armies — in the plural. We merely suggest that the heavenly army may possibly be in two divisions – one on this side of the veil, the other on the other side of the veil.” (*R5451:4*)

means that the inauguration of Messiah's kingdom will bring a great time of trouble, symbolically styled fire, or fiery judgments. 'He shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance.' Everything appertaining to present institutions contrary to the divine standards of justice will be rudely shaken and eventually destroyed.

"However, the Lord wounds that he may heal. The lessons of the time of trouble will be salutary; as we read, 'When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.' These judgments will not in any sense continue upon all throughout the thousand years of Messiah's kingdom, but will be inflicted only upon those deserving them. Hence the judgments will be especially severe at the beginning. All who learn righteousness will thereby deliver themselves; and as they come into harmony with the King of kings and Lord of lords, blessings will be their portion, uplifting them gradually to human perfection." (RS493:3)

"He who now takes his great power to reign is shown in symbol (Rev. 19:15), as the one whose sword went forth out of his mouth, 'that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.' That sword is the TRUTH (Eph. 6:17), and the living saints, as well as many of the world, are now being used as the Lord's soldiers in overthrowing errors and evils. ... But let no one hastily infer a peaceable conversion of the nations to be here symbolized; for many scriptures such as Rev. 11:17, 18; Dan. 12:1; 2 Thes. 2:8; Psa. 149 and Psa. 47, teach the very opposite." (B100)

"It should not be a wonder to us ... that the fiery judgments upon the world are the Master's design, not for the world's injury, but for its blessings. We read that as a result of St. Peter's preaching at Pentecost the truths struck home to the hearts of his hearers - 'They were cut to the heart.' But we realize that this was a great blessing, in that it prepared them for the message of divine mercy. So here we read of the Lord's slaying his enemies; they will be cut to the heart. A picture of this slaughter is given us in Revelation, where the Lord is represented in glorious majesty, with a sword proceeding out of his mouth, that with it he should smite the nations. (Rev. 19:15) Blessed smiting! The sooner it begins, the better for the world, we might say; and yet we remember that God's time is best for everything." (RS493:5)

The "treading of the winepress" probably is intended to signify the complete crushing of every element of rebellion and apostasy identified with the old order, and reflects "the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

## Treading the Winepress

"The treading of the winepress is the last feature of harvest work. The reaping and gathering is all done first. So this treading of the winepress of the wrath of God into which 'the vine of the earth' (the false vine, which has misappropriated the name Christian and Christ's Kingdom) is cast when its iniquitous clusters are fully ripe (Rev. 14:18-20), represents the last work of this eventful 'harvest' period. It pictures to our minds the last features of the great time of trouble which will involve all nations, and of which we are so abundantly forewarned in the Scriptures.

"The fact that the King of kings is represented as treading the winepress 'alone' indicates that the power exerted for the overthrow of the nations will be divine power, and not mere human energy. It will be God's power that will punish the nations, and that will eventually 'bring forth judgment [justice, righteousness, truth] unto victory.' 'He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips [the force and spirit of his truth] shall slay the wicked.' (Isa. 11:4; Rev. 19:15; Psa. 98:1) To no human generalship can the honors of the coming victory for truth and righteousness be ascribed. Wild will be the conflict of the angry nations, and worldwide will be the battlefield and the distress of nations; and no human Alexander, Caesar or Napoleon will be found to bring order out of the dreadful confusion. But in the end it will be known that the grand victory of Justice and Truth, and the punishment of iniquity with its just deserts, was brought about by the mighty power of the King of kings and Lord of lords." (D18)

The Lord's "vesture" is again brought to John's attention; but this time he notes that it, the vesture, so well as his thigh, bears the name "King of kings and Lord of lords." This name is really the title which Jehovah God, the Father, gave unto him for his faithfulness unto death, and which title gives to Jesus that preeminence, by which, "at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow." (Phil. 2:9, 10) Charles B. Williams, evidently sensing this, renders Rev. 19:16 as follows: "On His garments and on His thigh He has this title written: King of kings and Lord of lords."

### King of kings and Lord of lords

1 Tim. 6:15 - "Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the **King of kings, and Lord of lords:**"

"That the passage in question relates to our Lord Jesus and designates him the only Potentate, King and Lord, does not imply any disregard or disrespect of the heavenly Father and his attributes, kingship, etc., as the same writer (St. Paul) elsewhere points out. When speaking in similar strain about Christ's kingdom and subjugation of all things under him, he says, 'It is manifest that he is excepted who did put all



things under him.’ In other words, comparisons which show dignity and honor pertaining to Christ, Head or body, are never understood to be comparisons with Jehovah, who is beyond all comparison. (See 1 Cor. 15:27, 28)

“The correctness of this application is further attested by our Lord’s own application to himself of the same titles. (Rev. 17:14; 19:16)” (R2747:6)

### Messiah’s Reign

“Thank God, the Bible abounds with precious promises that a better day is soon to dawn! That glorious epoch is to be inaugurated by Messiah’s kingdom, for which Jesus taught his people to pray, ‘Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven.’ Then will come a glorious change to the world. Satan shall be bound for a thousand years. The reign of Sin and Death will cease and a reign of Righteousness and Life will begin.

“That reign is to last a thousand years. We have the words of Jesus himself that its results will be the entire removal of the curse – the freeing of mankind from every difficulty and ailment which came upon the world as a penalty for Father Adam’s sin, etc. From the very beginning of Messiah’s reign, God’s blessings will begin to come to the world through him, and correspondingly the curse will fade away; but the full blessing will not be here, and the curse will not be entirely removed, until about the close of the Millennium. It will be a grand work. The promise of Jesus is that eventually there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying; for the former things of sin and death will have passed away and he will have made all things new, as the great King of kings and Lord of lords. (Rev. 21:4, 5; 19:16; 1 Cor. 15:26, 54)” (R5779:6)

**19:17, 18** – “And I saw an angel standing in the sun; 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.”

Who is this “angel” who is standing in the sun? Is it not reasonable to suppose that he represents a class of persons living on the earth at the time of Christ’s manifestation with his saints in judgment – a class, who after the glorification of the Church, have a knowledge of the fact that the destruction of the great anti-Christian host is at this time to occur? The “sun” is a symbol of the Gospel light, the Truth. (D590)

“The angel standing in the sun would therefore represent a company of persons on earth blessed

with a knowledge of Divine truth – not alone the truth respecting God’s great Plan of the Ages, but also the truth respecting the very last judgment on those powers, civil and ecclesiastical, which are left after the judgments have fallen upon the great Mother of Harlots – a company who understand that this judgment is then immediately to take place. More than this ... this company ... it seems evident ... is comprised of those who have become acquainted with the fact that the selection of the Bride of Christ is at the time of the vision’s fulfillment complete, and that all of these elect ones are glorified and with their Divine Lord. The proclamation made by this angel implies that the momentous events of that time will culminate in the complete destruction of those organizations, civil, social, and ecclesiastical, symbolized by the ‘beast,’ the ‘kings of the earth,’ and the ‘false prophet.’

“Keeping in mind that this vision meets its fulfillment in the very closing period of the great time of trouble, the great tribulation (Dan. 12:1; Rev 7:9, 14), and after the glorification of the Church, would it not seem to the careful student of Revelation that there could be but one class on earth at this particular time possessing such knowledge of the Divine plans and purposes; and may not that class indeed be the one that is called in Rev. 7:9 the ‘Great Multitude (Company)’.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 448)

Those who constitute this spiritual class (the Great Company) which stands in the “sun” (the Gospel light – the Truth), must not be confounded with that class which is but nominally spiritual – “Babylon” – the “heavens” which is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every fowl spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. (Rev. 18:2)

“How strong the expression, ‘She is become the habitation of demons, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.’ How true it is, that the most execrable of society seek and wear the garb of Christian profession and ceremonialism, in some of the various quarters (sects) of Babylon. Every impure principle and doctrine, somehow and somewhere, finds representation in her. And she is a ‘cage’ which holds securely not only the Lord’s meek and gentle doves, but also many unclean and hateful birds. Of all the defaulters, and deceivers of men and women, how many are professedly members of Christ’s Church! and how many even use their profession as a cloak under which to forward evil schemes! It is well known that a majority of even the most brutal criminals executed die in Roman Catholic communion.” (C162)

Nor need we understand that this “proclamation” by the members of the Great Company living in the end of the age, will be one in the ordinary sense of that word:

for, it is hardly possible that they would audibly address themselves to the embattled marauders, to tell them to “feast” upon one another. Would it not be most natural for these “vultures” to do just this, without being invited so to do? We think, therefore, that the “loud voice” which John heard, was really the heavy heart-throb, the sincere yearning of this Company for the complete and utter destruction of the old order, which in itself had already been a matter of great tribulation; but by way of which tribulation these Great Company members would be able to “wash their robes ... white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Rev. 7:14) Is it any wonder then, that they should so strongly desire the speedy accomplishment of this?

“Through the favor of the High Priest, this great company are to go into ‘great tribulation’ and have the flesh destroyed...”

“This class ... will be sent into the Wilderness condition of separation from the world, forced thither by the ‘man of opportunity’ – unfavorable circumstances – there to be buffeted by adversity until they learn the vanity, deceitfulness and utter worthlessness of the world’s approval, and until all human hopes and ambitions die, and they are ready to say, God’s will, not mine be done.

“Forced into freedom by Babylon’s fall, while realizing that the great prize has been lost, these ‘tribulation saints’ will then hear the High Priest’s voice and find themselves forced into the wilderness condition of separation and flesh destruction ... an enforced destruction of the flesh.” (T70, 72)

Concerning this eventful day, when virtually every man’s hand shall be against his neighbor – the Day of Jehovah, the “day of vengeance” we read:

“The Lord hath prepared a slaughter, he hath bid his guests. And it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord’s slaughter that I will punish the princes and the king’s children, and all such as are clothed in imported clothing. And I will inflict punishment (also) on all those (marauders) who leap over the threshold on that day, who fill their master’s houses with violence and deceit. (This shows not only that there will be a great overthrow of wealth and power in this time of trouble, but that those who will for the time be the instruments of heaven in breaking down present systems will also be punished for their equally unjust and unrighteous course; for the coming trouble will involve all classes, and bring distress upon all the multitude.)

“Nigh is the great day of the LORD: it is nigh. Nearer and louder comes the uproar of the Day of the LORD. There the mighty shall shriek bitterly! That day is a day of wrath, a day of distress and anxiety [uncertainty and foreboding, as well as present distress], a day of clouds [trouble] and tempestuous gloom, a day of the trumpet [the

seventh symbolic trumpet, which sounds throughout this day of trouble – also called the trump of God, because connected with the events of this Day of the Lord] and shouting against the fenced cities and high battlements [clamorous and conflicting denunciations of strong and well-instructed governments]. And I will bring distress upon men, and they shall walk about as blind men [groping in uncertainty, not knowing what course to pursue], because they have sinned against Jehovah. Their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh shall be dung. Neither their silver nor gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD’s wrath [though previously wealth could furnish ease and every luxury], but the whole land shall be devoured by the FIRE of his zeal; for destruction, yea, quite sudden, will he prepare for all them [the wealthy] that dwell in the land.’ (Zeph. 1:7-9, 14-18) This destruction will destroy many of the wealthy in the sense that they will cease to be wealthy, though doubtless it will involve the loss of many lives of all classes.” (A316)

**19:19-21** – “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. 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.”

“Babylon, **Christendom**, has had a long probation of power, and has had many opportunities both to learn and to practice righteousness, as well as many warnings of a coming judgment. All through this Gospel age she has had in her midst the saints of God, devoted, self-sacrificing, Christ-like men and women, ‘the salt of the earth.’ She has heard the message of salvation from their lips, seen the principles of truth and righteousness exemplified in their lives, and heard them reason of righteousness and judgment to come. But she has disregarded these living epistles of God; and not only so, but her so-called Christian nations, in their greed for gain, have brought reproach upon the name of Christ among the heathen, following the Christian missionary with the accursed rum traffic and other ‘civilized’ evils; and in her midst and by her authority the true embryo kingdom of heaven (composed only of the saints, whose names are written in heaven) has suffered violence. She has hated them and persecuted them even unto death, so that thousands of them, by her decrees, sealed their testimony with their blood. Like their Master, they were hated

without a cause; they were rejected as the offscouring of the earth for righteousness' sake; and their light was again and again quenched that the preferred darkness might reign with its opportunities to work iniquity. Oh how dark is this record of Christendom! The mother system is 'drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus'; and she and her daughters, still blind, are ready still to persecute and behead (Rev. 20:4) though in a more refined manner, all who are loyal to God and his truth, and who venture, however kindly, to point out to them plainly the Word which reproves them.

"The **civil powers** of Christendom have been warned frequently when again and again empires and kingdoms have fallen with the weight of their own corruption. And even today, if the powers that be would hearken, they might hear a last warning of God's inspired prophet, saying, **O ye kings:** be instructed ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son **lest he be angry, and ye perish** from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.... 'Why do the nations rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? **The kings of the earth set themselves (in opposition), and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed.**' ... But their resistance shall avail nothing; for, 'He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, and the Lord shall have them in derision. Then (since they persistently neglect to heed his warnings) shall he **speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.**' (Psa. 2:10-12; 1-5)" (D51, 52)

"This judgment against the 'thrones' of the present time, and against 'the beast and the false prophet' systems, follows speedily upon the introduction of this Millennial judgment reign. The thrones of present dominion of earth will be 'cast down' and the dominion transferred to the great Prophet and Judge. (Compare Dan. 7:9, 14, 22) And the systems of error will be speedily judged worthy of destruction, the lake of fire, the second death." (R893:2)

"The Beast and Prophet are symbols of false systems, which during the Gospel age have deceived and led astray. These systems will be cast into a great consuming trouble in the close of this Gospel age. The torment of those systems will be *aionion*, i.e., **LASTING**. It will continue as long as they last, until they are utterly consumed. So at the end of the Millennial age the system of error which will then manifest and lead to the destruction of 'goats' will also be consumed. That deceiving system (not specified as to kind, but merely called Satan, after its instigator), will be cast into the same sort of trouble and destruction in the end of the Millennial age, as

the Beast and False Prophet systems are now being cast into, in the end of the Gospel age." (R1040:5)

"The great time of trouble, the Lord's judgment, which will utterly destroy these systems, will undoubtedly cause great social, financial and religious difficulty and pain to **all** those identified with these deceived and deceiving systems, before they are utterly destroyed. These systems will be cast in, destroyed, at the beginning of the Millennium, while Satan's destruction is reserved until its close, when all the 'goats' shall have been separated from the 'sheep,' and they shall perish with Satan in the second death, as 'his angels,' messengers or servants. None of these abominable characters among men, who knowing the truth, yet love unrighteousness – none of the 'fearful and unbelieving' – those who will not trust God after all the manifestations of his grace afforded during the Millennial reign of Christ; nor the abominable who at heart are murderers and whoremongers and sorcerers and idolaters and liars: none of these shall escape from the second death, to defile the earth again. All such, after a full and abundant opportunity for reformation, will be judged unworthy of life, and will forever be cut off in the second death, symbolized by the lake of fire and brimstone." (R2608:6)

#### **What About The Two-Horned Beast of Rev. 13:11?**

"The ecclesiastical power symbolized by the Two-Horned Beast is rapidly dissolving. The church as a governmental establishment in Ireland has already passed away, and the ablest statesmen of England concede that it is only a question of a very short time when it will be disestablished in England.

"Thus we see the Two-Horned Beast as such dropping from view, and we can thus account for the fact that it has no part in the struggle at its close as shown in Rev. 19:19, 20. A 'beast' is the symbol of a kingdom: hence the separating of the English church from the government will neither destroy the beast nor church; but since Revelation is treating of ecclesiastical beasts, it drops from view when it ceases to be an ecclesiastical Government. In Rev. 19:19, 20, its government appears among the others – among the 'kings of the earth,' etc., and the English church is represented among the other Protestant systems in the 'false prophet'." (R834:4)

#### **"The False Prophet"**

"The **False Prophet** is a new symbol, and takes the place of both the 'two-horned beast' and 'the image of the beast,' and, we believe, is a still more comprehensive symbol, representing **all** systems teaching error – those called 'orthodox' as well as many considered heterodox." (R510:4)

“But in the prophecy under consideration in Matt. 24:23-25, our Lord warns us of danger from false Christs ‘then’ – that is **now**. In harmony with this we find in Rev. 13:14-18 a prophecy of a special combination of influence by which Protestant denominations will be unified and, though separate, yet be brought into cooperation with Papacy, in a manner that will give both increased powers, and deceive many into supposing that the new combination will be God’s instrumentality for doing the work predicted of Messiah, and that it is thus its representative.” (D581)

“The false teachers and false Messiahs who have deceived many are represented today, we believe, by some very large and very prosperous denominations which are deceiving themselves and millions of others into supposing that they are the true church, the true Messiah, the true Vine of the Heavenly Father’s right-hand planting.” (R4872:6)

### Re: Revelation 19:15 and 21

“The methods of conquest and breaking will be widely different from any which have ever before overthrown nations. He who now takes his great power to reign is shown in symbol (Rev. 19:15) as the one whose sword went forth **out of his mouth**, ‘that with it he should rule them with a rod of iron’.” (B100)

### The Warfare of the Rider on the White Horse

“A comparison of verse 21 with that of verse 18 seems to show that the supporters of the present order, the supporters of the beast power before its disintegration, are referred to... These ... the civil and ecclesiastical potentates, the great financial kings, as individuals, and those standing with them. The broad sword of truth and judgment will cause these to see that it is God’s Kingdom they are opposing, and later their complete fall from the positions of prominence, they will yield, some willingly we believe, and give allegiance to the new order.

“Thus it will be seen that this remarkable vision teaches that before the incoming of the new order, the great anti-Christian systems, and the supporters of the same, which have so long opposed and misrepresented, unwittingly to a large extent, the Gospel and its great Author, and which have persecuted the saints, must be destroyed that the masses bound up in those systems may be given opportunity to yield obedience to the Divine authority of the Kingdom. And in this great conflict of the near future, the Truth and its supporters will be as victorious as though in a literal sense the Lord Jesus Christ should wage battle with these opposing forces, overthrow them with great slaughter, capture their leaders, imprison and finally destroy them.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 465)

**20:1-3** – “And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.”

The “angel” who at this point John saw coming down from heaven having the key of the “bottomless pit,” and a great chain with which to bind Satan, is undoubtedly the same angel as is referred to in Rev. 19:11-12; however, from a slightly different viewpoint. His purpose now is to bind Satan! This binding of Satan, is in a sense a very gradual work; the “chain” we suggest, represents the truth, i.e., the increase of knowledge, though perhaps more particularly truth along the lines of Biblical truth. An increase of knowledge surely does thwart the Adversary’s designs to keep the human race in sheer ignorance, and is therefore a part of the binding of Satan.

We are living in the end of the age, in the period known as “the Time of Trouble” of which Daniel, the Prophet of old, spake when he declared:

Dan. 12:1-4 – “... at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book; and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”

Michael, the great prince, did not come at the beginning of this period, here called the time of the end, but rather, at the end of it – the harvest of the Gospel age; and who is so blind as not to be able to see that the binding of Satan is, therefore, now in progress.

“The time for the binding of Satan is fixed at the close of the Gospel age, prior to the thousand year’s reign of Christ, and is to be accomplished by the ‘Messenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in,’ and who ‘has the keys of death and hades,’ – our Lord Jesus, at his second advent; – ‘And I saw an angel [messenger, ‘the Messenger of the Covenant’ –

Christ Jesus] come down from heaven [his second advent], having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.' (Rev. 20:1, 2; 1:18; Mal. 3:1) The object of his binding evidently is that the world may be released from his bondage and brought under favorable conditions of the reign of Christ, with nothing to oppose, hinder or obstruct their progress toward full restitution to the divine favor and blessings.

"According to the above Scripture (Rev. 20:1, 2) the binding of Satan could not begin until the Angel had come down – until 1874, the date of our Lord's second advent, nor indeed until 1878, the date of the assumption of his power as King of kings. (See B235) Mark the binding process since that time. The power of Satan is the power of darkness, of ignorance and superstition. (Luke 22:53; Col. 1:13) As the light of truth advances, the power that can only work in darkness is to that extent curtailed. Hence **it is that truth, on every subject, but especially divine truth**, has always met with opposition from the deceived and unwitting agents of the great adversary. Truth, therefore, is the great agency which is eventually to accomplish **the complete binding of Satan**. To some extent truth has for many centuries obstructed the course of error, of Satan's influence in the world – truths both of nature and religion – but they never bound Satan and rendered him powerless. If they obstructed his course in one direction, he either battered them down with persecution of one sort or another, or failing in this, branched out and flourished in another direction. But the truth which is to accomplish the binding of Satan is described by the Revelator as 'a great chain' in the hands of earth's new and rightful King. Not only the truths directly relating to the plan of God constitute this chain, but to these are linked every feature of truth related to human rights and privileges. Soon this mighty chain will so thoroughly compass the devil's dominion and influence, and the Lord's great army will draw it so tightly, that the great enemy will lie prostrate in the dust. And the Lord will cast him and all his wicked deceptions into the pit of oblivion, sealed for a thousand years; – his power to deceive and enslave men being completely stopped by the clear knowledge then prevailing." (R1233:4)

### The "Angel" to Bind Satan

"The word angel signifies messenger, and this picture shows us that God will send some messengers with authority and power to subdue Evil – the adversary of truth and right. In this work of binding, many agencies will doubtless take a part – an increase of knowledge probably being one of the strongest. Yet all of these agents are typified by the one messenger.

There is that about this figure, which seems to indicate that Christ Jesus, and his body, the church of the firstborn, is the one in whose hand is the power of authority to bind and control Evil – 'To bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgments written – this honor have all the saints.' (Psa. 149:8, 9) The language too, reminds us of one who declares he has the keys. (Rev. 1:18)

"The binding or suppression of evil during the Millennial age will result from the exercise of authority and power, by our Lord, when he shall take unto himself his great power and reign. (Rev. 11:17) But we have reason to think that the manner in which our Lord takes his great power, and binds evil, will differ much from the general conception of it. We believe that truth binds error, and error binds truth; like light and darkness, they are constantly opposed to each other. During this Age the powers of darkness and error hold control; but light and truth will come with the new rulership.

"We believe that this New Ruler has already come, (visible only, as are all the glorious and spiritual things, to the eye of faith enlightened by the Word of God) and that the binding is already commenced." (R331:2)

### The Binding of Satan

"... our Lord reasoned (Mark 3:27), that 'no man can enter into a strong man's house and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.' The 'strong man' here referred to is Satan, who is the powerful 'prince of this world' – his dominion or house. He will surely hold his dominion and pursue his own policy as long as possible, and will diligently resist every binding influence which threatens the loss of his power. The work and teaching of Jesus were just such binding influences; and the opposition which his words met was what might be expected as a manifestation of Satan's wrath. During the Gospel age generally the prince of darkness has flourished, and consequently a large portion of it is known as the 'dark ages.' But since the beginning of the time of the end, in 1799, God has specially let in the light – and particularly since 1878. The more the 'light' shines, the more active is this adversary to preserve his power; but God's assurance is that Christ, as the Strong Messenger, will now quickly bind Satan's power and release humanity from his dominion. (Rev. 20:1, 2)" (R1736:2)

"The binding of Satan with the great chain, and the putting of him into the abyss mentioned in Rev. 20:1-3, is all figurative; but the figures are all meaningful. To us they signify a complete restraint of Satan and all his powers of evil. The great chain represents restraint. The word abyss, in our

common version rendered 'bottomless pit,' represents oblivion. The seal upon it represents divine care that none shall interfere with God's arrangement, but that it shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the divine prearrangement. Our suggestion respecting the influence of the increased light of the present time is that a preliminary restraint of evil results from turning on the light of present truth, which makes the evil more manifest and less able to deceive. But this is not all, by any means. The thought is that the great King, who is now about to take control of the world, has full power to bind, to restrain Satan and every evil power and influence, that nothing may hurt or injure that which is good throughout the Millennial age, as has been the case during the present age, when the kingdom of heaven (the church in its incipient state) suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force, misusing the members of the body of Christ, even as they misused also the Head of the body – our Lord." (R2645:6)

"Our thought is that the Christ will be very closely associated with the earth, just as Satan's kingdom is. Satan's seat of government is in Tartarus – the atmosphere. He and his associates, the fallen angels, are near the earth, whither they were cast down, separated from their own plane because of sin. They are invisible to mankind, however, amongst whom they have done an evil work. Satan has also his human agents – wicked men and women, who are under his control, sometimes through ignorance and superstition, and sometimes through mesmeric influence. The Scriptures inform us, however, that shortly Satan is to be bound for a thousand years; and the place which he occupied will then be vacant. (Rev. 20:1-3)" (R5182:1)

"When the whole world has been thus enlightened, trained and disciplined for a thousand years, all will have had full opportunity to reach actual perfection, and therefore actual perfection will be required of them. At the end of the thousand years Christ is to deliver up his finished work to the Father. (1 Cor. 15:24, 25) And when his work is finished, it must be complete and perfect, lacking nothing – otherwise, it would not be acceptable to God.

"So, in the end of the thousand years, when Christ has completed his work of reconstruction – restitution – the final test must be applied to prove the worthiness or unworthiness of each individual of the race to continued existence throughout the ages of glory to follow. And for this purpose, the final testing and proving of all, is the loosing of Satan out of his prison for a little season.

"How may it be accomplished? We answer, by relaxing the rigor of the hitherto iron rule which made obedience to divine law obligatory by prompt

punishment of any deviation from it and prompt rewarding of every obedience to it. Here would be Satan's opportunity to again deceive any who desire to carry out plans in opposition to God's will or the principles of strict justice, into the idea that they could now do so with impunity, and that neither the penalties nor rewards of divine law are certain. Under such a delusion, those who at heart are not loyal to God, and who thus far have been controlled principally by the force and rigor of law, will manifest their real disposition; and likewise those who have learned to love God's law and who delight in it, and who would not deviate from it to the slightest degree, even if there were no penalties attached to it – these will also be manifested. And these only, be they many or few, are those whom God by his law marks as worthy of continued life. Others, by preferring their own wills, shall thus prove their unworthiness of life, and together with Satan must be cut off – destroyed. (Matt. 25:41-46)" (R1234:2)

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

The thrones here referred to –

"... are those of earthly kingdoms at the present time, and all under the 'prince of this world.' (John 14:30) These are all condemned as unfit, and are to be overthrown, to give place to the Kingdom of Christ." (R331:3)

But –

"All constituting the kingdom class are here referred to as beheaded – every member of the glorified church must, eventually, have this experience, whatever it signifies. But we reflect that our Lord was not beheaded and, so far as history shows, few if any, of the apostles were literally beheaded; indeed, very few, if any, of the Lord's saints from Pentecost to the present time have died by decapitation. We are to remember, however, that this statement is from the symbolical book, and is, therefore, a figure of speech, a word picture and its meaning must be sought for accordingly.

"The Apostle gives us the key, saying, 'The head of every man is Christ; the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.' (1 Cor. 11:3) As a woman who becomes a wife accepts her husband as the head of the family, so the church accepts Christ as its Head, and each member of the church thus comes into relationship with the Lord as a member of his body – not the Head; and all of these, to be acceptable as members of the figurative body of

Christ must be will-less, headless: their own wills must be surrendered, so that, like their Lord, they can say, 'Not my will, but thine, be done.' They must be headless in the sense of ignoring their own wills, being dead to self and actuated henceforth by the will of the head of the body, Christ Jesus. His will, his mind, his Spirit, must dwell in each member of the body, and abound, if it would abide a member of his body, the church. Thus, as the wife loses her own name, and accepts the name of her husband and his headship, so each member of the bride of Christ must lose his or her individuality in order to be accepted as the bride of Christ. **It is this self-surrender to Christ on the part of his church that is represented in the symbolism of the text before us.**" (R2844:6)

These were such as were **never in accord with**; or in response to the call, "Come out of her, my people," had become **separated from**; the systems here called the "beast" (the Papacy), and its "image" (the Protestant Federation), and thus were not marked in their "fore-heads" (intellectually) with fear, sympathy or worship of these systems, nor had they borne in their "hands" their merchandise; but who, because of their faithfulness unto death in the matter of their covenant relationship with Jehovah God, were now exalted to the royalty of the Kingdom to reign with Christ Jesus, a thousand years!

### **The Kingdom Class – Rule and Reign with Christ**

"To accomplish this complete victory over death and the grave will be the very object of the establishment of the Kingdom, and will require a thousand years; as it is written again, respecting the reign of those who have part in the first resurrection, 'They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.' (Rev. 20:4)

"The first resurrection glorifies the kingdom class; and forthwith the kingdom will be set up – 'The mountain [kingdom] of the Lord's house' will be established in the earth. This agrees with the statement of the prophet from which the Apostle quotes, 'In this mountain [Millennial kingdom] shall the Lord of hosts make unto the people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined; and he will destroy in this mountain [kingdom] the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it.' (Isa. 2:2; 25:6-8) How much of the beauty and fullness of the divine Word has been hidden from our eyes by reason of the errors introduced into the creeds of Christendom by the great adversary for this very purpose!" (R3175:5)

### **"Judgment ... given unto them"**

*Krima* (Κριμα), a judgment, sentence.

"The Greek word rendered judgment here, is the same rendered condemnation in the following passages: (Luke 23:40; Jas. 3:1; Jude 4)" (R331:3)

**20:5, 6** – "But the rest of the dead lived not again, until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years."

The first portion of this fifth verse – "but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" – seems to be spurious, for it does not appear in any manuscript prior to the 5th century.

"They are not found in the oldest and most reliable Greek MSS., the Sinaitic, Vatican Nos. 1209 and 1160, nor in the Syriac MS. We must remember that many passages found in the modern copies are additions which do not properly belong to the Bible. Since commanded not to add to the Word of God, it is our duty to repudiate such additions as soon as their spurious character is established. The words indicated probably crept into the text by accident, in the fifth century; for no MS., of earlier date (either Greek or Syriac) contains this clause. It was probably at first merely a marginal comment made by a reader, expressive of his thought upon the text, and copied into the body of the text by some subsequent transcriber who failed to distinguish between the text and the comment.

"However, the repudiation of this clause is not essential to the 'Plan' as herein set forth: for the rest of the dead – the world at large – will not live again in the full sense, in the perfect sense that Adam lived before he sinned and came under the sentence 'dying thou shalt die.' Perfect life without weakness or dying is the only sense in which God recognizes the word life. From this standpoint all the world has already lost life, is dying, and might now be more properly described as dead than as alive. (2 Cor. 5:14; Matt. 8:22)

"The word resurrection (Greek, *anastasis*) signifies raising up. As related to man, it signifies raising up man to that condition from which he fell, to full perfection of manhood – the thing lost through Adam. The perfection from which our race fell is the perfection to which they will gradually rise, during the Millennial age of restitution or resurrection (raising up). The Millennial age is not only the age of trial, but also the age of blessing and through resurrection or restitution to life all that was lost is to be restored to all who, when they know and have opportunity, gladly obey. The process of resurrection will be a gradual one, requiring the entire age or its full



accomplishment; though the mere awakening to a measure of life and consciousness, as at present enjoyed will, of course, be a momentary work. Consequently, it will not be until the thousand years are finished that the race will have fully attained the complete measure of life lost in Adam. Since anything short of perfect life is a condition of partial death, it follows that, although the above words are no part of the inspired record, it would be strictly true to say that the rest of the dead will not live again (will not regain the fullness of life lost) until the thousand years of restitution and blessing are complete.” (A288)

There are really but two resurrections: the “first” or chief, and the general. In a sense, therefore, even the Great Company, though they will be raised spirit beings, are sharers in the general resurrection; for only those who share the “first” resurrection are free from the second death’s power. These latter, in their glorification will have been made partakers of the divine (immortal) nature (2 Pet. 1:4); and sharers with Christ Jesus in his Millennial reign (2 Tim. 2:12), for a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4, 6)

“Those who will share this first resurrection will experience an instantaneous ‘change’ from the human nature to the divine nature – the highest of the spirit natures; not human, not flesh and blood, for ‘flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.’ (1 Cor. 15:50) Their trial and perfecting of heart takes place beforehand and only the ‘overcomers’ will receive this blessing.” (R4793:3)

“This change of nature from human to divine is given as a reward to those who, within the Gospel age, sacrifice the human nature, as did our Lord, with all its interests, hopes and aims, present and future – even unto death. In the resurrection such will awake, not to share with the rest of mankind in the blessed restitution to human perfection and all its accompanying blessings, but to share the likeness and glory and joy of the Lord, as partakers with him of the divine nature. (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12)” (A196)

### **Our Immortality! How Wonderful!**

**“This spiritual body ... the Apostle declares, will be an incorruptible one – one which cannot corrupt, which cannot die ...**

“The declaration that our spiritual bodies shall be incorruptible, immortal, is a most momentous one, because we are distinctly informed that this quality of immortality belongs inherently to Jehovah alone; while it is declared of our Lord Jesus that, because of his faithfulness, his high exaltation consisted in part in his being granted life **in himself**, as the Father hath life in himself. The thought there is the same – that the glorious Head of the Church experienced just such a ‘change’ to immortality, to incorruption, to participation in the divine nature.

It does not amaze us that the plan of God should be thus liberal toward our dear Redeemer; but it surely does astonish us that this quality of the divine nature, **given to none other** than our Master, **should be promised to the members of his body**, who walk in his footsteps, and are seeking for glory, honor and immortality. (2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 2:7)” (F727)

### **The Right To Life!**

“The world will gain the right to life under the opportunities offered to them during the thousand years of Christ’s reign. We have that right to live now. Our ‘life is hid with Christ in God.’ (Col. 3:3) Men can kill the body, but no man can take from us the right to live. Our eternal life has already begun in a sense. We are on trial now, and if we pass the trial successfully, we shall forever possess that right to life.

“Not so with the world. There is no provision by which the world has a right to life. ‘The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.’ (Rev. 20:5) Therefore, the church gets eternal life at least a thousand years before the world will be given the right to everlasting life; it is ours now and forever if we continue faithful unto death.” (RS103:2)

### **The Great Company and Their Resurrection**

“The great company, although **they cannot be counted in as participants of the First Resurrection**, and sharers of its glory, honor and immortality, nor counted in with the ancient worthies, must, nevertheless be counted as overcomers even though the overcoming be through great tribulation. And as overcomers, they must be esteemed to pass from death unto life and, therefore, to be subjects of an instantaneous resurrection, and not a gradual one, as in the case of the world, whose trial is future.” (F707)

**20:7-10** – “And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

The setting is indeed, **the end of the Millennial age** – and it would appear that Gog and Magog would represent all who then, imbued with the spirit of Satan, will be opposers of God, and of his righteous kingdom; perhaps, having no specific reference to a people from any particular section of the globe (such as the north country –

Ezek. 38:15); but to those who join him from every quarter of the earth; the four corners – north, south, east and west. (Rev. 20:8)

“The Scriptures inform us that Satan will be loosed from his prison-house and go forth to tempt, to try, to test, all those that dwell upon the whole earth, whose number will be at that time as the sand of the sea – thousands of millions. The test will be applied to all; for it is the Divine purpose that such should be tested. Those in perfect accord with the Potter will stand the test, and prove their characters to be strong, crystallized by this test, while others not in fullest harmony with the great Potter shall be melted under the fiery trial of that time. The proportion of those who will stand to those who will then fall is not indicated in the Word of God; and we must not be wise above what is written. It is sufficient for us to know that every true and loyal member of the race, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, will have the fullest opportunities for becoming a vessel of the Lord to some honorable purpose and service if he wills, and that those whose wills are not fully submissive to the Lord will be ultimately destroyed from amongst the people and not be preserved for torture. (Rev. 20:7-10)” (SM714)

“Remember that this is the final sentence at the close of the final trial – at the close of the Millennium; and that none will then be servants of Satan ignorantly or unwillingly, as so many now are; for the great Deliverer, Christ, will remove outside temptations, and provide assistance toward self-improvement, which will enable all who will to overcome inherent weaknesses and to attain perfection. These ‘goats,’ who love evil and serve Satan, are the messengers (‘angels’) of Satan. For these and Satan, and for no others, God has prepared second death – the everlasting destruction. Fire will come from God out of heaven and consume them.” (R2608:3)

### End of Millennium – Satan Loosed

“It follows then, that the thousand years of Christ’s reign shall complete the great work of salvation, and beyond it there is no probation for any; all will have had a full opportunity, with every favorable advantage. In the end or closing period of that age Satan is to be loosed for a little season for the final testing of mankind, and at its close he and those who follow his spirit and leadership shall be destroyed. That will be the ‘second death,’ from which there is no recovery. (Rev. 21:7, 8)” (R763:6)

### The Final Trial at the End of the Millennium

“Consider for a moment the words of Matt. 25:41: ‘Depart from me, ye cursed [once redeemed by Christ from the Adamic curse or condemnation to death, but now condemned as cursed, as worthy of the second death, by the One who redeemed them from the first curse], into everlasting fire [symbol of everlasting destruction], prepared for the devil and his messengers [servants].’” (R2608:2)

“We read, regarding that testing, that Satan will endeavor to lead all mankind, whose number will then be as the sand of the sea for multitude; but that many of them will choose evil and disobedience ...

“Seemingly the goodness and love of God in the provision of a ransom, a restitution, and another opportunity of life for man, instead of leading these to an abhorrence of sin, will lead them to suppose that God is too loving to cut them off in the second death, or that if he did so he would give them other, and yet other, future opportunities.... But they shall go no further, for their folly shall be manifest. Their utter destruction will prove to the righteous the harmony and perfect balance of Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power in the Divine Ruler. Such are called the ‘angels’ (messengers, followers, servants) of Satan. And for such, as well as for Satan, the utter destruction (the second death) is prepared by the wise, loving and just Creator. And so, in the parable of the sheep and goats, (Matt. 25:31-33) the latter are called messengers or servants of Satan.” (*What Say the Scriptures About Hell?* p. 62)

### The “Camp of the Saints”

“We read, ‘And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the **camp of the saints** about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.’ (Rev. 20:9) The ‘beloved city’ is the New Jerusalem, the church in glory, not the church in the flesh. The rebellion incited by Satan will be not only against the **earthly princes**<sup>1</sup> but also against The Christ.

“By that time having reached perfection of organism and powers, the people will assert themselves in thus going to encompass the **camp of the saints**. That the church cannot be meant is evident from the fact that human beings could not attack an unseen force of spirit beings, as the church will then be.... We fancy that we hear them say, ‘It is time that this government was turned over to us. We protest against your remaining in power any longer.’ **In rebelling against the earthly phase of Messiah’s kingdom, however, they are rebelling against the Lord.** Consequently divine judgment will overtake them – ‘fire from heaven.’” (R5182:6)

<sup>1</sup> “... the ‘princes’ to whom Immanuel will entrust the earthly phase of his Kingdom. (Psa. 45:16)” (C257)

“In one place the Prophet Jeremiah declares, ‘This is the name whereby he shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness.’ In another place he says, ‘She shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness [or, The Righteousness of Jehovah].’ And so the Apostle declares, ‘That we might be the righteousness of God through him.’ (Jer. 23:6; 33:16; 2 Cor. 5:21)

“These statements refer to Zion. The typical Zion is the Jewish nation; and the anti-typical Zion is the glorified Christ. Very properly, then, we may understand that **the blessings which belong to the church on the spirit plane will, naturally, on the earthly plane, belong to the ancient worthies** who will be in divine favor forever.” (R4913:3)

With regard to the “torment day and night for ever” and ever, let it be noted, that –

“Rev. 20:9 tells of the destruction of those individuals who join Satan in the last rebellion; and verse 15 tells of that same destruction in other words, using the symbol ‘lake of fire.’ They are devoured or consumed in fire. This being the case, the torment of verse 10 cannot refer to these human beings who are consumed, destroyed. Hence the question narrows down to this, Will Satan and a false prophet and a beast be tortured forever: and does this verse so teach?

“We answer in God’s own words, ‘All the wicked will he destroy.’ Concerning Satan, the arch enemy of God and man, God expressly advises us that he will be destroyed, and not preserved in any sense or condition. (Heb. 2:14)

“The beast and false prophet systems, which during the Gospel age have deceived and led astray, will be cast into a great, consuming trouble in the close of this Gospel age. The torment of those systems will be *aionion*, i.e., lasting. It will continue as long as they last, until they are utterly consumed. So also the system of error, which will suddenly manifest itself at the end of the Millennial age and lead the ‘goats’ to destruction, will be consumed. (Rev. 20:7-10) That deceiving system (not specified as to kind, but merely called Satan, after its instigator) will be cast into the same sort of trouble and destruction in the end of the Millennial age, as the beast and false prophet systems are now being cast into, in the end of the Gospel age.” (R2609:5)

### **The Millennium’s “Harvest”**

“Accordingly, we are shown (Rev. 20:7-10) that at the close of the Millennial age there will be a ‘harvest’ time, for sifting and separating amongst the billions of human beings then living, each of whom will have enjoyed a full opportunity of attaining perfection. This will be similar to the present sifting of ‘Babylon,’ ‘Christendom,’ in this ‘harvest’ time; and similar also to the sifting work in the ‘harvest’ of

the Jewish age. The harvest of the Millennial age will witness the complete separation of the ‘goats’ from the Lord’s ‘sheep,’ as represented in our Lord’s parable. (Matt. 25:31-46)” (D644)

**20:11** – “And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.”

“Symbolically, the whiteness of the throne indicates the purity of the justice and judgment which will be meted out by the Great Redeemer as the Messiah-King. The heavens and earth which will flee away from the presence of that throne are not the literal, but the symbolical. The ecclesiastical heavens and the social earth of the present time will not stand in the presence of that August Tribunal. The people will not be judged nationally nor by parliaments and systems in society, but individually. The judgment or trial will not merely test those living at the time of the establishment of the Kingdom, but will include all the dead.” (OV256)

### **The Great White Throne**

“The ‘great white throne’ represents the powers of the government and the purity or fairness of the trial which will be granted to the world of mankind. When we read that heaven and earth fled away from the presence of him upon the throne, it identifies that throne with the end of this age, and the opening of the Millennial Age. Present institutions are represented thus: the heavens, the church, etc., and the earth, the political and social interest of ‘this present evil world.’ As St. Peter tells us, present institutions shall ‘pass away with a great noise,’ and instead the Lord will reveal a new heavens and a new earth – that is to say, new spiritual powers, the Church in glory; and new earthly powers, the new political and social conditions – along better lines than those which now control: along the lines of justice and love.” (OV41)

### **The Great White Throne and Judgment**

“Neither Jehovah God nor His Representative, Messiah, can in any sense or degree be a party to injustice or inequity. The fact that injustice has been permitted, that inequity has been the rule for centuries, is to be accounted for by the fact that during all this period the world has been under the reign of Sin and Death, the reign of Satan, ‘the Prince of this world,’ and of the darkness and selfishness and evil – all of which his name represents; that the world has not been under the dominion of Messiah, the Representative of Jehovah and His righteousness and love.

“The New Dispensation which Messiah’s Kingdom will usher in is pictured in this Rev. 20:11 text. It will be the worldwide dominion of purity, holiness, righteousness, justice, truth – a Great White Throne.

No wonder we read that the symbolical heavens and earth, representing the old order of things – social, ecclesiastical – will vanish away!

“Let it be remembered that the Great White Throne speaks blessings only to those who love righteousness and hate iniquity.

“At the end of Messiah’s Reign, those whose names will have been written upon the new Book of Life will be found worthy of everlasting life; those whose names are not therein written will be destroyed in the Second Death. (Rev. 20:11-15)” (SM694, 696)

**20:12, 13** – “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.”

“The dead’ includes all of the Adamic race who during this Gospel age do not escape from the condemnation that is on the world – DEATH – by becoming partakers of spiritual life through Jesus ...

“This verse relative to the dead shows us how all those death condemned ones will be on trial before the White Throne. So surely as it is a throne of purity and Justice, their trial, as ours now, will be full, fair and impartial. The Judge himself has already become their bail, so that they shall have a full and sufficient trial before himself, to attain perfection of human life.

“The books opened, according to the rulings of which they will be tried, we understand to be the books of the Bible. The church, now on trial, is being judged according to these same books – and none now are on trial, to whom those books are not to some degree opened (understood). This too, accords with Jesus’ words: ‘My words shall judge you in the last day’ (period) – the Millennial day. (John 12:48) The word here translated judge is the same word as in our text and in 1 Cor. 6:1 ...

“The words of Jesus will no longer be hidden under parables and dark sayings, that the hearing people might hear and not understand; but the secret things will be uncovered. ‘The mystery of God’ – the church – being finished, the books will be opened, and the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth. For God ‘will have all men to be saved, [redeemed] and [then] to come unto the knowledge of the truth.’ (1 Tim. 2:4)

“The succeeding verse is in harmony, and says that ‘the sea [masses of mankind not under religious restraint] delivered up the dead which were in it:’ i.e., mankind will be taken out of that condition, and

brought under the restraints of the White Throne. Consequently, when all are restrained, there will be ‘no more sea.’ – (See Jude 13; Jas. 1:6) ‘Death and the tomb delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to their works’ (during that age or day).

“This trial includes all the world, (but not the saints – John 5:24), and is indeed the grand prospect held out before them. By means of that trial, the entire groaning creation may be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty (freedom from death) of the sons of God. (Rom. 8:21, 22)

“Another book – of life, was opened. This suggests to us that as there is a book (record), of life, in which the names of all the Gospel age overcomers are recorded who are worthy of divine life, so there will be a book or record kept in the next age of those worthy of perfect human life.” (R333:1)

### The Books to be Opened

“The books of the Bible will then all be opened – understood. All will then see that the Golden Rules laid down by inspiration through Moses and the Prophets, Jesus and his Apostles, are the very ones which God will require of men in the future and which Messiah will then enable the willing and obedient to comply with by assisting them up out of their sin and degradation. The judgment of that time, the test, will not be of faith, for knowledge will be universal and all the darkness and obscurity created by ignorance and superstition will have passed away. The test at that time will be of works, whereas the tests of the Church at the present time are of faith.” (OV256)

### The Millennium Judgment Day

“The Scriptures represent the Millennium as the Judgment Day for the world; saying: ‘God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man (the Christ, head and body) whom he hath ordained.’ (Acts. 17:31) If it were God’s plan to coerce all the world or to everlastingly save every member of Adam’s race, why call the coming age a Day of Judgment? Judgment signifies trial, testing, and this implies the rejection of the unfit as much as it implies the acceptance and blessing of those proved worthy. The judgment is unto life or death everlasting.

“Note our Lord’s parable of the sheep and the goats, applicable not to the Gospel age, but to the world in the Millennium. It opens with ‘When the Son of Man shall come in all his glory’ – and sit upon his glorious throne – a time when, according to his promise, his bride, the ‘elect’ Church shall share his throne and glory – ‘then shall be gathered before him all nations,’ and he shall judge them, separating the sheep to the right hand of his favor

and the goats to the left hand of disfavor. This separating and judging will occupy the entire Millennial age, and at its close the 'sheep' will all be welcomed to the Father's favor – everlasting life, and the disobedient 'goats' with Satan, their leader, and all evil doers, shall be punished with 'everlasting destruction,' everlasting cutting off from life symbolized by a lake of fire and brimstone – the Second Death.

"The Scriptures represent the judgment of that great Millennial Judgment day as before a great white throne of purity and justice." (E480)

### The Bible in the Next Age!

"... our thought is that the Bible will be used then, not so much as a sole means of communicating God's will, but as a source of information, much as we now use histories. It will enlighten men respecting God's laws, etc.

"The Scripture which tells us that the Bible will be used in the future, tells us that all the world will be judged by the things written in these books, and informs us that the books will be opened (the books of the Old and New Testaments) implying that up to that time they were not opened. (Rev. 20:12)" (RS804:1)

"The world will be standing on judgment before the throne of Christ throughout the Millennial age in the same sense that the church has been standing on judgment during this Gospel age. A picture of the world's judgment is given us in Matt. 25, where the two classes that will be found amongst men are to be separated into sheep and goats, and the division between them is to be the work of the Millennial age – to separate the true sheep, who will be accounted worthy of divine favor everlastingly, from those of the goat nature, who, refusing to come into subjection to the Lord's will, shall be estimated unworthy of any favors beyond the Millennial age, and will be destroyed with Satan, as described in Rev. 20:9, 10.

"During the Millennial age these books of the Bible – Genesis, Exodus, Matthew, Mark, Luke, etc., will be opened to the whole world, will be understood fully, clearly, and the great lessons therein taught will be emphasized; and as our Lord declared to the Jews, so will it be: 'My Word shall judge him in the last day' – the Millennial day." (R3433:4)

"But when the world's judgment or trial will be on, during the Millennium, the books will be opened – **the books of the Bible** – and the dead will be judged, will be tried, will be tested along the lines of teaching found in those books of the Bible." (OV41)

**20:14** – "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."

### The Sin Unto Death in the Millennium

"Any who sin wilfully, against full light and ability, will perish in the second death. And should any one, during that age of trial, under its full blaze of light, spurn the offered favors, and make no progress toward perfection for a hundred years, he will be reckoned unworthy of life and will be 'cut off,' though at a hundred years he would be in the period of comparative childhood. Thus it is written of that day: 'As a lad shall one die a hundred years old; and as a sinner shall be accursed he who dieth at a hundred years old.' (Isa. 65:20 – *Leeser*) Thus all must have at least one hundred years of trial; and, if not so obstinate as to refuse to make progress, their trial will continue throughout the entire day of Christ, reaching a culmination only at its close.

"The conclusion of the world's coming judgment is clearly shown in the parable of the sheep and goats. (Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 20:15; 21:8; 1 Cor. 15:25) These and other Scriptures show that at its close the two classes will have been completely separated – the obedient and the disobedient; those in harmony with the letter and the spirit of God's law, and those out of harmony with it. They enter into everlasting life, and the others are remanded to death, extinction ('second death'), the same sentence as in the first judgment, from which they had been reckonedly released by Christ who secured the right to release them by the giving of their ransom – by his death. This will be their second death. No ransom will be given for them, and there will be no release or resurrection for them, their sin being a wilful, individual sin against full light and opportunity, under a most favorable, individual trial." (A144)

**20:15** – "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

"As the 13th verse declares that all men shall be brought out of these conditions in due time for trial, so this verse declares that Adamic death, and the sleep in oblivion, consequent to it, shall be no more, after the Millennial age: and it explains why, viz., because they shall be merged into or swallowed up by the Second Death condition. In the future no one will die for Adam's sin: it will be out of consideration as a factor in the trial of the future. The only death thereafter will be the Second Death, which will affect only the sinner who commits the sin, not the parents, not the children. In that day he that dies shall die for his own sin. 'The soul that sinneth it shall die.' Although such will have weakness of the Adamic nature from which they will never recover, because of refusal to use the means and opportunities placed within their reach during

the Millennium by the Mediator of the New Covenant, yet under that New Covenant those inherited weaknesses will not be reckoned against them, being fully offset by their Redeemer's sacrifice. Hence from and after the time when this full opportunity of the Millennial age is offered to each individual, although Adamic weaknesses and imperfections will still be upon them, their death will not be counted as being a part of Adamic death, but as being a part of the Second Death; – because their failure to make progress will be the result of their own wilfulness, and not the result of Adam's transgression, nor of their own heredity to its weaknesses." (E380)

**21:1** – “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea.”

“John, in the revelation given to him by our Lord on the Isle of Patmos, was in vision carried down through this Christian Age and its changing scenes of church and state, to the end of this present evil world or epoch, and there in prophetic visions he saw Satan bound, Christ reigning, and the new heaven and the new earth established; for the former heaven and earth were passed away. (Rev. 20:1)” (A70)

“As we have seen ... the new heaven and the new earth, as symbols, are forcefully descriptive of the new organization of things ordained of God to take the place of the old order after it has been swept away. The new heaven will consist of the new unseen spiritual ruling powers, composed of Christ and His glorified Church. These will take full control of earth's affairs and will introduce entirely new conditions, social, civil, and ecclesiastical. These new conditions amongst men are called in the text a 'new earth.' As the 'new heaven' does not mean a new atmosphere containing new planetary systems or a new place for God's throne, or a new dwelling place for angels and other heavenly beings, but new heavenly powers in control, namely the rulership of Christ and His Church in glory over the earth, so the new earth does not refer to a new planet, but rather to new conditions on this present planet. All present institutions, civil, social, and ecclesiastical, as described in other visions, will pass away in the great time of trouble with which this Age closes.

“A critical study of the Scriptures that portray the new conditions which will prevail on this earth after the new order is introduced shows that the literal sea will still exist. Therefore, the sea in the text, as is usually the case in the Revelation visions, is a symbol. The stormy sea is a symbol of the masses of people in a restless, unstable, anarchistic condition. Such a condition amongst humanity will have ceased, when

the new order of things is introduced at the beginning of the Millennial reign of Christ and His Saints. The symbol, therefore, teaches that under this new government which will rule in equity and righteousness and for the benefit of all, the social order will be of such a character, and will soon after its introduction prove so satisfactory to mankind as a whole, that there will be no more dissatisfaction, discontent, and restlessness; every element of society will be contented under the control of that perfect law and order; and justice will be secured to all alike. There will be an utter obliteration of the differences between classes – caste, wealth, and poverty, etc., which now exist. Consequently, there will be no more symbolic sea.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 550-551)

### No More Sea

“As we have already seen, the sea is a symbol of the masses of people in a restless and unstable anarchistic condition, just as the land represents the social order, and as the mountains represent the kingdoms of the present time. As there is no reference to the physical earth and physical heavens being destroyed, so there is no reference to the physical sea being obliterated. The symbol signifies that under the new arrangement, under the control of the new heavens or spiritual powers, the reconstructed social order will be so satisfactory, so complete, so thorough, that there will be no more sea-class, no more restless people, no more dissatisfaction, no more anarchists; everything will be reduced to law and order; and the law and order will under the new regime secure justice to every creature, obliterating the differences of wealth and power as they now exist.” (R2832:3)

**21:2** – “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

“A city is a symbol of a kingdom or dominion, and so God's Kingdom is symbolized by the New Jerusalem, the new dominion coming from heaven to earth. At first it will consist of only the spiritual class, the Bride of Christ, which as seen by John, will gradually come down to earth; that is, it will gradually come into power as the present empires break in pieces, during the Day of the Lord.” (A295)

John, after identifying the glorified Church with the holy city, the New Jerusalem, changes the metaphor; and speaks of her next, as “a bride adorned for her husband.” Seemingly, these adornments were described by the Psalmist of old, when he declared that her clothing was of “wrought gold” (the divine nature); and her raiment of “needlework” (the graces of the Spirit). However, reference must also be to that inner beauty (character – the beauty of holiness), so much desired

and appreciated by the “King” (Jesus, the heavenly bridegroom). (Psa. 45:11, 13)

“The King’s daughter (Jehovah’s daughter; for as such the Bride of Christ is owned) is all glorious within.’ Her beauty is the beauty of holiness. Outwardly, before the world, she is not glorious; and, like her Lord in his humiliation, she is despised and rejected of men. But she will not always be so: having followed him in his humiliation, she shall also share his glory. As a new creature, she will in due time be clothed with his divine nature – ‘Her clothing (when glorified) is of wrought gold’ – gold being a symbol of the divine nature. ‘She shall be brought to the king in raiment of needlework’ – in the simple white robe of her Lord’s own furnishing, the robe of his righteousness, upon which she will have wrought, with much carefulness, the beautiful adornments of the Christian graces.” (C193)

### The New Jerusalem

“... **the New Jerusalem** ... ‘coming down from heaven as a bride prepared for her husband’ – beautiful, pure, gorgeous, resplendent. The City represents the Church in glory, this being indicated by the declaration that it was like unto a bride prepared for her husband, and the further demonstration is in the fact that the angel who called to John, saying, ‘Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife,’ showed him **the New Jerusalem** descending, etc.” (R3570:6)

“The church at that time will be with Jesus on the spirit plane, invisible to men, and armed with all the power of God.” (R5849:3)

### The Glorified Church = the New Jerusalem

“The New Jerusalem represents the Gospel Church in glory and Kingdom power, spiritual, and invisible to men, yet all powerful. Its descent to earth (Rev. 21:2) marks the fulfillment of that petition of our Lord’s prayer which says, ‘Thy Kingdom come:’ and its ‘coming’ will be gradual, and not sudden. It is already ‘coming down,’ coming into control, and as a result we see the preliminary steps leading to the re-establishment of the old Jerusalem; and ultimately the result mentioned in our Lord’s prayer will be realized: God’s will, will be done on earth as in heaven. The New Jerusalem and the New Heavens are synonymous, signifying the new spiritual ruling power.” (C258)

### The “City”

“The ‘city’ referred to is not a literal city, but the symbolical one mentioned in Rev. 21:2, 9-27. In symbol a city signifies a government, and this city **which comes down from God out of heaven symbolizes the kingdom of God, his rule or government, which will be established in all the earth.** This ‘city’ or government will consist of The Christ – the ‘Bridegroom’ and ‘the Bride, the Lamb’s wife.’

‘Then shall the righteous shine forth’ – the city will have the glory of God. When this kingdom is established, the nations shall walk in the light of it. (Rev. 21:24)” (R2231:1)

Isa. 33:20 – “Look upon **Zion**, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see **Jerusalem** a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.”

Isa. 2:3 – “Out of **Zion** [the spiritual Kingdom] shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord [the divine messages, through the ‘princes’] from **Jerusalem.**” (D620)

“It should be remembered, then, that though undoubtedly the literal city of Jerusalem will be rebuilt, and though probably it will become the capital of the world, yet many prophecies which mention Jerusalem and its future glories refer, under that symbol, to the Kingdom of God to be established in great splendor.” (A296)

**21:3, 4** – “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”

The expression, “a great voice out of heaven” bespeaks the divine verity, assurance and universality, of the proclamation: “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men.” (Rev. 21:3)

“When the work of reconciliation is complete, God will recognize the world of mankind, and place his sanctuary among men. Then will be fulfilled that which was written: ‘The Tabernacle of God [God’s dwelling, the glorified Church] is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be [become] his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things [the reign of Satan, sin and death] are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.’ (Rev. 21:3-5)” (T76)

“During the Millennial age, there will be a restitution of all things lost by the fall of Adam (Acts 3:19-21), and before its close all tears shall have been wiped away. Beyond its boundary, in the ages of blessedness to follow, there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain. The former things will have



passed away. (Rev. 21:4) God's revelations particularize no further, and there we stop." (A73)

"It is this portion that God has elected to give to the human race. And what a glorious portion! Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay – not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete. (Rev. 21:4)" (A191)

### The Blessedness of the Millennium

"Rev. 21:1-8 represents the blessedness of the Millennial age, when the New Jerusalem (the glorified Church – the Bride) will be among men as their government and God's representative: to remove their sorrows, pains and troubles by making all things new, resulting in the giving of the water of life to the obedient, and second death to the disobedient." (RS01:4)

"... the Bible promises that 'as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive, every man in his own order' – class. (1 Cor. 15:22, 23) The giving to all mankind the full opportunities of the Millennial Kingdom will fulfill God's promise. Those who shall intelligently refuse God's gift of everlasting life, by refusing His reasonable requirements, will die the Second Death. But those who at the conclusion of the Millennial Age shall have profited by the Messiah's Kingdom will be received into God's family and will be granted all the liberties proper to the sons of God. (Rev. 21:4; 22:3)" (OV388)

"What a glorious consummation is before us! What lengths and breadths of human possibility in perfection we see with the eye of faith! Man was made in the image and likeness of his Creator, and the earth was provided to be his everlasting home. The curse that has rested upon the earth and its king has brought both to angels and to men valuable lessons, which perhaps could not have been learned under any other process of instruction.

"The result will be glorious, as described by the Master himself. There shall be no more sighing, no more curse there, nor sorrow nor pain nor any more dying; for all the things of sin and death will have passed away. He who sits upon the Throne will make all things new. (Rev. 21:4, 5)" (OV351)

**21:5** – "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."

### The Throne

"The throne of God referred to is not a material one, but refers to his supreme authority and rulership; and the Lord Jesus has been exalted to a share in that rulership. Paul declares, 'God hath highly exalted him [Jesus] and given him a name above every name.' He hath given him authority above every other, next to the Father." (A92)

"The fifth verse ... comprehensively grasps the entire Millennial age; our Lord Jesus, then in the throne of earth's dominion, declaring, 'Behold, I make all things new.' This expression does not relate merely to rocks and trees, etc., but to the great work which our Lord undertook: viz., the regeneration of humanity – of so many of Adam's race as would, under favorable conditions of knowledge, experience and assistance, develop characters in full accord with the divine will. The end of the Millennial age will see the work completed; – all the wicked destroyed, all who will not hear the voice of that prophet, teacher, governor, cut off from amongst the people in the second death, and all the willing and obedient made new, brought to the complete perfection contemplated in the original divine plan.

"John was to write this matter, because the testimony is true, is faithful, as is the one who has promised. This assertion of faithfulness and truthfulness implies what we see to be the case; viz., that present conditions seem so contrary to all this grand restitution outcome that it cannot be fully believed and trusted by any except those who have learned to walk with the Lord, and in their weakness to lean upon his might – to trust to his power to accomplish all the exceeding great and precious things which he has promised. To all others these things will appear untrue, and God will appear unfaithful, and the matters which we are here discussing will seem 'idle tales,' as fables and golden fancies: but to us who believe these promises are precious, correspondingly as we know him and trust him. (1 Pet. 2:7)" (R2833:3)

**21:6** – "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."

“The one enthroned ... declares at the conclusion of the Millennial age, ‘It is done’; my contract is accomplished; ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega [the A and Z], the beginning and the end.’ It was the Father’s good pleasure that the blessed One, the Only Begotten of the Father, should accomplish the entire program of redemption and restitution; and that incidentally, by his obedience in the things which he suffered that he should prove himself worthy to be forever the associate and representative of the Father, through whom and by whom all things should continue, as he was the one through whom all things were made that were made. It is this one who, during the Millennial age, will extend to all the willing and obedient the water of life, everlasting life – the privilege of perpetual existence. But they must thirst for it, and must desire it; and this desire must be manifest in obedience to the terms, the laws, upon which it will be supplied freely. Our Lord declared to Martha, ‘I am the resurrection and the life,’ and that anyone believing him, trusting him, though he were dead, yet should he live – attain to perfect life, escaping from death conditions, until at the close of the Millennium he shall have life in the full, unrestricted sense. And he who thus liveth (attains to life) and still believeth, trusteth in the Life-giver, and is obedient to his directions, shall never die.” (R2833:4)

### The “Water of Life”

“... although there shall be no more death, neither sighing nor crying, it will not be because the victors of the Millennial age will be crowned with immortality, but because, having learned to judge between right and wrong and their effects, they shall have formed characters in full accord with God and righteousness; and because they will have stood tests which will demonstrate that they would not wish to sin if the way were opened and no penalties attached. They will not have life in themselves, but will still be dependent upon God’s provision of food, etc., for the sustenance of life. (Rev. 21:4, 6, 8; 7:16; Matt. 5:6)” (E402)

**21:7, 8** – “He that overcometh shall inherit all things: and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

“Our Lord adds, ‘He that overcometh shall inherit these things, and I will be to him a God, and he shall be to me a son.’ Those addressed are not the bride class, selected during the Gospel age, but the sheep class of Matt. 25 – such of mankind as during the Millennial age become the Lord’s sheep and obey his voice. To these at the end of the Millennial age, in

harmony with the Father’s plan, he says, ‘Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’ They are not invited to inherit the kingdom prepared for us, in joint-heirship with the Lord, the heavenly kingdom. But they shall inherit the earth, the purchased possession – they shall come back into all the good estate of father Adam, which he lost for himself and his children through disobedience, but which Jesus redeemed with his own precious blood, and will restore at the close of the Millennium to all the children of Adam who shall have accepted his gracious favors and been regenerated by him, and thus become his sons, and be their God – their ‘Father.’ (Isa. 9:6)” (R2833:5)

### The Purchased Possession

“The blood poured at the base of the altar showed that through the blood of the sacrifice (life given) even the earth was purchased back from the curse. ‘Unto the redemption of the **purchased possession.**’ (Eph. 1:14)” (T42)

### The Church and the Everlasting Father

“As the Body of the great Prophet, Priest and King, the Church will be part of the Everlasting Father, as lifegiver to the world. (Isa. 9:6)” (T102)

“The Father draws to the Son during this age a special class, and gives such a class to him to be companions, joint-heirs in his Millennial kingdom – these are sometimes called his ‘brethren,’ as when it is said that Jesus was ‘the firstborn among many brethren’ (Rom. 8:29); and again, they are designated his bride and joint-heir, **in contradistinction to the saved of the world of mankind, who will be recognized as the children of Christ, and of whom he will be the ‘Everlasting Father.’** (Rev. 21:7; 22:17; Rom. 8:17; Isa. 9:6)” (R2652:3)

“The Scriptures teach that, in the new order of things, when Christ shall take to himself his great power and institute his Millennial Kingdom for the blessing and uplifting of mankind, he will have a Bride – the Church – ‘The Bride, the Lamb’s Wife.’ (Rev. 21:9) And the Scriptures further represent that the glorified Jesus, who is the heavenly Bridegroom, and the glorified Church, who is the heavenly Bride, will figuratively, beget children. That is to say, **all through the thousand years of the reign of righteousness the glorified Jesus will be the everlasting Father, or Giver of everlasting life, on the earthly plane to Adam, and all of his children** who will accept it on the terms of the Kingdom. **Then the Church will be the mother or nourisher and caretaker of all mankind** to uplift them, instruct them, in the ways of righteousness – to bring as many as will prove willing up to the full perfection of human nature and life everlasting.” (OV124)

### The World Begotten Again

“... they will be granted the privilege of coming into relationship with the Christ as children, receiving of his life, being **begotten again to restored life** – to a restitution of all that was lost in the first Adam and restored in the second Adam.” (R3927:1)

“The true character of the goat class is portrayed. ‘The fearful and unbelieving [who will not trust God], the abominable, murderers [brother-haters], whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters [such as misappropriate and misuse divine favors, who give to self or any other creature or thing that service and honor which belong to God], and all liars’ – ‘whosoever loveth and maketh a lie’ (in a word, all who do not love the truth and seek it, and at any cost defend and hold it) ‘shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone [*Gehenna*, symbol of utter destruction], which is the Second Death.’ Such company would be repulsive to any honest, upright being. It is hard to tolerate them now, when we can sympathize with them, knowing that such dispositions are now in great measure the result of inherited weakness of the flesh. We are moved to a measure of sympathy by the remembrance that in our own cases, often, when we would do good, evil is present with us. But in the close of the Millennial judgment, when the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall have given every advantage and opportunity of knowledge and ability, this class will be an abhorrence and detestation to all who are in harmony with the King of Glory ... the corrupters of the earth, and all their work and influence, shall be destroyed.” (R2609:4)

**21:9, 10** – “And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.”

Perhaps this “angel” is again Bro. C. T. Russell, and his pilgrim assistants, now pictured as coming to the John class (living in the end of the Gospel age – the Harvest), talking with and inviting “him” to behold the vision of the Bride, the Lamb’s wife. Accordingly, these “feet members” were carried in the spirit to a great and high mountain (an exalted viewpoint).

“This view seems to come back to our day, as its starting point. John representing the living members of the Bride company, is shown the Holy City (government) coming down to earth. But before he could see it, he had to go, in spirit, as high as possible above the earthly level. So we, the antitype, may now see the kingdom of God coming: the rule of the Highest commencing to direct and over-

throw earthly things, preparatory to the full reception of the will of God on earth as in heaven.

‘We can see his coming judgments as they circle all the earth.

The signs and groanings promised, to precede the second birth.

We read his righteous sentence in the crumbling thrones of earth,  
Jerusalem come down!’

“But all cannot see this kingdom as already on its way to earth – ‘coming down.’ To thus recognize it, we must get away from the world and its standpoint of view; we must go in spirit (by and by in person) to the great and high mountain (kingdom of God), i.e., we must come into full sympathy and loyalty to that heavenly kingdom before sharing the King’s confidence, so as to be shown its glory and power, **and our future position** of the Bride of the King.” (R333:6)

Actually, to these “feet members” of the Christ, still sojourning in the earth, this is but a preview, for the New Jerusalem cannot really “come down” to the earth as such, until every member of the true Church has first himself been glorified; i.e., has been made a part of the New Jerusalem:

“The entire Gospel age has been the time for the preparation of this New Jerusalem. In one figure we are the city, in another we are the people of the city. The walls are living stones, such as the Apostle Peter describes; the foundation stones are the twelve apostles of the Lamb. **The city as a whole comprises all the saints, from our Lord, the Head, down to, and including the last member of the church, which is his body. Not until all these have been chosen and found faithful and fitted and prepared for their places, will this city descend to earth in power and come into the possession or control of the earth.** The coming of that city to the earth is the symbolical representation of the establishment of God’s kingdom in the earth, for a city is a symbol representing government, control.” (R3570:6)

### The Bride Prepared ...

“The declaration that the city is adorned as a bride for her husband implies its grandeur and beauty and perfection, as a bride’s adornment on such an occasion is particular and elaborate to the last degree.” (R2832:4)

### The New Jerusalem = The Church Glorified

“... the New Jerusalem, which in the preceding context is described as ‘coming down from heaven, as a bride prepared for her husband’ – beautiful, pure, gorgeous, resplendent. The city represents the Church in glory, this being indicated by the declaration that it was like unto a bride prepared for her husband, and the further demonstration is

in the fact that the angel who called to John, saying ‘Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife,’ **showed him the New Jerusalem** descending, etc. (Rev. 21:9, 10)” (R3570:6)

### The Ancient Worthies

“At the very beginning of the Millennium ... there will be samples of perfect manhood before the world ... Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the holy prophets ... will be ‘princes’ among men, the exponents and representatives of the spiritual, invisible kingdom.” (B136)

“These intermediaries, while not the Kingdom in the proper sense of the word, will be so fully the representatives of it amongst men that they will be recognized as the Kingdom by men: they will represent the Kingdom before men and be the only visible representatives of it. Hence we have termed these ‘the earthly phase of the Kingdom,’ visible among men. (Luke 13:28)” (D619)

**21:11** – “Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.”

The glorified Church – the New (i.e., the heavenly) Jerusalem, will have for her own light, the “glory of God” – the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4) and, therefore, she will shine forth with a resplendent glory, like that reflected in a jasper stone; i.e., a jasper stone, without a flaw – one that is “pure as crystal.”

“The jasper is supposed to mean the diamond. It is described as ‘most precious’ and ‘clear as crystal.’ Being the most brilliant of gems, it fittingly symbolizes the glory of God; the light (luminary, or source of light) of the New Jerusalem. (Rev. 21:11-23)” (R529:3, W. I. Mann)

### The Church, A Vision of Glory and Beauty

“By faith we see the bride of Christ ‘having the glory of God’ – the divine nature, of which she was promised to be made partaker with her Lord. (Rev. 21:11; 2 Pet. 1:4) We see her ‘made like him,’ ‘the express image of the Father’s person.’ (1 John 3:2; Col. 1:15; 2 Cor. 4:4; Heb. 1:3) We see her shining forth as the sun in the Father’s kingdom. (Matt. 13:43) She is caught up to heaven and actually seated with Christ in the heavenly places at the Father’s right hand. (Eph.2:6; Heb. 1:3) She beholds her Father face to face, and sees her Lord ‘as he is.’ (1 John 3:2) She is endued with power and covered with glory. She is exalted far above angels. And as she followed the Lamb whithersoever he went here, so she accompanies him whithersoever he goeth there: Is he seated at the Father’s right hand – in the highest position of favor? so is she; is he at home in all the vast realm of the universe, which in ages past he was privileged of the Father to create (John 1:10, 3)? so is she.” (R1210:6, Mrs. C. T. R.)

**21:12, 13** – “And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.”

Walls, at least by the ancients, were built for the protection of those who dwelt within them. For the world of mankind, there will be about their Millennial “city” to keep out of it anything that might hurt or offend – just such a “wall” – great and high? This wall is also the glorified Church, which then, as “living stones” will serve also to protect their charges – the world of mankind, then seeking to enter, and to walk acceptably before Jehovah God!

In this “wall” there will be twelve “gates” with as many “angels.” The “gates” will be inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. The “gates” themselves will be the Ancient Worthies, to whom it will be granted to act as the physical representatives of the invisible, but spiritual power of the Kingdom (the Church). We suggest that the “angels” might be the Great Company, who though also invisible, will nevertheless be privileged to serve in this capacity too.

“Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth (observeth or regardeth) the truth may enter in.’ (Isa. 26:2)

“From Rev. 21:12 we learn that the gates or entrances of the city, which are twelve in number, are inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. This is in harmony with what we have learned of the earthy phase of the kingdom of God ... that the ancient worthies from the various tribes of Israel, selected during the Jewish age, will be the visible representatives of the heavenly kingdom in the earth, through whose instrumentality the nations may enter into the blessings of the kingdom.” (R1353:1)

The fact that there were three gates to the east, north, south and west, bespeaks the fact that no quarter of the earth will be excluded from entrance into the “city” of those who would be worthy citizens.

**21:14** – “And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

The wall of this great city is a sturdy one, for it has twelve foundations, bearing the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

“In Rev. 21:9-27, the glorified Church is shown. (See also Rev. 21:2-5) The Church is here pictured as coming down out of Heaven to begin her great work for the blessing of the world of mankind. Now note particularly that this glorified Church is shown as having Twelve Foundations, and in these

foundations the names of the Twelve Apostles (verse 14). There were never any more purposed by the Lord.” (OV410)

### The Foundations of the New Jerusalem

“... the Bible declares that there were only ‘Twelve Apostles of the Lamb.’ (Rev. 21:14) We see clearly that the Church has their testimony in the Bible as fully today as ever; and, as St. Paul, who took the place of Judas, declares the Word of God is sufficient, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished. (2 Tim. 3:17)” (SM550)

**21:15-17** – “And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.”

The Scriptures, not only indicate that this holy city, the New Jerusalem would come “down from God out of heaven” (Rev. 21:2); but also, that as a “stone cut out without hands” it would smite the image of Gentile Power upon its feet, breaking that image into pieces, and thereupon become a great “mountain, and fill the whole earth!” (Dan. 2:34, 35; See also A255) In other words, the earthly phase of the heavenly Kingdom which is to replace the old order, will find its protective “wall” in the glorified Church, this New Jerusalem, keeping out of it, as it were, everything that might hurt or offend; for “without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.” (Rev. 22:15; See Isa. 11:9; 65:25)

The “measurements” of this New Jerusalem, it is to be noted, were taken for the “John” class, by the “angel” – the messenger of Rev. 21:9, 15; whom, we have suggested, was Bro. C. T. Russell, and his staff of pilgrims, though, as is evident, the latter were merely the means employed by the messenger to convey the message to the “cleansed Sanctuary class,” – the saints still living in the earth in the end of the Gospel age. To this end, “he” used the golden reed – divine truth, the Scriptures; and the “measurements” are as follows:

This “city” or New Jerusalem, is also known as the Tabernacle of God, his Temple (Rev. 21:3-5; See T76); and is peculiarly “his workmanship.” It has been in the course of construction throughout the Gospel age – ever since Christ became the world’s Redeemer, and the chief corner stone ... through which, when finished, God’s blessings shall come “to all people,” and they shall find access to him. (2 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29)

Its chiseling, shaping and polishing, of consecrated believers in Christ’s atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these “living stones,” “elect and

precious,” shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman, will bring all together in the First Resurrection and this “Temple” will be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium. (Rev. 15:5-8)

This New Jerusalem, will consist of only 144,000, “redeemed from amongst men.” (See F179) These, also known as “the Bride of Christ, the Lamb’s Wife” (Rev. 19:7; 22:17) are “prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” (Rev. 21:2) (The reason why in so many instances, the 144,000 are maintained as a separate entity from Jesus Christ, himself, is to show that “he” is “her” heavenly Bridegroom.)

It is interesting to note that the “city” is foursquare (Rev. 21:16), the same as were the Altar of Burnt-Offering (Exod. 27:1), and the Altar of Incense (Exod. 30:2), and the Most Holy, of Israel’s ancient Tabernacle. In the two-dimensional plane, a square is a most apt symbol of that which is perfect, for every one of its four sides is equal to that of the others. But the symbolism doesn’t end here: for it goes on to tell us that the “city’s” length, and breadth, and height, are equal too. This means that like unto the Most Holy of the ancient Tabernacle, the “city” is also a cube – every side of which (and there are six) is a square, equal in size to every one of the other sides. This, we believe, bespeaks the very ultimate, as having been attained by those here represented – every one of them, has become a partaker of the divine nature! (2 Pet. 1:4)

One of the measurements given, is that of 12,000 furlongs! The area of such a square will be 144,000,000 square furlongs; or, 1,000 for each of the 144,000 glorified! We cannot be sure as to what this may signify, though it may be intended to suggest that each of the 144,000 saints will be associated and identified with this “city-government” for the full 1,000 years of Christ’s Millennial reign. And, if the fruitage of their work with the world of mankind in that Millennium is to be like that of Jesus – who by way of his death and resurrection brought 144,000 into relationship with the Father, then for these 144,000, the after fruitage will be 144,000 x 144,000, i.e., 20,736,000,000 souls ultimately reconciled to God! (See R3626:6)

Another measurement is that of the “wall” – and is 144 cubits. Of course, the city – its walls and foundations, are really one; made up of the “living stones” gathered, chiselled and polished, during the Gospel age. The measurement given – 144 cubits, is symbolic, and when multiplied by Jehovah’s number (1,000), it yields the exact number of the glorified saints, viz., 144,000. The expression, “according to the measure of a man, that is of the angel,” seems to us, to justify the thought that Bro. C. T. Russell was the “man” here referred to, the “angel” or messenger of Rev. 21:9, 15!

### The Glorified Church's After-fruitage

"In your comments in a Tower of recent date (R3539:6) on John 12:24, you said that our Lord's going down into death brought forth much fruit – the first-fruits – the church, the 144,000. Thinking on this it occurred to me, Will not the church as so many grains of wheat (by virtue of our heavenly Father's blessed arrangement in Christ) going down into death, bring forth the same amount of fruit in proportion? Reasoning thus, I found that if one brought forth 144,000, that number would bring forth 144,000 times 144,000 or 20,736,000,000. Ah, I thought, here is where Bro. Russell must get his twenty thousand millions to which he refers in his sermons as representing earth's dead, and specially mentioned in the Tract, 'Millennial Hopes Examined.' Now, dear Brother, is this a mere coincidence or did you use this method in addition to the one mentioned in the Tract?" C.B.S., Ohio.

To which Bro. Russell replied:

"I am glad to have your suggestion respecting the proportions of the fruit of our Lord's death as represented in the church of the firstborn (144,000) and the afterfruit of these, 20,736,000,000. I had not noted this correspondency, and hence it had nothing whatever to do with my calculations of the world's dead." (R3626:6)

### The 20,736,000,000

"As the number of the Bride of Christ is to be 144,000, it would be reasonable to think that each member of this class may have 144,000 to look after, as 144,000 x 144,000 equals 20,736,000,000 (twenty billion, seven hundred and thirty six millions). Evidently just about the right number to be cared for – couldn't fix it better myself. Now 144,000 would be quite a host for each individual of the Bride class to look after. So we can see the necessity for the work of the Great Company and the Ancient Worthies." (Q438)

### The 20,000,000,000

"When his kingdom is set up, he will take over the world of mankind, approximately 20,000,000,000 of humanity – Adam and his children, all in their broken, fallen condition; and then the great work of refreshing and restoring will begin. The sawing, the hammering and the filing, if you please, will continue during the whole thousand years of the Millennial reign." (R4992:1)

### The Holy City

In Rev. 21:16, we read of the holy city; that it was "foursquare," i.e., it had a square base, all of whose sides and angles were equal. A square is a most apt symbol of **perfection!**

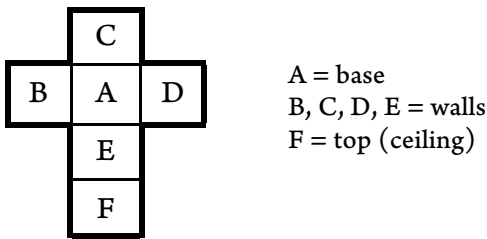
But the account also tells us, that not only was it foursquare – its length and its breadth being equal, but its height was the same as its length and breadth. In other words, it was a perfect **cube**, whose six sides were all perfect squares. Certainly this bespeaks the utmost in perfection! It will be recalled that the ancient Tabernacle's Most Holy was also a perfect cube, each of its sides being perfect squares measuring 10 x 10 cubits i.e., 100 square cubits. And 100, seems the figure which in the ancient types was intended to represent Christ Jesus. The gate into the Court of the Tabernacle measured just 5 x 20 cubits (Exod. 27:16; 38:18), i.e., 100 square cubits; and, as Bro. Russell says in *T19*, "Christ' is the 'gate'." Then too, there were just 100 silver sockets, made from the "ransom" or "atonement" money of the children of Israel, that supported the Tabernacle Structure, (Exod. 38:25, 27), signifying, no doubt, that the "price of redemption," is really Christ Jesus; and that all of atonement, is predicated upon the ransom price!

The Most Holy of that ancient Tabernacle, corresponds very well to the Holy City of Rev. 21:16 – as the state or condition of the 144,000 redeemed from amongst men, who were found worthy of the eventual identification with Christ Jesus in His glory – including, of course, the divine nature! Since the Most Holy was circumscribed by those six square sides, each measuring 100 square cubits, it suggests that the 144,000, are all IN Christ!

But, to be found worthy, means that every one of them must first have been identified with Christ Jesus in his sufferings (2 Tim. 2:12); i.e., each of them must have borne "the cross" faithfully unto death, as did also Jesus – the pattern to which they all had to be conformed. (Rom. 8:29, 30) This Church is also, in the Scriptures, called "the bride of Christ." In fact, in the same chapter of Revelation (21), the holy city is but another representation of this "bride." Note how that John was invited by the angel to "Come hither," so that the angel might show him the "bride, the Lamb's wife." (Rev. 21:9) Then John was "carried away" in the spirit to a great and high mountain, to behold the "great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God," (Rev. 21:10) – as a "bride" "adorned for her husband." (Rev. 21:2) And, as Bro. Russell says in *T76* "Then will be fulfilled that which was written, 'The Tabernacle of God [God's dwelling, the glorified Church] is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be [become] his people, and God himself will be their God.'" And thus it is that the Most Holy of the ancient Tabernacle, and the holy city, both refer to the glorified Church – the 144,000, the saints. However, as before stated, everyone of the glorified will have been faithful unto death as a "cross-bearer." This, we believe, is also reflected in the "cube" which represents that "glory."

If we were to take that cube apart in an endeavor to reflect this lesson on a two dimensional plane, we might do it like this:

We would allow the square base to remain as it already is, flat on the surface supporting it. Then we would take the four “walls” without detaching them from the base, and lay them down flat also. In this way we will have utilized five of the six squares. The remaining square (which was the top or ceiling of the cube) may then be placed alongside of one of the squares already attached to the base, but we suggest to the side of it that is opposite the side attached to the base square. The result will be something like this:



A Cross! If you will have it, we have here the testimony, that without the Cross, there will be no “crown” of life – immortality (Rev. 2:10) – the “glory of God” which is promised by God to the faithful saints – the “Bride Class.” (2 Pet 1:4; Rev. 21:11)

Note: That which is divine, is thus represented by the “cube” on a three-dimensional plane; whereas that which is human (the cross and its sufferings) by the figure in the two-dimensional plane!

### The “Stone” that becomes a MOUNTAIN! (Dan. 2:34, 35)

“The stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which smites and scatters the Gentile powers, represents the true Church, the Kingdom of God. During the Gospel age this ‘stone’ kingdom is being formed, ‘cut out,’ carved and shaped for its future position and greatness – not by human hands, but by the power or spirit of the truth, the invisible power of Jehovah. When complete, when entirely cut, it will smite and destroy the kingdoms of this world. Not the people, but the governments are symbolized by the image, and these are to be destroyed that the people may be delivered. Our Lord Jesus came not to destroy men’s lives, but to save them. (John 3:17)

“The stone, during its preparation, while being cut out, might be called an embryo mountain, in view of its future destiny; so, too, the Church could be, and sometimes is, called the Kingdom of God. In fact, however, **the stone does not become the mountain until it has smitten the image**; and so the Church, in the full sense, will become the Kingdom to fill the whole earth when ‘the day of the Lord,’ the ‘day of wrath upon the nations’ or ‘time of trouble,’ will be over, and when it will be established and all other dominions have become subservient to it.” (A255)

Isa. 11:9 – “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

Isa. 65:25 – “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.”

**21:18-21** – “And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald. The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.”

The wall of the city, we are told, was of jasper; but this cannot be a correct rendering; for our modern jasper is **opaque**; and, when we remember that in Rev. 4:3, the jasper was to symbolize the glory of God (which glory should also be manifest in the “living stones” – See Rev. 21:11), we incline to the thought suggested by Bro. W. I. Mann – “A diamond – most precious and clear.” (R529:3)

The fact that the city was “pure gold” like unto clear glass, is indicative, we believe, of the fact that the glorified Church are not only partakers of the divine nature; **but resplendently so!**

The description of the foundation stones, and of their being “garnished with all manner of precious stones,” bespeaks the special glory of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb: Peter, James (the greater), John, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (the lesser), Simon (Zelotes), Jude (Lebbaeus, Thaddaeus), and Paul. (Acts 1:13; 9:15) Unfortunately –

“The present science of mineralogy with its names and exact terminology is a young science coming later than physics, chemistry, astronomy, or mathematics. Mineralogy as a science certainly did not exist at the time the Bible was written. It is quite impossible to be certain in all cases that when a mineral name is used in the Bible, it is used with the same meaning as that attached in modern mineralogy. The gemstones or precious stones of the Bible are minerals with identities in a considerable state of uncertainty and confusion.” (*Zondervan’s Pictorial Bible Dictionary*; Article: Minerals of the Bible, p. 534)



We do know, however, that most gems and precious stones are the result of a process involving heat, pressure and a special cooling period, to which the chemical elements or compounds have been subjected. Translating this into the realm of the figurative, it means that the Apostles of the Lamb – the foundations of the New Jerusalem, were developed as such into glorious characters, by way of the trials of life, the pressure of circumstances, and the special cooling to which the overruling providences of God committed them. Thus were they “crystallized” into the precious foundation stones of the New Jerusalem, having a beauty, color, lustre and texture peculiarly their own!

So too, is it with the character-development of those “pearls” – the Ancient Worthies, “formed” during the Ages which preceded the Gospel age, viz., the Antediluvian, the Patriarchal, and the Jewish Ages, respectively. But the “process” was slightly different. The trials endured by them, came about by virtue of the presence in their times, of gross unrighteousness, with which, of course, their own hearts were never in sympathy. Yet, they were able to relieve their sufferings in part, by becoming “preachers” of righteousness, through the testimony of their own lives. Nor was this easy. Therefore, did Jehovah account this to them “for righteousness” (Heb. 11:39), considering them worthy also, of a “better resurrection”! (Heb. 11:35) Thus were these Ancient Worthies prepared in advance for their future work:

“We find that the Ancient Worthies as a class have been prepared of God in advance to serve this very purpose; that they, rewarded with human perfection, might serve as the intermediaries between the spirit kingdom and the world of mankind. As it is written, ‘The law shall go forth from Mount Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.’ The instruction will go from the spiritual kingdom to the earthly princes, its representatives, and be communicated from these princes to all the families of the earth, with full power and authority in the name of the kingdom to enforce every regulation, to reward the well-doers and to punish all who fail of obedience.” (R3462:5)

Pearls are generally of a satiny lustre, and in color, creamy or silvery **white**. Perhaps this is intended to reflect the fact that the **actual justification** of the Ancient Worthies could not take place until after Jesus’ death, and their redemption from the curse. (See R4574:5)

In this connection, it might be well to note that Abraham of old was literally the progenitor of Israel: the twelve tribes were the descendants of the sons of Jacob (known also as Israel); which Jacob was the son of Isaac, who in turn was the son of Abraham. (John 8:39) But Abraham had a faith such as did not the children of Israel. In this sense Abraham was not their father! (John 8:39, 40; Rom. 2:28, 29) for he is the father of the faithful. (Rom. 5:16) And, in this sense fleshly Israel will

one day have to become the seed of Abraham according to faith: and not only Israel, but the whole world of mankind also; thus, as Bro. Russell once said, “The nations shall bless themselves in Abraham’s seed by becoming through faith and consecration to God, members thereof.” (See SM596) This means that one day, and that **through the special ministry of the Ancient Worthies** – the “**princes in all the earth**” – the whole world of mankind, Jews and Gentiles will constitute the Israel of God (as was once typified by the twelve tribes of natural Israel); all of whom will be blessed under the terms of Israel’s New Covenant!

### The Nations Becoming Abraham’s Seed!

“... note the critical translation of my text which I have given. According to the Hebrew, **the nations are to bless themselves in the Seed of Abraham**. In other words, after the establishment of Messiah’s Kingdom, when your nation shall have been reorganized and brought into favor with God under the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34), and when the princes of all the earth under Messiah’s direction shall be Israelitish – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the holy Prophets then the door of opportunity, first to the Jew, will stand open to all nations, that they may come in, under the gracious terms of that New Covenant, as servants of God, **become in this adopted sense the children of Abraham**. This is the significance of the words of our text. **The nations shall bless themselves in Abraham’s seed – by becoming through faith and consecration to God, members thereof.**” (SM596)

### The Twelve “Gates”

The figure 12 is symbolic, even as are the 12 stones of the breastplate of the ancient High Priest of Israel. And as far as ancient Israel was concerned, those 12 stones represented their 12 tribes; for weren’t their very names upon them? (Exod. 28:21)

However, in Rev. 21:21, where reference is made to the 12 “gates” to the New Jerusalem’s earthly phase of the Millennial Kingdom, it is the **ancient worthies** that are represented by these 12 gates, because they will be the earthly representatives of the antitypical Israel, consisting of 12 tribes also – thus, of the glorified Church. (See Rev. 7:4-8)

“We find the **ancient worthies** as a class have been prepared of God in advance to serve this very purpose; that they, rewarded with human perfection, might serve as the intermediaries between the spirit kingdom and the world of mankind. As it is written, ‘The law shall go forth from Mount Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.’ The instruction will go from the spiritual kingdom to the earthly princes, its representatives, and be communicated from these princes to all the families of the earth with full power and authority in

the name of the kingdom to enforce every regulation, to reward the well-doers and to punish all who fail of obedience.” (R3462:5)

Heb. 11:34-38 – “... out of weakness ... made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of aliens ... were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection; had trial ... of mockings and scourgings, bonds and imprisonment; were stoned, sawn asunder ... tempted, slain with the sword, wandered in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was unworthy) wandered in deserts ... mountains ... dens and caves of the earth.”

### The Pearl!

“Most of the shells of the oyster are pearly in the interior; and as the true pearls are merely morbid growths, they may all produce pearls of various qualities. The formation of pearls is caused by the introduction of irritating substances, such as grains of sand, between the mantle and the shell. The irritation causes the animal to cover the obnoxious object with layers of pearl, which generally attach the foreign body to the interior of the shell.

“When we look at a pearl, we look at **an annoyance which has been ennobled**. The oyster by itself is of merely nominal value. But the result of the oyster’s own treatment of its irritation – the pearl – is something ‘of great price.’ Apart from its pecuniary worth this gem has a moral significance. It suggests that troubles may be made beautiful, and reminds us that amongst mankind some martyrs are more remembered for the glory with which they invested their sorrows than for any other portion of their lives. Biography has its moral pearls, which are treasures long after the creators of them have perished, just as material pearls are valued long years after the oysters have been discarded.” (R1756:2)

Surely, the “pearl of great price” (character) was evidenced in the lives of those Ancient Worthies, who when passing through “the valley of Baca” (weeping and sorrow)<sup>1</sup> made it a well of refreshment for others.

Psa. 84:5, 6 – “Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.”

### The “Better Resurrection” of the Ancient Worthies

“The ‘better resurrection’ for which the Apostle tells us the ancient worthies hoped, will not be the First Resurrection, which is limited to those called during the Gospel age – Christ the Head and the Church his body. The ‘better resurrection’ which these ancient worthies will receive, superior to that of their fellow creatures, will consist in its being an instantaneous resurrection to human perfection, at the beginning of the Millennial age, instead of a gradual resurrection ‘by judgments’ during that age. This will permit them to be the honored servants of the Christ, the servants of the Kingdom, during the Millennium, and, as perfect men, to be made ‘princes (chiefs) in all the earth.’ (Psa. 45:16) It will be the privilege of these worthies to administer the laws of the Kingdom, as the agents and representatives of the spiritual Christ, unseen of men.” (F707)

### The Justification of the Ancient Worthies

“Not until Abraham had shown his absolute **heart-loyalty** could he be counted of God as worthy of a ‘**better resurrection**’ than the remainder of mankind – resurrection to human perfection – actual justification, **actual rightness** or **righteousness**. Even when Abraham’s tests were all passed satisfactorily he could not still be **actually justified** or made **actually perfect**; because he needed to be redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. As a member of Adam’s family, he was under a death sentence which must be annulled before he could be actually justified to perfection of human life.” (R4574:2)

**21:22, 23** – “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”

Normally, a temple is a place of worship; yet, only if the God of worship be present in that place. Without the Presence, the place is in no sense a temple! On the other hand, wherever God is, that place is a temple. Let it be recalled that the burning bush in the backside of the desert in Midian, became for Moses, because of the presence of Jehovah, “holy ground” – a virtual temple!

Since Jehovah, and his blessed Son Christ Jesus – the Lamb of God, are both identified with the holy city, the New Jerusalem, it needs no other temple – the place itself, by virtue of their presence is holy – a temple! In a sense, they are the Temple, other than which none is needed! In another sense, the glorified Church, by virtue

<sup>1</sup> See “*Specials Treasures*” Book – The Valley of Baca

of the presence of Jehovah and the Lamb, are become the temple – the Tabernacle of God, which is in due time to take its place among men.

“... the city, the glorified, the kingdom class, who during the Millennial age, will be ‘kings and priests unto God, and reign upon the earth,’ ‘a thousand years.’ (Rev. 5:10; 20:4) This city, class, the glorified church, it is declared will have no need of the sun or the moon. Nothing in this statement indicates that the world will not have and need both sunlight and moonlight during the Millennial age, and subsequently, ‘as long as the sun and moon endure.’ (Psa. 72:5) And while it will be true that the church, as spirit beings, will not have need of literal sunlight and literal moonlight, nevertheless, this is not the thought. The sun and the moon here are symbolical, as in Rev. 12:1; the sun signifies the light of this Gospel age; the moon signifies the typically reflected light of the Gospel in the law and the prophets of the previous dispensation. The glorified church will have no need of the light which in the present time she so much enjoys through the Word and spirit, and the law and the prophets. She will have, instead of these, a much more excellent glory to which the Apostle refers when he says, ‘Now (with all the light, privileges and opportunities which we enjoy, both as respects the representations of God through the law and the prophets, and through the instructions and leadings of the Spirit in the present) we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part; then we shall know even as we are known.’ (1 Cor. 13:12)

“The church, the temple of God, will be so filled with all the fullness of God, when made like unto the glorious Lord, that nothing could add to their blessing of knowledge and divine favor; will be so filled with the glory of God that from her, as from the Sun of Righteousness, shall proceed the light of the glory of God, which shall heal and bless the world during the Millennial age. This is the Sun of Righteousness to which our Lord referred in Matt. 13:43, ‘Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father’ – our Lord Jesus, the Head of the church, of course, being included. The same Sun of Righteousness is mentioned by the Prophet, saying, ‘The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams.’ (Mal. 4:2) Nevertheless, while so filled with the Lord’s glory we are not to lose sight of the fact which the Apostle impresses upon us saying that Christ is the Head of the church, even as the Father is the Head of Christ Jesus. Hence the Lord Almighty and the Lamb will always be an inner Temple in this great Temple, which God has provided for the world’s blessing during restitution times. (Rev. 21:22)” (R2833:6)

**21:24**— “And the nations shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it.”

“When this Sun of Righteousness shall shine forth, its blessings of healing, refreshment and life, mental, moral and physical, upon the world of mankind, the nations shall walk in the light of it. (The words ‘of them that are saved’ are not in old MSS. Indeed it is because they are not saved that they need this special light during the Millennial age, in order to their enlightenment, their salvation, their restitution.) ‘And the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it.’ (The words, ‘and honor’ are not found in old MSS.) The expressions ‘nations’ and ‘kings’ are not to be understood as signifying that the world of mankind during the Millennial age will be divided into nationalities and kingdoms as at present: the word ‘nations’ here signifies peoples and is intended to show that all peoples, and not merely the people of Israel, will be thus favored under God’s kingdom. The word ‘kings’ represents those princes or chief ones of the earth who, during the Millennial age, will be the chief representatives of the heavenly, spiritual, invisible kingdom of Christ. These princes, as we have already seen, will be Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the faithful prophets of the previous dispensation, who, loving God before the call to the kingdom and to the bride class, cannot be of it, but because of their faithfulness will be the princes whom the Lord will establish in all the earth – first making them perfect individuals, and qualifying them for the office, as a reward for their faithfulness to God in the dark time in which they lived – their manifestation of love for righteousness and trust in the Omnipotent One.” (R2834:1)

### **The Earthly Phase of the Kingdom**

“When mankind reaches perfection at the close of the Millennial age ... they will be admitted into membership in the Kingdom of God and given the entire control of earth as at first designed – each man a sovereign, a **king**. This is clearly shown in the symbolic prophecy of John (Rev. 21:24-26), for in vision he not only saw the people walk in the light of it, but he saw the kings enter it in glory; yet none could enter who would defile it. None can become identified with that city (kingdom) who has not first been thoroughly tested; none who would work, or love to work, deceit and unrighteousness; only those whom the Lamb will write as worthy of life everlasting, and to whom he will say, ‘Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.’” (A296)

### **“Kings” Subsequent to the Millennium**

“Its reign will be for a thousand years, **after which** a new dispensation will open, under new conditions, in which mankind (perfected) will be granted the

privilege of ruling themselves in harmony with the divine law.” (R2231:2)

“**That kingdom, in which all will be kings**, will be one grand, universal republic, whose stability and blessed influence will be assured by **the perfection of its every citizen**, a result now much desired, but an impossibility because of sin. The Kingdom of Christ during the Millennium will be, on the contrary, a theocracy, which will rule the world (during the period of its imperfection and restoration) without regard to its consent or approval.” (*What Say The Scriptures About Hell*, p. 50)

**21:25** — “And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.”

### The Gates ... Not Shut By Day

“The thought in these words is that access to the Kingdom and its blessings on the part of earth’s people will continue throughout the entire period of the Millennial Age of restitution.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 588)

### The Dark Night and the Morning

“The period in which sin is permitted has been a **dark night** to humanity, never to be forgotten; but **the glorious day** of righteousness and divine favor, to be ushered in by Messiah, who, as the Sun of Righteousness, shall arise and shine fully and clearly into and upon all, bringing healing and blessing, will more than counterbalance **the dreadful night of weeping, sighing, pain, sickness and death**, in which the groaning creation has been so long. ‘Weeping may endure for a **night**, but joy cometh in the morning.’ (Psa. 30:5)” (A9)

### The Kingdom Class

“... the poor in spirit; for only the poor in spirit – the humble, teachable ones – can submit to the discipline and training necessary to fit them for it. The heady, the high-minded, the proud, the self-conscious and self-righteous have no promise of the kingdom, and cannot inherit it, nor enter into it; for ‘there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth.’ (Rev. 21:27) So, although in the present age many of these are esteemed of men as the aristocracy of the earth, they will not be the aristocracy of the new dispensation; but the poor in spirit will reign with Christ for the blessing of all the families of the earth. And even now, in God’s estimation, these constitute the embryo kingdom, and God is in the midst of them, and his law is established in their hearts. ‘The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.’ Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off.’ For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and

holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.’ ‘Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; where is the house [the temple] that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? ... but upon such a one will I look, upon the poor, and him who is of a contrite spirit, and who trembleth at my word.’ (Psa. 34:18; 138:6; Isa. 57:15; 66:1, 2)

“This is the kingdom class, the temple class, the beloved of the Lord with whom he is pleased to dwell. Like their Master, they are often lightly esteemed among men of the world, and perhaps despised among the multitudes who professedly are the Lord’s people, but whose hearts and minds are still engrossed with worldly things; but they are the prospective kings and priests of the new dispensation, and their lowly estate in the present life is only their necessary discipline to fit them for the glory and service of the time to come. These are the living stones now being shaped, chiseled and polished for their places in the glorious temple of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Blessed indeed are the poor in spirit with such a heritage!” (R2139:4)

For those, who during the Millennial age are desirous of coming into fullest accord with the laws of the Kingdom (the will of God), the “gates” will “not be shut at all by day.” As antitypical Israelites travelling toward their “Canaan,” they will be feeding upon a heavenly manna (redemptive truth), and advancing more and more into the “day” which knows no night – “there shall be no night there.”

But, and while it is not so definitely stated, there nevertheless will be some, who despite all of the gracious opportunities afforded them, will still prefer to be out of harmony with the Kingdom, and will seek to do wickedly! For these, the “gates” to the city (its earthly counterpart) will be closed; “without” there will be “dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.” (Rev. 21:15) These, as unworthy ones, feeding as it were, upon the flesh (lusting), will not be of the day, but will accordingly be going deeper and deeper **into the night**, and ultimate destruction with Satan, into the “lake of fire” – the Second Death! (See Rev. 20:10; 21:8)

### An Additional Note (Rev. 21:24-26)

The Most Holy of the ancient Tabernacle, represented the abode of Jehovah-God: for, He was manifested therein by the Shekinah (glory-light), which appeared atop the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant, between the two cherubim. (Exod. 25:22; Num. 7:89)

But, it also represented the spirit-born condition of the glorified Christ (the Church, Head and body) as partakers of the divine nature. (T120)

During the Gospel age, the Tabernacle has represented a progressive development of the “class” that is to be identified with Jesus, as the “seed” of Abraham, in due time to bless all the families of the earth. (Gen. 22:18; Gal. 3:29) The original “seed” was the Israelitish nation, which might have become the “royal priesthood” of God. (Exod. 19:5, 6) That they would fail, was attested by the prophet who declared for Jehovah, “... because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the Law of God, I will also forget thy children” (Hos. 4:6); and that they did fail, is evidenced by the words of Jesus unto them, “... your house is left unto you desolate.” (Matt. 23:38)

Thus, with the ending of the Jewish age, another Israel was privileged to enter into covenant-relationship with God – to become, as it were, the “royal priesthood.” (1 Pet. 2:5, 9) It is this latter “Israel” that is pictured in the Tabernacle types and shadows, as making progress in the direction of becoming this “anointed priesthood” of God. It is **their** justification, that is represented in the Court; **their** sanctification, that is represented in the Holy; **their** glorification, that is represented in the Most Holy!

When the last member of this “priesthood” has passed beyond the “Veil,” making his “calling and election” sure (2 Pet. 1:10), the Tabernacle will no longer represent a progressive development. Unlike the curtains – the gate, the door, and the veil – the west end of the Tabernacle was a wall, bespeaking finality – the end of all progress, because the ultimate has been attained! And, the “door” to the “Most Holy” and the “high-calling,” will forever be closed! Those having entered in, will constitute the true Zion (Isa. 2:3) – the New Jerusalem – the Holy City, which John was privileged to “see” in his vision (Rev. 21:2, 10, 11, 16, etc.), coming down from heaven to the earth, as the Tabernacle of God. (Rev. 21:3; T76)

This does not mean that there will be an actual transplanting of that “Tabernacle”; but rather, that its influence, its government, its rule, and the corresponding blessings, will be visited upon the world of mankind. (The sun does not have to leave the sky itself, for its warmth and light to be felt upon the earth.) This is undoubtedly what was intended by God, to be reflected in the glorious Curtain – the Tabernacle, itself (Exod. 26:1) – which covered the structure, coming down only nine cubits on the south and north sides; but down to the earth itself, by way of its being draped over the west (rear) wall. It, of course, represented something heavenly; and this is the reason why it did not touch the earth, until first of all, all of the Holy, and the Most Holy, including its rear (west) wall had been covered. Not until the Church – the anti-typical “priesthood” has first completed its consecration unto death, and been glorified, can it become the blesser of the world of mankind!

Changing the metaphor, the saints of God, when their number is complete, will become that “stone” cut out of the mountain without hands (Dan. 2:34), which on smiting the image of Gentile domination – breaking them in pieces, itself becomes a great mountain, and fills the earth. (Dan. 2:35)

Thus, by the end of the Millennial age, the Church, the “royal-priesthood,” will have accomplished its work of blessing the world of mankind, with a full reconciliation unto God. And so:

“When mankind reaches perfection at the close of the Millennial age ... they will be admitted into membership in this Kingdom of God, and given the entire control of earth as at first designed – each man a sovereign, a king. This is clearly shown in the symbolic prophecy of John (Rev. 21:24-26), for in vision he not only saw the people walk in the light of it, but he saw the kings enter it in glory; yet none could enter who would defile it. **None** can become identified with that city (kingdom) who has not first been thoroughly tested; **none** who would work, or love to work, deceit and unrighteousness; only those whom the Lamb will write as worthy of life everlasting, and to whom he will say, ‘Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you’.” (A296)

“Its reign will be for a thousand years, **after which** a new dispensation will open, under new conditions, in which mankind (perfected) will be granted the privilege of ruling themselves in harmony with the divine law.” (R2231:2)

“**That kingdom in which all will be kings**, will be one grand, universal republic, whose stability and blessed influence will be assured by **the perfection of its every citizen**, a result now much desired, but an impossibility because of sin. The kingdom of Christ during the Millennium will be, on the contrary, a theocracy, which will rule the world (during the period of its imperfection and restoration) without regard to its consent or approval.” (*What Say the Scriptures About Hell*, p. 50; R2607:2)

**21:26, 27** – “And they shall bring the glory of the nations into it. 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.”

“The bringing of their glory into the city, the kingdom, signifies their acknowledgement of the heavenly kingdom, their rendering of tribute of praise, thanks, worship and obedience to it as God’s agency. And this rendering of glory to the kingdom will continue throughout the entire Millennial age, as the princes throughout the earth will make known to the people that not in their own names or authority do they rule and execute judgment and

establish righteousness, but in the name and as the ministers and representatives of the glorified Christ. The result will be that all the people will ascribe honor and praise and majesty and glory to the Lord's Anointed, through whom their redemption and restitution was and is being accomplished; and this is indicated in verse 26.

"Then, in consideration of the fact that this book of symbols, while relating to the future, is addressed to God's consecrated elect church in the present time, and in view of the fact that this message would be communicated to and more or less understood by those who would seek to make their calling and election sure to a part in the glorious city, the 27th verse is added, declaring that 'In nowise shall there enter into it anything common, or he that doeth abomination and falsehood – but only they who are written in the Lamb's book of life.' The Lamb's book of life we must understand to include those, and only those, who attain to position of joint-heirship with Christ, whose names are written in heaven during this age, and who are faithful to their covenant. What a glorious incentive we have here to faithfulness! What a warning against the slightest sympathy with anything unclean, untrue, or in anywise contrary to the divine standard of holiness! If we appreciate the glorious things of the divine provision for the church and for the world, these promises and offers will have their influence upon us, and under their influence we are expected to keep our garments unspotted from the world; to be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; to hate every contamination of the flesh upon our robe of righteousness; and to seek immediately in prayer for the removal of any spot or wrinkle or any such thing from our wedding garment – that thus we may abide in the Lord's love, and in the due time be 'meet for the inheritance of the saints in light'." (R2834:4)

**22:1** – "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

"In Revelation we see that the Church is the Bride, and the Church glorified is symbolized by the heavenly Jerusalem and the river of the water of life.... There can be no doubt that the two rivers (Ezek. 47:1-8; Rev. 22:1) are identical. And since the Church is not yet complete, and has, therefore, not yet been glorified, the river of life has not yet proceeded from the glorified Church, and hence the whole matter must be future.

"The same thought is in this lesson as Ezekiel gives it. He first sees the Temple and then beholds the glory of the Lord entering the Temple through the eastern gate, and that gate closed after the Lord. This represents the closing of the door at the end of this

age, as our Lord portrayed it in the parable of the ten virgins. The door will be shut, the glory of the Lord will have entered the Temple. It is subsequent to this shutting of the door that the prophet is shown the issuing of the water from under the threshold. The lesson, therefore, is clear and explicit to the effect that not until the glory of the Lord shall have entered his Temple, not until the church shall be glorified, not until that door shall be forever shut, will the water of life issue forth.

"The stream (Ezek. 47) is shown as rapidly increasing. Issuing as a rivulet it speedily becomes ankle deep, a little further along waist deep and a little further beyond a man's depth to ford. Thus is indicated the rapid increase of the blessings of the Lord as soon as his time shall have come; but, as we have heretofore pointed out, there is no such river of life now, our Master himself being authority for this in his statement respecting his disciples, saying, 'The water I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up to everlasting life.' Ours is not an invitation to drink of a river of life, but an invitation to have a well-spring of water of life started in our hearts by the impartation of the Holy Spirit. As already pointed out it will be after the river of the water of life flows from the glorified Church that the Spirit and the Bride will say to the world of mankind, Come. Then whosoever will may come, whereas now no man can come 'except the Father which sent me draw him'." (R3624:6)

### The River of the Water of Life

"... under the symbol river ... the blessing of the Lord is to be through **the spread of the truth to mankind during the Millennial age**. It will proceed from the City of God – the glorified Church – and results in the complete blotting out of the curse and the restoring of mankind to communion with God." (R501:4)

"He offers the water of life – the refreshing hope of life through faith in him as the Redeemer, which hope would be like a perennial well-spring continually rising up in her heart. (John 4:14) So it is now; **but by and by** when the hopes of the believing Church are realized and God's kingdom is fully established, these wells will flow together, and a mighty river of the water of life will come forth from underneath the throne of God for the refreshment of all who will partake of it. (Rev. 22:1)" (R1703:1)

"... the rivers of living waters flowing from Jerusalem, during this Millennial Day of the reestablishment of Jehovah's feet upon his footstool (Zech. 14:8, 9), reminds us of the corresponding testimony of Ezekiel (47:1-12), and of John's Revelation (22:1, 2) which, under this same symbol of living waters proceeding from the throne of the Millennial

Kingdom, show us the restitution blessings under the symbols of 'waters of life,' to which whosoever will may come and drink freely." (D655)

Ezekiel's River:

Ezek. 47:1-8 – "Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house, at the south side of the altar. Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward, and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side. And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles. Again he measured a thousand and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over. And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me to return to the brink of the river. Now when I returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed."

### More Anent John's Revelation and Ezekiel's Vision

"It would not at all surprise us if in the beginning of the Millennial age, not only the nation of Israel would receive the blessing of the Lord lost at the beginning of this Gospel age and become his representative people in the world – the church having been taken from the world, glorified spirit-beings, but neither would it surprise us if, in the Lord's providence, some miracle were wrought by which the Dead Sea would become connected with the Mediterranean, possibly refreshed also by some such river as is here described by Ezekiel, a picture of the symbolical river of life flowing from the New Jerusalem. But however interested we might be in the thought of such a literal fulfillment of prophecy, our interest is still greater in the fulfillment of it as a symbol in accord with the river of Revelation. From this symbolical standpoint the Dead Sea represents the dead world, and the coming of life-

giving waters would represent the resurrection power of the Lord and the church exercised amongst men during the Millennial age. As the Apostle expresses it, it would mean, for the Gentiles, life from the dead.

"But while it is refreshing and exhilarating to look down into the future and think of the blessings to come, it is important that we draw practical lessons and apply them to ourselves, and see to it that we do all in our power to make our calling and our election sure, that we may be of that New Jerusalem class, the bride glorified, from whom the river of the water of life will issue. There is no doubt that it will be accomplished, because the Word of the Lord has spoken it. The whole question for us is whether we or others will be the Lord's ministers, servants, honored agents in causing the blessing of the Lord to fill the whole earth. The more we love the glorious prospects set before us in the Word, the more we will strive for present participation in the sufferings of Christ, in laying down our lives for the brethren, and for future participation in the glories of Christ, in the blessing of all the families of the earth." (R3625:5)

**22:2** – "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

Ezek. 47:12 – "And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be meat, and the leaf for medicine."

"Thus seen, God has rich blessings in store for mankind in general in the day when his kingdom shall be established amongst men, in Immanuel's day. The restitution of that time is pictured in the leaves of the trees; the abundance of instruction and nourishment, mental, moral and physical, is represented in the fruit of the trees. More than this, wherever the water of this river went life resulted, until finally it emptied into the Dead Sea with the effect that the waters of the latter were healed. Fishes thrive well in sea water, but the water of the Dead Sea is five times as strongly impregnated with salts, and as a consequence fish taken from the Mediterranean and put into the Dead Sea die in a few minutes – hence its name, Dead Sea.

"... From this symbolical standpoint the Dead Sea represents the dead world, and the coming of life-giving waters would represent the resurrection power



of the Lord and the Church exercised amongst men during the Millennial age. As the Apostle expresses it, it would mean, for the Gentiles, life from the dead." (R3625:2)

### **"Leaves ... for the healing ... nations"**

"Trees of life seem to symbolize saints, **whose leaves – professions – teachings, will heal men**, and whose fruit will be adapted to the changing conditions of men as they are brought upward toward perfection – fruit suitable for each changing season, thus restoring man to man's estate." (R334:5)

### **Trees of Righteousness – Now and Then**

"All of the Lord's people need to remember that in proportion as they are ambassadors of the Lord, and his representatives, it will be their privilege not only by and by in the kingdom to 'comfort all that mourn,' and to be **the trees of righteousness, whose leaves will be for the healing of the nations** (Rev. 22:2), but they should remember that in the present life they have a ministry of comfort to perform also, toward all who mourn in Zion – toward all the Lord's people who are in any tribulation, physical or mental disquiet, dis-ease; and they should remember too, that just in proportion as they are filled with this spirit now, it is their privilege to bind up the broken-hearted, and comfort the mourning ones. No one can have this spirit of helpfulness, this disposition to comfort and to strengthen and to edify, and to upbuild the household of faith, except he have in considerable measure **the spirit of truth, the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love**: and in proportion as each seeks to cultivate this privilege of brotherly helpfulness, in comforting and up-building and strengthening, in that same proportion he will find the spirit of love developing and abounding in his own heart, and that his likeness to the Lord Jesus ... is becoming more pronounced from day to day and from year to year." (R2665:4)

### **River, Tree, Leaves ... for the Nations**

"The last members of his church must complete their course, must pass their examination and enter into glory with him before the marriage is consummated. But after the marriage there will be not only the holy city, representing the church in her official or governing capacity under Christ the Head, but there will be also the blessed work of the church, the calling of the world's attention to the river of the water of life, to the leaves of healing, to the fruits of the spirit; and the spirit, the power of God, will cooperate with the message that will then be promulgated, and the result undoubtedly will be that all the world shall hear, and that all who love righteousness and hate iniquity will return again to life eternal. It will require all the Millennial age for the delivery of this message to

every creature and for them to avail themselves of the privileges." (R3571:4)

### **"And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations"**

One of the important functions of the leaves of plants is **transpiration**:

"Transpiration. – Much more water is absorbed by the roots than is used in growth, **and this surplus water passes from the leaves into the atmosphere by an evaporation process known as transpiration**. Transpiration takes place more abundantly from the under surfaces of leaves, and through the pores or stomata ... A large oak tree may transpire 150 gallons per day during the summer." (*First Course In Biology* – Bailey – Coleman, p. 98)

The physical comfort of a creature may be measured by the humidity of the atmosphere in which it moves.

The body, quite naturally produces heat; and to regulate this heat, the skin acts something like a thermostat, releasing the heat for the body's comfort. In the process, perspiration is formed, which on evaporating from the skin, gives the sensation of cooling. However, if the atmosphere is already fully charged with all the moisture it can contain, no evaporation can take place at the skin; this will make one uncomfortably warm!

Thus, humidity, is related to the water content of the atmosphere. An atmosphere that is too dry can likewise be quite uncomfortable; yea, oppressive, especially if the temperature is high. The ideal humidity, therefore, would be that state or condition in which the temperature and the water content gave the individual the greatest comfort. Lack of this comfort is dis-ease!

Thus, spiritually speaking, the wholesomeness or health of the nations to be blessed, will largely be contingent upon the "atmosphere" in which they shall have to move. But, we are assured, that the "transpiration" of these "trees of righteousness" will be such as to afford this ideal state! The heavenly sunshine (of the holy Spirit, then to be poured out upon all flesh (Joel 2:28) will supply the proper temperature, and the "trees of righteousness" by "transpiration" – the waters of Truth! Thus will be fulfilled the statement in the Revelation, (22:2) that "their leaves will be for the healing (wholesomeness) of the nations."

### **The "River" and the "Trees"**

"A river of water of life is seen, and trees of life whose fruit sustains life, and whose foliage heals the people. How this calls our minds back to the paradise from whence Adam was driven on account of sin, and to the tree of life in the midst of Eden, from which he was debarred, and from the lack of whose fruit Adam and his race died.

"Oh, what a picture of the 'restitution of all things which God has spoken' – the healing of all the curse, the blotting out of sin, and with it, of misery, pain,

and death, because a ransom has been paid and he who ransomed is the one who gloriously restores.

“The Water of life which will there flow from the throne is a picture of the future; for not yet has the throne been established – on the earth. We still pray ‘Thy kingdom come,’ and not until that prayer is answered can the river of water of life flow. The water of life is knowledge – truth – for which mankind famishes now. It will flow out bountifully when the tabernacle of God is with men. Then thirsty humanity, groaning and in painful bondage to sin and death, will be refreshed and restored.” (R334:4)

“We praise the Lord for the information afforded us in his Word, that although the water of life is now given individually, and enjoyed only by the ‘elect,’ ‘even as many as the Lord our God shall call,’ yet the time is coming that it shall no longer be thus a well of water springing up within the Lord’s people, but during the Millennial age will be a river of water of life, broad and full and clear as crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and of the bride, the Lamb’s wife and joint-heir, to all the families of the earth: and that there will not only be trees of life, whose leaves will be for the healing, restitution of the nations, but that the Spirit and the bride (then glorified) shall say, Come and he that heareth may say, Come, and whosoever will may come and have the water of life freely. (Rev. 22:17)” (R2575:4)

“Now the prospective members of the bride class have the Lord’s spirit in them, ‘a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.’ (John 4:14)

“By and by these well-springs brought together in glory with the Lord shall constitute the source of the great river of life which shall bless and heal all the nations.” (R3410:5)

### The “Tree of Life”

“... the Lord’s people ... it will be their privilege ... by and by in the Kingdom to ‘comfort those that mourn,’ and **to be trees of righteousness, whose leaves will be for the healing of the nations.** (Rev. 22:2)” (R2665:4)

One meaning of the Greek word (*θραπειαν*) is “service” – a service rendered for the good of another. This is what Young has suggested in his *Literal Translation*:

“... and the leaves of the tree are for the service of the nations.” (Rev. 22:3)

Nor is this really very different from the manner in which the same word is used in Luke 9:11, which Young has rendered in the same *Literal Translation*:

“... and those having need of service he cured.”

The *Twentieth Century Translation* has rendered the same text:

“... and cured those who had the need of healing.”

And the *Revised Standard Version* has rendered it:

“... he cured those who were in need of help.”

**22:3-5** – “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him. And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

### The Curse

“When the work of Christ is fully accomplished, ‘Then there shall be **no more curse**’; ‘for the former things [the evil incurred through Adam’s transgression] are passed away.’ (Rev. 22:3; 21:4) put away legally by the sacrifice of himself (Christ); and put away in fact by his glorious reign. ‘Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.’ For Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us’.” (R587:6)

### The World Seeing the Glorified Church

“We have seen that the way in which the world will see the glorified Church will be by mental perception, in the same sense that a blind person may properly be said to see.” (T85)

“They will see him, not by physical sight, but as we now see all spiritual things – our Lord Jesus, the Father, the prize, etc. – by the eye of faith. Men will not see the Christ by physical sight, because on a different plane of being – the one spirit, the other flesh; for the same reason that they will never see Jehovah.” (T86)

“The glorious blessings and favors of that Millennial period, set apart by the Lord and declared by the mouth of all the holy prophets to be times of restitution of all things spoken of, is summed up most completely in the declaration, ‘There shall be no more curse.’ In what more comprehensive language could the Lord declare the end of the reign of sin and death and the commencement of the reign of righteousness unto life eternal? There is a curse upon the world now, official, legal. It has been against us as a race for six thousand years. It is a curse or sentence of death. Although our Redeemer has died, the Just for the unjust, although he was made a curse for us, nevertheless up to the present time release from that curse has come to only a small proportion of the race. In the Father’s plan the only ones released from the curse, the only ones who have yet escaped the condemnation which is still on the world, is the class which has accepted Christ and is trusting in him.

“With the end of this age, when the last members of the body shall have finished their course and be glorified with him, he as the great High Priest and they as the under priests, his members, will be prepared to bless the world. Then will be presented to the Father on behalf of the world the merit which came from our dear Redeemer’s death on behalf of all, shared by those who rejoiced to suffer with him and who are accepted. Then divine justice will declare the lifting of the curse from all the world of mankind, and then the work of graciously blessing and uplifting and helping them out of their sinful conditions into life everlasting will be possible and will begin. There shall be no more ‘curse’ against humanity, but, on the contrary, they may have fellowship with the Lord, and the throne of his grace and the evidences of his favor will be theirs, and all who desire shall have the opportunity to serve him. All the night of darkness, ignorance, superstition and sin will be past; no longer will the world be dependent for light upon the imperfect shining of such little candles the Lord’s people now are.

“And all who come into accord with the Lord shall see his face – that is, there will be no earthborn cloud between, no hindrance to the Father’s love and favor, and his name shall be in their foreheads. They will confess him, they will have his likeness, the various elements which go to make up his glorious name and character will be theirs and will be manifest in their faces. If, even now, under present imperfect conditions, the light of grace and truth in the heart transforms the outward features and makes them more and more bright and glorious, much more, we are sure, will this be true of those who at that time shall come under the influence of the light of divine favor and have their hearts filled with the Lord’s spirit and truth.

“These developments of that Millennial age will bring the willing and obedient of the human family back to the original perfection, the image and likeness of God, and once more they will have direct communication with the Lord and not merely his written messages through apostles and prophets as now. ‘And they shall reign forever and ever.’ **This does not refer to the church, whose reign has been previously described. The reference is to the reign of those whom the Millennial age shall find worthy of life eternal** – all the unworthy being then cut off in the second death. The account here is in full accord with that of Matt. 25:34 – the sheep of that age will at its close be received into the fullest fellowship with the Lord, the goats of that period being destroyed.” (R3571:5; 3572:1)

### The Restored Kingdom – Their Reign

“The nature of the reign then to be delivered to the world ... will be the same reign or kingdom which at his creation was bestowed upon father Adam, as it is written in Psa. 8:6, ‘Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen with the beasts of the field and fowl of the air and fish of the sea.’ This dominion of earth was part of what father Adam lost by his disobedience, and was a part, therefore, of what our Lord Jesus purchased by his obedience even unto death, and is to be an element of the restitution to be accomplished during the Millennial reign of Christ.

“At the close of that reign the kingdom shall be delivered up to God, even the Father, by being delivered over to those for whom the Father originally intended it, and who by that time will have been fully prepared to receive it. The whole world of perfect men will be a world of kings, though doubtless one of their number will serve particularly as general or representative, just as in the Republic every individual is a sovereign and from their own number they choose a sovereign, a servant.” (R3572:2)

**22:6, 7** – “And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.”

“Having pictured the work of restitution down to its consummation in the delivery of the kingdom to man, in harmony with the Father’s intention, the address of the revelation changes. We are assured that these wonderful promises are faithful and true, that the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. Then the Master speaks to his church who have ears to hear, saying, ‘Behold, I come quickly; Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.’ The intimation seems to be that the book being symbolical, none can understand it except as its seals are loosed, as its message opens before the Lord’s people, and that when its sayings, its teachings come to be appreciated, it may be recognized by those who do understand it as an evidence that the Lord’s second advent and the establishment of his kingdom are close at hand.” (R3572:2)

**22:8-10** – “And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand."

"As we have already seen, John the revelator represented those favored members of the church who, living in this end of the Gospel age, are granted the privilege of seeing and appreciating more and more the things which he saw in symbol. The revelation being complete John fell down before the angel who had given him the revelation to offer him worship. This may signify that in the end of this Gospel age as the whole church, the John class, comes to see the unfolding of the divine plan, there might be a spirit or disposition amongst them to do too much honor to the one used of the Lord in communicating to them the divine light now due.

"The proprieties of the case are set forth to us in the conduct of the symbolical angel who talked to John and who represented some in the end of this age commissioned to present God's truths to his people, He said, 'See thou do it not' – do not worship me, for I am not the author of this plan. I am thy fellow-servant, a brother to all the prophets and all those who keep the message of this revelation. God alone should be worshipped: he is the Author of the great plan and will be the finisher of it. It is brought to our attention now by him because it is now 'due time' for his people to come to an appreciation of his plans.

"The same thought continues: At the time that the features of this symbolical revelation shall come to be understood and appreciated by the Lord's people, they may know that the time of the completion is near at hand. They are not to feel it necessary to hide the matter. 'Seal not the sayings of this book, for the time is at hand.' Furthermore, we are not to expect that the telling of this message, the explaining of the divine plan, will have the effect of converting the world. It was not intended to do this and will not do it. Notwithstanding, the unfolding of the divine plan, this knowledge will only be for a special class for whom it was intended, namely, the Lord's people – 'None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.' So far as the revelations of the divine plan are concerned they are not intended to turn the filthy to make them righteous, nor will they be inclined contrariwise to turn the righteous to sin." (R3572:3-5)

### Bro. Russell – Seeking No Homage!

"As we have been to some extent, by the grace of God, used in the ministry of the Gospel, it may not be out of place to say here what we have frequently said in private and previously in these columns – namely, that while we appreciate the love, sympathy, confidence and fellowship of fellow-servants and of the entire household of faith, **we want no homage, no reverence, for ourselves or our writings**; nor do

we wish to be called Reverend or Rabbi. Nor do we wish that any should be called by our name. The name of him who died for all – the name Christian – is quite sufficient to designate the spiritual sons of God, the true brethren of Christ; and whatsoever is more than this cometh of evil, of carnality, and tends toward more of the same." (R2080:4)

**22:11** – "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

"So far as these revelations are concerned they who are righteous may be righteous still, they who are filthy may be filthy still, they who are holy may be holy still.

"How true it is that present truth, although in many respects full of comfort and encouragement to the Church in respect to their dear friends who are out of Christ, has no effect whatever upon those who love sin, who are filthy, who are unrighteous. It appeals only to those who are already righteously inclined. This does not mean that it appeals only to those who are saints, who are holy. There are some who are not saints because they have never properly grasped the conditions of the divine call of the present time, but who are nevertheless, righteous persons, persons who desire to live uprightly, honorably, honestly, who are sincere and truthful in their own hearts and in their dealings with others so far as their knowledge permits. To these lovers of righteousness, of truth, as well as to the holy, the revelations of the divine plan now unfolding commend themselves, and intensify their love for righteousness and appreciation of full consecration to the Lord.

"On the other hand the unrighteous and the filthy simply ignore this message and are not moved specially by it. During the Millennial kingdom time, however, we may expect that the vigorous processes of the kingdom will correct many of these filthy and unrighteous, and ultimately develop many of them into lovers of the light and the truth and the way, bringing many of them into full fellowship with the Lord, which will secure to them life everlasting." (R3572:6)

**22:12** – "And, behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

The thought here seems to be not so much of his "coming" – for he has been present for some time; but rather to his **readiness**, now to take over the matter of judging the world of mankind; and, thus it is declared, "and my reward is with me; to give every man according as his work **shall** be." Note this phrase: "as his work shall

be.” Dr. Benjamin Wilson, in his *Emphatic Diaglott* has rendered it, “to give to each one as his work is.”

By the end of the Gospel age, all sins tracing to the Adamic fall will have been atoned for; and God will not hold any of these against the human race, despite the fact that their handicaps during the new dispensation (the Millennial age) will often trace to these; “stripes” will be borne by some, the effects of sins will follow after! (1 Tim. 5:24) The world’s judgment, however, will be based, not upon the past, but on their response to the principles of truth and righteousness **during the Millennial Day**. In the past, what people have suffered of judgment was because of the “sour grape” their fathers had eaten; but then, (during the Millennial age) each man that dies, if die he must, will die for his own iniquity. (Jer. 31:29, 30) This is the “reward” he will then give “to every man according as his work shall be” – i.e., then is!

### “My Reward Is With Me”

“And my reward is with Me, to give to each one as his work is,’ evidently applies to the great Judgment Day, at the beginning of which the church will be rewarded and during which the world will have their trial, retribution and reward.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 610)

### “Stripes”

“Many will feel rebellious against that perfect and equitable rule because accustomed in the past, under the rule of the present prince, to lord it over their fellow mortals, and to live wholly at the expense of others without rendering compensating service. And many and severe will be the **stripes** which a present life of self-indulgence and gratification will naturally demand and receive under that reign before such will learn the lessons of that kingdom – equity, justice, righteousness. (Psa. 89:32; Luke 12:47, 48)” (E303)

“So, you see, the condition into which a man gets himself now has a great deal to do with his future. Many will be so degraded that when they come forth from the tomb they will have a very difficult time.” (R4992:1)

**22:13, 14** – “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city.”

At this point, the Lord, reiterates his earlier remarks, “I am Alpha and Omega,” (Rev. 1:8, 11), to the Apostle John, who here represents, we believe, more particularly the saints still in the flesh in the end of the Gospel age. But the purpose now is slightly different. He would have “him” understand that the identity of the Logos (who was in the beginning with God – John 1:1), and the glorified Christ Jesus, is one, and the same. However, he adds, “the beginning and the end, the first and the last,” implying, of course, that he was himself, the beginning of the creation

of God (Rev. 3:14), the firstborn of every creature (Col. 1:15); but also that he was the last, therefore, **the only direct creation of God**. In all of the further creation, he was the Father’s active agent, and so we read, “the world was made by him,” and “without him was not anything made that was made.” (John 1:10, 3) He would have John know that the plan is Jehovah’s; and, that whatever glory and honor had come to him – Jesus, was as a reward for his obedience to the divine will. Not only did he want the Church to appreciate this, but the time had come when the world of mankind too, would have to come to an appreciation of this fact; that blessing comes only by way of obedience to the will of God. Thus does Jesus follow through with, “Blessed (happy) are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates (have the approval of the Ancient Worthies, the visible representatives of the invisible spiritual Kingdom) into the city.”

### “The Beginning and the End”

“... the beginning and the end, the first and the last as he claims in his revelation to John (Rev. 1:8; 3:14; 21:6; 22:13) ... as the Scriptures harmoniously teach, that as Jehovah’s agent he is the beginner and the finisher of the wondrous plan, though not its author. In a word, he was the only direct creation of Jehovah – born ‘from the womb of the morning,’ as the Psalmist expresses it (Psa. 110:3) – all other creations being through him, as Jehovah’s agent, or representative; as we read: ‘To us there is 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 Cor. 8:6) He is the firstborn of every creature (born before all creation); for by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or principalities or powers; all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” (R1060:4)

“He it is who in all things has the preeminence in Jehovah’s plan and work. He was not only ‘the beginning of the creation of God,’ ‘the firstborn of every creature,’ but more: he was the ‘beginning and the ending,’ he was the ‘Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last,’ of Jehovah’s direct creation; for all other ‘things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made.’ (Col. 1:15, 18; Rev. 3:14; 1:8; 21:6; 22:13; John 1:3)” (R1278:3)

**22:15** – “For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”

Without, i.e., outside, this earthly counterpart of the heavenly kingdom, and kept out from entering it, is everything that defiles: “dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.”

“When mankind reaches perfection at the close of the Millennial age ... they will be admitted into membership in the Kingdom of God and given entire control of earth as at first designed – each man a sovereign, a king. This is clearly shown in the symbolic prophecy of John (Rev. 21:24-26), for in vision he not only saw the people walk in the light of it, but he saw kings enter it in glory; yet none **could enter who would defile it**. None can become identified with that city (kingdom) who has not first been thoroughly tested; none who work or love to work, deceit and unrighteousness; only those whom the Lamb will write as worthy of life everlasting; and to whom he will say, ‘Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.’” (A296)

“So all the world of mankind who will come into harmony with God will come into that city, into the New Jerusalem and kingdom of God, and **outside of that city will be found all impure characters**. We have them pictured in this statement, that liars and murderers, etc., shall have their portion in the ‘lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.’ This ‘lake of fire and brimstone’ is as symbolical as is the city. As the city is not a literal city of gold, neither is the lake a literal lake of fire and brimstone. That city was pictured by Jerusalem, and the ‘fire’ by Gehenna. As the offal of the literal city of Jerusalem was put into the Valley of Hinnom for destruction and for the purification of the city, so all the offal of the Millennial kingdom will be destroyed and be kept outside of the Golden Jerusalem. That will be a glorious kingdom, free from anything that would be a blight or blemish or sin; and all who love unrighteousness, in any sense of the word, will be destroyed in ‘the lake of fire,’ which is, we are told by the Revelator, the second death. (Rev. 21:8)” (R4992:5)

**22:16** – “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.”

Jesus himself, declares his responsibility for the “angel” – Bro. C. T. Russell, whom he “sent” as it were, to bear testimony for him (through the *Scriptures Studies*, Vol. 1-6; and the *Watch Tower* to October 1916) to the Churches (ecclesias) – those still in the flesh at the end of the Gospel age. Surely none ever gave a more lucid explanation concerning Jesus as “the root, and the offspring of David,” than the following:

“According to the flesh, our Lord Jesus was, through his mother, the son, the branch, the offshoot or offspring of David. It was by virtue of his sacrifice of his undefiled life that he became the ‘root’ of David as well as his Lord: for the thought suggested by the word ‘root’ differs somewhat from that furnished in

the word ‘Lord.’ The ‘root’ of David signifies the origin, source of life, and development of David.

“The Scriptures declare that David was ‘a stem out of Jesse;’ his father, therefore, was his root, according to natural generation. When and how did Christ become David’s root or father? We answer, Not before he ‘was made flesh’; – it was when made flesh that, as the man Jesus, he became related to Adam’s race through his mother. (Heb. 2:14-18) And in that relationship to the race and to David he was ‘branch,’ not ‘root.’ How and when did he become the ‘root’? We answer, By the same means and at the same time that he became David’s Lord; the means was his death, by which he purchased life-rights of Adam and all the race, including David’s; the time was when he was raised from the dead, Adam’s Redeemer, the race’s Redeemer and hence David’s Redeemer.

“It was, therefore, not the pre-human Logos, nor yet the man Christ Jesus that was David’s Lord and David’s Root; but the resurrected Messiah. When David in spirit (i.e., speaking under the prophetic spirit or influence) called Jesus Lord, saying, ‘Jehovah said unto my Lord (Jesus), Sit thou on my right hand,’ etc., the reference was not to the sacrificing one, ‘the man Christ Jesus,’ who had not yet finished his sacrifice, but to the victor Jesus, the Lord of life and glory, ‘the firstborn from the dead, the prince of the kings of earth.’ (Rev. 1:5) It was of this one that Peter said, ‘Him God raised up the third day.... He is Lord of all.’ (Acts 10:36, 40) Of this one also Paul declared that at his second coming he will display himself as ‘King of kings and Lord of lords.’ (1 Tim. 6:15)” (E136)

At this juncture, Jesus also refers to himself as “the bright and morning star.” It may be that this was merely to emphasize the fact of his having been created early in God’s creative day! On the other hand, something else may have been intended here. In this connection it might be well to recall that there was a time when there were two morning stars – the Logos and Lucifer; yea, we are even told that there was a time when these two sang together – when the foundations of the earth were laid. (Job. 38:6, 7) But Lucifer fell from his exalted position (Isa. 14:12; Luke 10:18), leaving but one morning star – **the** morning star. (Rev. 22:16) And, as the heavenly Bridegroom, he intends one day to give himself to those who shall constitute his Bride (Rev. 2:28), when “she” shall become “the Lamb’s wife.”

**22:17** – “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

After he has given himself to her as the “bright and morning star,” they will both, he, as the heavenly Bridegroom – the Spirit, and she as the Bride, then say to the world of mankind, “Come ... partake of the waters of life freely.” He, as “that Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:17), and she, as the Lamb’s wife (Rev. 21:9), will become the dispensers of the Father’s blessings to all the world of mankind.

“What a blessing it will be to attain to such glory, honor and immortality as is offered to the Church in the First Resurrection! And what a grand privilege it will be to be associated with our Lord in dispensing the divine favors to the entire groaning creation, and bidding whomsoever will, to Come to the water of life, and partake thereof freely! Yes; then, in the kingdom, the Spirit and the Bride will say ‘Come’ (for there will be a Bride then, the marriage of the Lamb taking place in the end of this Gospel age), ‘and whosoever will, may take of the water of life freely.’ (Rev. 22:17)” (F336)

“Then, we are told, ‘the Spirit and the Bride’ shall give the invitation a worldwide invitation; ‘whosoever will’ then may come, and he who hears the invitation may say to others, ‘Come and drink of the waters of life, freely!’” (R4882:6)

### The Millennium of Blessing

“A beautiful symbolic picture of the Millennial age and the blessings extending to all mankind under Israel’s New Covenant, is set before us in the Book of Revelation. First, the ‘elect’ Church is pictured as ‘the New Jerusalem adorned as a Bride for her husband’ descending from heaven to earth, establishing the Divine rule amongst men. Then follows a further symbolization: ‘a river of the Water of Life, clear as crystal,’ is represented as ‘proceeding forth from the throne’ of the New Jerusalem, flowing out to bless all the nations of the world. The result is Paradise with trees of life by both sides of the River and ‘the leaves of the trees for the healing of the heathen.’ Then we read the message of Free Grace ... ‘and the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him come and take of the Water of Life freely.’ (Rev. 22:17)” (OV36)

**22:18, 19** – “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

“The writer, St. John, does not say who is referred to by the pronoun ‘I’. Some think it refers to the Lord

Jesus, others think it refers to the writer, St. John himself. The meaning in any event is that the writer makes the solemn affirmation contained in the words as a conclusion. The object of these threatening words is doubtless to guard the book against being corrupted by any interpolations or changes.” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 616)

“The Book (referred to) is certainly not the whole Bible, but this Book of Revelation; though it may be that the Holy spirit, in guiding him who was to close the Canon of Scripture, moved him to add words suitable to the whole Volume of Inspiration. The threats are plainly put by way of antithesis – He who shall add, shall have added woe; he who shall take away, shall have woeful loss. To ‘add’ must mean so to add as to bring in something inconsistent with, destructive of the very truth.... To ‘take away’ must be to take away something essential to the truth.... When we remember that this is the Prophetic Book of the New Testament, that it especially throws light upon the Prophecies of the Old Testament, discovers their true scope and meaning, we can understand its peculiar value, the peculiar danger of adding to or taking from it. Woe to him who so adds, or so takes away, as to obstruct the Revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ!” (G. Curry – *Commentary of Revelation*)

### Bro. Russell’s Comments on Rev. 22:18, 19

“... it would appear that the expression of Rev. 22:18, 19, has always, more or less deterred men from falsifying the canonical books. We believe that very few interpolations into the text of the Bible have been made intentionally (that of 1 John 5:7 being a bold and notable exception). Other interpolations were, we believe, generally the result of accident – usually the copying of a marginal comment into the text, at a time when all copying was done by pen.” (R1210:2)

**22:20, 21** – “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen.”

“We have come now to the last, the concluding words of the book. The words are those of the Lord Jesus Himself, and read: ‘He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly.’ Twice does the Savior utter these words, apparently as already suggested to give emphasis to the paramount importance of the Second Advent, toward which they all finally merge. Next comes the response of St. John, as representing the true spirit and longing desire of the true Church: ‘Amen! Come! Lord Jesus.’ On this, the concluding statement of the Revelator, we cannot but submit the beautiful and forceful illustration which another has given:



“Fiction has painted the picture of a maiden whose lover left her for a voyage to the Holy Land, promising on his return to make her his beloved bride. Many told her that she would never see him again. But she believed his word, and evening by evening she went down to the lonely shore and kindled there a beacon-light in sight of the roaring waves, to hail and welcome the returning ship which was to bring again her betrothed. And by that watch-fire she took her stand each night, praying to the winds to hasten on the sluggish sails, that he that was everything to her might come. Even so that blessed Lord, who has loved us unto death, has gone away to the mysterious Holy Land of Heaven, promising on His return to make us His happy and eternal Bride. Some say that He is gone forever, and that here we shall never see Him more. But His word was, ‘Yea, I come quickly.’ And on the dark and misty beach, sloping out into the eternal sea, each true believer stands by the love-lit fire, looking, and waiting, and praying, and hoping for the fulfillment of His word, in nothing gladder than in His pledge and promise, and calling even from the soul of sacred love, ‘Amen! Come! Lord Jesus.’” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ* – Streeter, Vol. 2, p. 619)

“We find this longing for and hoping for and waiting for the coming King in the writings of all the apostles. It is John who exclaims, ‘Come, Lord Jesus!’ It is James who says, ‘Be patient, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.’ It is Peter who encourages the brethren, by pointing out that shortly, when the chief Shepherd will appear, they shall receive a crown of glory, which fadeth not away. It is Jude, who speaks of the Lord’s coming, with myriads of his holy ones. It is Paul who urges faithfulness, and assures the brethren that not only himself, but all who love his appearing, shall then receive a crown of righteousness. (Rev. 22:20; Jas. 5:7; 1 Pet. 5:4; Jude 14; 2 Tim. 4:8)

“And if this hope so encouraged, strengthened and upheld the early Christian Church, should its influence be less today, upon us who remember that now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed?

Nay, verily; Indeed, when the light of present truth, shining on the pathway, shows us that **he who was to come has come**, and has not tarried that the promises of God through the prophets, written aforetime for our admonition, are fulfilled; that we are living in the harvest-time of this age; that the chief Reaper is present; that the gathering of the ‘wheat,’ into the barn, and the bundling of the ‘tares,’ for the coming fiery troubles, is in progress; and when, the eyes of our understanding being opened, we see these things in evidence about us, what manner of persons ought we to be in holy joy and faithfulness, and courage and zeal; to be, to do, to endure, whatsoever things our present Lord and Master, in his infinite wisdom and love, may mark out for us! As he declared, ‘The cup which the Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?’ So may we, with implicit confidence, say that whatever cup of experience our present Lord and Head may pour for us, his disciples, we will cheerfully partake thereof, and thus fill up the afflictions which are behind; and shortly, with all the faithful, enter into glories of the Millennial kingdom which God hath in reservation for them that love him.” (R2926:1)

The Apostle John may have been under the impression that this missive for which he had acted as the amanuensis for the Lord, was just for those of the seven churches of Asia Minor Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. And so, in concluding it, he adds his own little benediction unto those with whom he was personally acquainted. However, as we have seen, those seven churches were merely typical of the seven stages in the development of the whole Church during all of the Gospel age. Little, we believe, did John realize that in the overruling providences of God, this missive would be regarded as a most cherished part of Holy Writ, for more than nineteen centuries! Accordingly, the benediction, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all,” has been received and accepted, ever since, as if it had been directed to every one of the saints during this age. And, of course, our own hearts join with his, as we say to still others, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen”

# INDEX OF SCRIPTURE CITATIONS

|                           |                      |                       |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Genesis</b>            |                      |                       |
| 1:1 ..... 11, 70          | 25:9 ..... 71        | 32:35 ..... 118, 198  |
| 2:7 ..... 12, 143         | 25:22 ..... 234      | 33:22 ..... 90        |
| 2:17 ..... 62             | 25:36 ..... 62       | <b>Judges</b>         |
| 3:4 ..... 37, 62, 171     | 25:40 ..... 71       | 18:1-31 ..... 90      |
| 3:8 ..... 207(2)          | 26:1 ..... 235       | <b>2 Samuel</b>       |
| 9:12-17 ..... 65(2)       | 27:1 ..... 228       | 6-6, 7 ..... 90       |
| 11:1-11 ..... 181         | 27:16 ..... 229      | 7:13 ..... 66         |
| 15:17, 18 ..... 111       | 27:20, 21 ..... 17   | <b>1 Kings</b>        |
| 18:1 ..... 13, 19, 207    | 27:21 ..... 17       | 8:7 ..... 71          |
| 18:1, 2 ..... 2           | 28:21 ..... 231      | 17:1 ..... 127        |
| 19:1-17 ..... 129         | 30:2 ..... 228       | 18:19 ..... 42, 44    |
| 19:17 ..... 129           | 30:6 ..... 97        | <b>2 Kings</b>        |
| 21:9 ..... 33             | 30:8 ..... 17        | 9:22 ..... 44         |
| 22:17 ..... 88            | 30:34-38 ..... 76    | <b>1 Chron</b>        |
| 22:17, 18 ..... 5         | 37:1-9 ..... 71      | 29:11 ..... 205       |
| 22:18 ..... 8, 47, 88, 89 | 37:17 ..... 62       | <b>Job</b>            |
| 168, 235                  | 37:29 ..... 76       | 19-25, 26 ..... 66    |
| 23:6 ..... 11             | 38:18 ..... 229      | 38-6, 7 ..... 243     |
| 28:14 ..... 158, 228      | 38:25, 27 ..... 229  | 38:7 ..... 91(2)      |
| 35:16-19 ..... 92         | <b>Leviticus</b>     | 38:31 ..... 22(2), 23 |
| 35:18 ..... 92            | 4:7 ..... 97         | 38:31, 32 ..... 23    |
| 49:8 ..... 90             | 10:7 ..... 8         | <b>Psalms</b>         |
| 49:8-10 ..... 74          | 16:3 ..... 70        | 1-1, 2 ..... 124      |
| 49:8-12 ..... 74          | 16:11 ..... 97       | 2-1, 2 ..... 188      |
| 49:10 ..... 66            | 16:11-13 ..... 97(2) | 2:1-5 ..... 137, 212  |
| 49:17 ..... 90(2)         | 18:23 ..... 180, 182 | 2:6 ..... 188         |
| <b>Exodus</b>             | 24:3, 4 ..... 25     | 2:6, 8 ..... 136      |
| 3:2 ..... 11, 19, 207(2)  | 25:10 ..... 133      | 2:6-9 ..... 137       |
| 3:3-15 ..... 13, 19, 207  | 26:26 ..... 80       | 2:8 ..... 53          |
| 3:14 ..... 4(2), 10, 11   | <b>Numbers</b>       | 2:10-12 ..... 212     |
| 3:18 ..... 129            | 7:89 ..... 234       | 3:9 ..... 39          |
| 4:21 ..... 192            | 14:21-23 ..... 29    | 5:4 ..... 72          |
| 6:3 ..... 11              | 14:32, 33 ..... 29   | 7:9 ..... 46          |
| 7:1 ..... 11              | 22-25 ..... 40       | 8:3, 4 ..... 70, 160  |
| 7:3 ..... 192             | 23:1-30 ..... 36, 40 | 8:5 ..... 11          |
| 7:17-21 ..... 127         | 23:4 ..... 40        | 8:6 ..... 240         |
| 7:24 ..... 106            | 23:21 ..... 29, 159  | 18:12, 13 ..... 162   |
| 8-12 ..... 127            | 24:1-25 ..... 36, 40 | 19:1 ..... 70, 160    |
| 9:19-21 ..... 180         | 31:13-16 ..... 40    | 19:13 ..... 90        |
| 10:1 ..... 192            | 31:16 ..... 36, 40   | 22:16 ..... 129       |
| 10:12-15 ..... 108        | <b>Deuteronomy</b>   |                       |
| 14:4 ..... 192            | 6:5 ..... 124        |                       |
| 15:3 ..... 119            | 18:15 ..... 135      |                       |
| 16:32-34 ..... 41         | 18:15-19 ..... 66    |                       |
| 19:5, 6 ..... 88, 235     | 19:21 ..... 71       |                       |
| 19:6 ..... 7(2), 77       | 32:11, 12 ..... 71   |                       |
| 19:8 ..... 88             | 32:21 ..... 89       |                       |
| 21:6 ..... 11             |                      |                       |
| 21:24 ..... 71            |                      |                       |

97:5 ..... 179  
 97:11 ..... 122  
 98:1 ..... 164, 209  
 102:19 ..... 71  
 102:25 ..... 70  
 103:1-22 ..... 76  
 106:48 ..... 59  
 110:1 ..... 72  
 110:3 ..... 242  
 110:6 ..... 208  
 133:1, 2 ..... 53  
 137:1-6 ..... 167  
 138:6 ..... 234  
 139:7-10 ..... 5  
 141:1, 2 ..... 76(2)  
 144:1-3 ..... 157  
 144:9 ..... 167  
 149:1-9 ..... 209  
 149:5-9 ..... 208  
 149:7-9 .. 164, 168(2),  
 188  
 149:8, 9 .... 189, 214  
 149:9 ... 69, 164, 165,  
 168(3)

### Proverbs

8:22-30 .... 60(2), 67  
 8:22, 30 ..... 60  
 22:10 ..... 32  
 30:27 ..... 110

### Song of Solomon

8:5 ..... 146

### Isaiah

2:2 ..... 216  
 2:3 ..... 47, 223, 235  
 6:2 ..... 71  
 8:14 ..... 61  
 9:6 ..... 4, 11, 59,  
 143, 225(3)  
 9:6, 7 ..... 8  
 11:4 .... 119, 164, 209  
 11:9 ..... 228, 230  
 13:1-15 ..... 117  
 14:12 ..... 243  
 14:13 ..... 90  
 22:22 ..... 53  
 24:19-21 ..... 85, 120  
 25:6-8 ..... 216  
 26:2 ..... 227  
 26:9 ..... 62  
 26:16-18 ..... 61

28:1 ..... 90  
 28:5 ..... 206  
 28:7 ..... 90  
 28:17 .... 66, 180, 208  
 29:9-13 ..... 181, 194  
 29:13 ..... 20  
 30:26 ..... 173  
 32:1 ..... 136  
 33:17 ..... 63  
 33:20 ..... 223  
 34:4 85(4), 120(2), 206  
 34:6 ..... 93(2), 207  
 34:6, 8 ..... 203  
 34:8-10 ..... 202  
 35:5 ..... 9  
 35:8-10 ..... 67  
 41:4 ..... 10  
 41:8 ..... 110  
 43:3, 11 ..... 6  
 44:6 ..... 10(2)  
 44:27, 28 ..... 175  
 45:1-3 ..... 175  
 45:1-5 ..... 174  
 46:10 ..... 71, 104  
 47:1-11 ..... 196  
 47:9 ..... 196  
 48:13 ..... 70  
 49:10 ..... 93  
 52:7 ... 11(2), 18, 168  
 53:1 ..... 129  
 53:1-3 ..... 9  
 53:10-12 ..... 21  
 53:12 ..... 206  
 55:9 ..... 67  
 57:15 ..... 234  
 59:18 ..... 197  
 60:16 ..... 6  
 60:21 ..... 163  
 63:1-4 ..... 206  
 63:9 ..... 33  
 65:1 ..... 89  
 65:20 ..... 221  
 65:25 ..... 228, 230  
 66:1, 2 ..... 234  
 66:7 ..... 139, 158  
 66:7, 8 ..... 139  
 66:9 ..... 158

### Jeremiah

7:34 ..... 201  
 8:11 ..... 170  
 8:22 ..... 170, 199  
 20:9 ..... 69  
 23:6 19, 42, 56, 57, 219  
 31:29, 30 .... 67, 242

31:31-34 ..... 231  
 33:16 19, 42, 56, 57, 219  
 50:38 ..... 175  
 51:1 ..... 197  
 51:1-3 ..... 197  
 51:6 ..... 197(3)  
 51:6-13 ..... 179  
 51:7 ..... 181  
 51:8, 9 ..... 197, 199  
 51:9 ..... 199  
 51:24 ..... 197  
 51:24-26 ..... 199  
 51:42 ..... 199  
 51:44, 58 ..... 197  
 51:45 ..... 197  
 51:61-64 ..... 200  
 51:62 ..... 200  
 51:63 ..... 200  
 51:63, 64 ..... 199

### Ezekiel

1:5 ..... 70, 71(2)  
 1:6 ..... 71  
 1:10 ..... 71  
 4:6 ..... 95  
 4:16, 17 ..... 80  
 10:15, 20 .... 70, 71  
 16:48-63 ..... 167  
 21:26, 27 ..... 67  
 38:15 ..... 218  
 47:1-8 ..... 236, 237  
 47:1-12 ..... 236(2)  
 47:12 ..... 237

### Daniel

2:31-45 ..... 131  
 2:34 ..... 235  
 2:34, 35 ..... 228, 230  
 2:35 ..... 235  
 2:35 ..... 86  
 2:40 ..... 99  
 2:44 ..... 86  
 2:45 ..... 86  
 5:25-29 ..... 57, 197  
 5:30, 31 ..... 174  
 7:1-6 ..... 185  
 7:1, 7 ..... 185  
 7:1-28 ..... 147  
 7:7 ..... 140, 147, 185  
 7:7, 8 ..... 185, 188  
 7:8 ..... 142  
 7:8-25 ..... 174  
 7:9 ..... 17, 19  
 7:9 ..... 18

7:9, 14 ..... 212  
 7:11 ..... 142  
 7:13 ..... 18  
 7:13, 14 ..... 18, 19  
 7:13 ..... 189  
 7:14 ..... 212  
 7:19-23 ..... 139  
 7:20-22 ..... 142  
 7:22 ..... 18, 212  
 7:24 ..... 132, 188  
 7:25 104, 142, 149, 187  
 7:26 .... 104, 116, 199  
 7:27 ..... 7, 189  
 8:10-12 ..... 102  
 8:11 ..... 102  
 8:11-14 ..... 27  
 8:14 ..... 121  
 8:16 ..... 2(2)  
 9:21 ..... 2(2)  
 9:24-27 ..... 98  
 9:27 ..... 98  
 10:24 ..... 159  
 11:31 .... 49, 125, 128  
 11:33 ..... 130  
 11:34 ..... 125, 130  
 12:1 ..... 45, 47, 85,  
 136, 137, 143(2),  
 177, 209, 210  
 12:1-4 ..... 193, 213  
 12:3 ..... 175  
 12:4 ..... 83  
 12:7 ..... 125  
 12:10 ..... 186  
 12:11 ..... 121, 125  
 12:12 . 67, 121(2), 123

### Hosea

3:5 ..... 67  
 4:6 ..... 88, 235  
 7:8 ..... 90(2)  
 13:4 ..... 6

### Joel

2:10 ..... 84, 116, 118  
 2:11 .... 117, 119, 208  
 2:28 ..... 67, 238

### Amos

3:2 ..... 29  
 8:11 .... 42, 44, 112,  
 127, 194  
 8:11, 12 ..... 128  
 9:13-15 ..... 67

**Obadiah**

21 ..... 67, 158

**Jonah**

4:10, 11 ..... 67

**Micah**

4:1, 2 ..... 67

**Nahum**

1:15 ..... 67

3:1-6 ..... 192

**Habakkuk**

2:2 ..... 123(2)

2:14 ..... 67

**Zephaniah**

1:7-9 ..... 164, 211

1:14-18 ..... 164, 211

3:1-4 ..... 192

3:8, 9 ..... 68

**Haggai**

2:6,7 ..... 68, 133

2:22 ..... 118

**Zechariah**

4:1-14 ..... 127

4:2, 3 ..... 126(3)

4:3 ..... 126

4:7-11 ..... 126

4:11 ..... 127

4:11, 12 ..... 126

4:14 ..... 126

5:5-11 ..... 193

5:7, 8 ..... 193

6:12, 13 ..... 68

6:13 ..... 135

12:8-10 ..... 9

12:10 .... 9(3), 11, 12

14:8, 9 ..... 236

14:9 ..... 136

**Malachi**

3:1 ..... 193, 214

3:17 . 42, 56, 63, 68, 198

4:2 ..... 48, 233

**Matthew**

1:20, 21 ..... 2

3:1-3 ..... 121

3:9 ..... 11

3:11 ..... 33, 98

3:17 ..... 205

4:17 ..... 95

5:6 ..... 225

5:11 ..... 38

5:14, 16 ..... 69

5:15 ..... 69

6:10 ..... 5, 117(2),

133, 143

7:21 ..... 46

8:22 ..... 216

8:34 ..... 36

10:5 ..... 98

10:7 ..... 95

10:20 ..... 95

10:22 ..... 47

10:26 ..... 119

11:28-30 ..... 109

12:29 ..... 184

13:25 ..... 3

13:30 ..... 163, 193

13:33 ..... 79(2)

13:39 ..... 3

13:41 ..... 193

13:43 69, 135, 227, 233

14:29 ..... 166

15:14 ..... 109

15:24 ..... 98

17:3 ..... 127

17:5 ..... 205

17:9 ..... 17

18:18 ..... 98

20:18, 19 ..... 129

20:28 ..... 5, 71, 76

22:32 ..... 110

22:42 ..... 59

23:8 ..... 79, 153

23:8,9 ..... 196

23:8-12 ..... 40

23:9 ..... 36, 39

23:14 ..... 50

23:22 ..... 129

23:23-28 ..... 50

23:37 ..... 50

23:38 ..... 32, 89, 235

24:9 ..... 84

24:12 ..... 161

24:14 ..... 7, 159

24:15 ..... 124, 128

24:21 ..... 45, 47, 85,

161, 178

24:22 ..... 178

24:23-25 ..... 213

24:29 ..... 84

24:30 ..... 84

24:36 ..... 76

25:1-5 ..... 83

25:1-13 ..... 204

25:31-33 ..... 218

25:31-46 . 219, 221(2),

225

25:34 ..... 240

25:41 ..... 218

25:41-46 ..... 215

26:29 ..... 135

26:56 ..... 32

27:3-5 ..... 40

27:50 ..... 32

28:18 .... 4, 11(2), 13,

47(2), 75, 117, 193

28:19 ..... 159

28:20 ..... 38, 63

**Mark**

1:15 ..... 95

1:24 ..... 36

3:27 ..... 214

6:39 ..... 80

9:4 ..... 127

13:32 ..... 1, 73, 74

14:20 ..... 32

15:12-15 ..... 9

15:37 ..... 32

**Luke**

1:19 ..... 2

1:28 ..... 2

2:10, 11 ..... 68

2:49 ..... 5

3:16 ..... 33

3:21,23 ..... 6

4:5-7 ..... 53

4:25 ..... 127

9:11 ..... 239

9:26 ..... 52

9:30,31 ..... 127

9:56 ..... 81

10:18 ..... 243

11:50, 51 .... 165(2)

12:16-21 ..... 32

12:32 ..... 208

12:37 ..... 63

12:47, 48 ..... 242

13:28 ..... 227

18:7,8 ..... 197

18:8 ..... 84, 116, 137

18:22 ..... 43

19:43,44 ..... 33

19:44 ..... 61

21:19 ..... 161

21:20,24 ..... 33

21:26 ..... 68, 133

21:28 ..... 117

21:34,35 ..... 10

21:36 ..... 61, 158

22:53 ..... 214

23:40 ..... 216

23:46 ..... 32

24:44 ..... 127

24:49 ..... 95

**John**

1:1 . 5, 11(3), 19, 59(2),

60, 207(2), 242

1:1,3 ..... 31

1:1-3 ..... 31, 32

1:3 ..... 5, 12, 21, 37,

207, 227, 242(2)

1:10 . 31, 207, 227, 242

1:11 ..... 9, 88, 129

1:12 ..... 76, 89

1:18 ..... 60, 75

1:29 ..... 68, 158

1:29, 36 ..... 75, 156

1:51 ..... 59

2:1-11 ..... 32

2:3,4 ..... 65

2:13-23 ..... 32

3:1-21 ..... 32

3:16 ..... 6

3:17 ..... 230

4:1-42 ..... 32

4:14 ..... 236, 239

4:46-54 ..... 32

5:1-47 ..... 32

5:19 ..... 6

5:23 ..... 73

5:24 ..... 205, 220

5:24,25 ..... 59

5:26 ..... 12

5:29 ..... 160

5:30 ..... 6

5:39 ..... 127, 205

6:26-65 ..... 32

6:38 ..... 6

6:47-51 ..... 41

7:16 ..... 6(2)

7:28 ..... 6

8:14 ..... 60

8:23 ..... 60

|           |                        |
|-----------|------------------------|
| 8:32      | 86, 106                |
| 8:39      | 32, 88, 231            |
| 8:39, 40  | 231                    |
| 8:52      | 60                     |
| 8:56, 58  | 111                    |
| 8:58      | 60(2)                  |
| 9:1-41    | 32                     |
| 9:4       | 6(2)                   |
| 10:27     | 195                    |
| 10:30     | 71                     |
| 10:33     | 173                    |
| 11:17-46  | 32                     |
| 11:49-53  | 36                     |
| 12:4-9    | 6                      |
| 12:20-33  | 32                     |
| 12:24     | 229                    |
| 12:48     | 220                    |
| 13:1-17   | 32                     |
| 14:3      | 63, 163                |
| 14:6      | 58, 62                 |
| 14:9-11   | 11                     |
| 14:11     | 71                     |
| 14:16     | 48                     |
| 14:16, 17 | 65                     |
| 14:16-18  | 75                     |
| 14:16-20  | 38                     |
| 14:16, 17 | 65                     |
| 14:18     | 48                     |
| 14:24     | 6                      |
| 14:26     | 65                     |
| 14:26, 27 | 48, 75                 |
| 14:30     | 215                    |
| 15:16     | 63                     |
| 15:26     | 38                     |
| 16:8-11   | 103                    |
| 16:13     | 25                     |
| 16:13, 14 | 31, 65                 |
| 17:1-26   | 32, 59                 |
| 17:5      | 5, 71                  |
| 17:22     | 71                     |
| 18:29-37  | 32                     |
| 18:36     | 33                     |
| 19:30     | 32                     |
| 19:34     | 32                     |
| 19:35     | 32                     |
| 19:38-42  | 32                     |
| 20:19-23  | 32                     |
| 20:23     | 98                     |
| 20:25     | 32                     |
| 20:28     | 11                     |
| 29:29     | 32                     |
| 20:31     | 32                     |
| 21:1-24   | 32                     |
| 21:22     | 2, 14, 31, 122,<br>168 |
| 21:22, 23 | 64                     |

**Acts**

|           |              |
|-----------|--------------|
| 1:4-9     | 95           |
| 1:13      | 230          |
| 2:1-4     | 95           |
| 2:2       | 65           |
| 2:3, 4    | 65           |
| 2:6-17    | 95           |
| 2:9       | 3            |
| 2:10      | 54           |
| 2:38      | 95           |
| 3:19-21   | 63, 111, 223 |
| 3:21      | 167, 171     |
| 3:22      | 135          |
| 3:23      | 10, 135      |
| 4:12      | 7            |
| 4:13      | 25           |
| 5:29      | 33           |
| 5:33      | 98           |
| 6:5       | 30           |
| 7:5       | 111          |
| 7:54      | 98           |
| 7:57, 58  | 99           |
| 8:1       | 99           |
| 9:15      | 25, 230      |
| 9:15, 16  | 25           |
| 9:23      | 98           |
| 10:36, 40 | 243          |
| 11:2      | 98           |
| 13:44     | 98           |
| 13:45-49  | 98           |
| 13:50     | 36(2)        |
| 15:14     | 89           |
| 17:5, 6   | 36           |
| 17:23     | 147          |
| 17:31     | 137, 220     |
| 19:40     | 36           |
| 20:1      | 36           |
| 20:24     | 38           |
| 20:28     | 7            |
| 20:28-30  | 26(2)        |
| 20:29     | 3(2)         |
| 20:29, 30 | 27           |
| 20:30     | 3, 37        |
| 20:32     | 27           |
| 21:31     | 36           |
| 22:4      | 6            |
| 24:25     | 68, 103      |
| 26:9      | 28           |
| 26:12-14  | 6            |
| 26:15     | 6            |
| 26:23     | 6            |

**Romans**

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| 1:1 | 25 |
|-----|----|

|           |                         |
|-----------|-------------------------|
| 1:8       | 26                      |
| 1:28      | 102, 103                |
| 2:7       | 3, 40, 217              |
| 2:28, 29  | 33, 231                 |
| 3:10      | 70                      |
| 3:29      | 126                     |
| 4:1-4     | 111                     |
| 5:8       | 71                      |
| 5:15      | 3                       |
| 5:16      | 231                     |
| 5:21      | 3                       |
| 6:23      | 3                       |
| 8:11      | 158                     |
| 8:13, 14  | 139                     |
| 8:16-18   | 38                      |
| 8:17      | 53, 56, 98,<br>217, 225 |
| 8:17, 18  | 7                       |
| 8:19-23   | 62                      |
| 8:21, 22  | 220                     |
| 8:28, 29  | 55                      |
| 8:29      | 76, 80, 225             |
| 8:29, 30  | 229                     |
| 9:4       | 89                      |
| 9:6, 7    | 33                      |
| 9:24      | 126                     |
| 9:29-33   | 89                      |
| 11:7      | 88                      |
| 11:25-32  | 9                       |
| 11:25-33  | 88                      |
| 11:26     | 158                     |
| 12:1      | 65                      |
| 12:3      | 29                      |
| 12:19     | 118, 198                |
| 15:4      | 46                      |
| 16:25, 26 | 87                      |

**1 Corinthians**

|          |                     |
|----------|---------------------|
| 1:26-29  | 47                  |
| 2:9, 10  | 31, 65              |
| 2:14     | 65                  |
| 3:1      | 93, 207             |
| 3:13     | 137                 |
| 3:16     | 168                 |
| 3:16, 17 | 175                 |
| 5:5      | 90                  |
| 6:1      | 220                 |
| 6:3      | 47                  |
| 8:6      | 10, 31, 32, 75, 242 |
| 10:12    | 29                  |
| 11:3     | 215                 |
| 11:14    | 109                 |
| 11:15    | 109                 |
| 11:19    | 26(2)               |
| 12:4-11  | 69                  |

|           |              |
|-----------|--------------|
| 12:12     | 16           |
| 012:12-31 | 18           |
| 13:12     | 233          |
| 15:20     | 6, 189       |
| 15:22, 23 | 224          |
| 15:24, 25 | 215          |
| 15:24-28  | 12           |
| 15:25     | 221          |
| 15:25, 26 | 64           |
| 15:26     | 210          |
| 15:27     | 12, 19, 189  |
| 15:27, 28 | 12, 190, 210 |
| 15:29     | 158          |
| 15:42     | 138          |
| 15:42-44  | 12           |
| 15:50     | 217          |
| 15:51-53  | 161          |
| 15:52     | 134, 162     |
| 15:52, 53 | 189          |
| 15:53, 54 | 12           |
| 15:54     | 210          |

**2 Corinthians**

|           |          |
|-----------|----------|
| 2:3-6     | 27       |
| 3:16, 17  | 228      |
| 3:17      | 244      |
| 3:18      | 52       |
| 4:4       | 227      |
| 4:11      | 8        |
| 4:18      | 9        |
| 5:14      | 216      |
| 5:21      | 219      |
| 8:2       | 26       |
| 8:9       | 5, 71    |
| 9:15      | 3        |
| 10:4, 5   | 208      |
| 11:2      | 139, 159 |
| 11:5      | 25       |
| 11:13     | 84, 101  |
| 11:13-15  | 55       |
| 11:14     | 33, 185  |
| 11:28     | 25, 26   |
| 12:1      | 25       |
| 12:7      | 25       |
| 12:11, 12 | 25       |

**Galatians**

|          |       |
|----------|-------|
| 1:1      | 28    |
| 1:4      | 7     |
| 1:6-9    | 28(2) |
| 1:8      | 130   |
| 1:11, 12 | 28    |
| 1:13, 14 | 28    |
| 1:15, 16 | 28    |

1:23 ..... 28  
 2:2-10 ..... 25  
 3:6 ..... 111  
 3:7, 9 ..... 33  
 3:7-9 ..... 147  
 3:8 ..... 159  
 3:16 ..... 158  
 3:19 ..... 88  
 3:29 .... 8, 33, 47, 89,  
 147, 158, 228, 235  
 4:26 ..... 57, 147  
 6:3 ..... 29

**Ephesians**

1:6 ..... 90  
 1:10 ..... 47  
 1:14 ..... 225  
 2:1 ..... 158  
 2:2 ..... 178  
 2:6 ..... 16, 227  
 2:10 ..... 39, 43  
 2:20-22 ..... 228  
 3:6 ..... 126  
 3:7-9 ..... 25  
 3:9 ..... 12  
 3:11 ..... 76  
 3:12 ..... 25  
 4:4 ..... 90  
 4:12 ..... 7  
 4:269 ..... 159  
 5:14-17 ..... 50  
 5:15-17 ..... 204  
 5:25 ..... 7(2)  
 5:27 ..... 51  
 6:17 ..... 209

**Philippians**

2:5-11 ..... 53  
 2:6-11 ..... 6  
 2:7 ..... 5  
 2:7-9 ..... 124  
 2:7-11 ..... 75  
 2:8 ..... 5  
 2:9 ..... 5(2), 71, 206  
 2:9, 10 ..... 209  
 2:9-11 ..... 9, 73  
 2:10 ..... 9, 47  
 2:11 ..... 71, 152  
 3:10, 11 ..... 189  
 3:14 ..... 65, 162

**Colossians**

1:13 ..... 214

1:15 .. 4(2), 10, 12, 19,  
 31, 32, 36, 59, 72,  
 143, 227, 242(2)  
 1:15-18 ..... 59, 60  
 1:16 ..... 4  
 1:18 ..... 6, 242  
 1:20 ..... 47  
 1:24 ..... 39, 97  
 1:25-27 ..... 25  
 2:3 ..... 75  
 2:4 ..... 40  
 2:8 ..... 109  
 2:9 .... 11, 71, 72, 143  
 2:18 ..... 40, 109  
 2:19 ..... 109  
 3:3 ..... 217  
 3:4 ..... 8

**1 Thessalonians**

1:3 ..... 26  
 1:4 ..... 90  
 1:8 ..... 26  
 3:11 ..... 4  
 4:16 ..... 134  
 5:3 ..... 137

**2 Thessalonians**

1:7-10 ..... 163  
 1:8 ..... 9, 137  
 1:8, 9 ..... 167  
 2:3 ..... 3, 100  
 2:3,4 ..... 183  
 2:4 ..... 143  
 2:7 . 3, 27, 37, 79, 101,  
 139(2), 184, 185  
 2:7-10 ..... 102  
 2:8 ..... 209  
 2:10-12 ..... 109, 143  
 3:6 ..... 184

**1 Timothy**

2:4 ..... 167, 220  
 2:6 ..... 5, 71, 76  
 4:1 ..... 46  
 4:10 ..... 6  
 5:24 ..... 242  
 6:14-16 ..... 189  
 6:15 . 12, 189, 209, 243  
 6:15, 16 ..... 12  
 6:16 ..... 8, 19

**2 Timothy**

1:12 ..... 36, 39

2:12 47, 53, 76, 97, 149,  
 175, 217(2), 229  
 2:17 ..... 3  
 3:1-4 ..... 10  
 3:5 ..... 100, 102  
 3:12 ..... 38  
 3:13 ..... 10  
 3:15-17 ..... 27  
 3:17 ..... 228  
 4:8 109, 162, 206, 245

**Titus**

1:3 ..... 6  
 2:10 ..... 6  
 2:14 ..... 7

**Hebrews**

1:1-3 ..... 143  
 1:3 5, 11, 19, 72, 227(2)  
 1:8 ..... 72  
 1:13 ..... 72  
 2:1,3 ..... 57  
 2:9 ..... 9, 71  
 2:14 ..... 219  
 2:14-18 ..... 243  
 3:1 ..... 25(2), 65, 97  
 3:5,6 ..... 61  
 4:1 ..... 69  
 5:1-3 ..... 25  
 5:7 ..... 130  
 5:10 ..... 5  
 7:2 ..... 137  
 7:17 ..... 5, 135  
 7:24-27 ..... 5  
 7:26, 27 ..... 25(2)  
 8:1, 2 ..... 25  
 8:1-3 ..... 25  
 9:11 ..... 25(2)  
 9:24 ..... 5, 25(2)  
 9:28 ..... 8  
 10:1-4 ..... 70  
 10:1-10 ..... 102  
 10:7 ..... 124  
 10:7, 9 ..... 6, 32  
 10:11, 12 ..... 25  
 10:19,20 ..... 5  
 10:32, 33 ..... 29  
 10:34 ..... 26  
 10:35-39 ..... 29  
 11:34-38 ..... 232  
 11:35 ..... 231  
 11:39 ..... 231  
 11:39, 40 ..... 47  
 12:2 ..... 9

12:17 ..... 40  
 12:23 ..... 159  
 12:26 ..... 105  
 12:27 ..... 161  
 12:28 ..... 136  
 13:8 ..... 60  
 13:10 ..... 124  
 13:12 ..... 7

**James**

1:6 ..... 220  
 1:12 .... 35, 109, 206  
 1:18 .... 158, 159, 189  
 1:27 ... 51(2), 204(2)  
 2:17 ..... 43  
 2:22 ..... 43  
 2:23 ..... 111  
 3:1 ..... 216  
 5:7 ..... 245  
 5:17 ..... 127

**1 Peter**

1:2 ..... 7  
 1:12 ..... 2, 169  
 1:18, 19 ..... 110  
 2:5 ..... 89, 235  
 2:7 ..... 224  
 2:9 .... 7, 76, 77, 89,  
 176, 235  
 2:23 ..... 38  
 4:12, 13 ..... 33  
 4:16 ..... 53  
 4:17 161, 168, 205, 206  
 5:2,3 ..... 40  
 5:2-4 ..... 27  
 5:4 .. 35, 109, 206, 245  
 5:8 ..... 147

**2 Peter**

1:4 ..... 5, 62, 217(2),  
 227(2), 228, 230  
 1:10 ... 40, 63, 90, 235  
 1:11 ..... 191  
 1:21 ..... 71  
 2:1 ..... 3  
 2:12 ..... 10  
 2:15 ..... 30  
 2:15, 16, 19 ..... 30  
 3:3,4 ..... 48  
 3:6,7 ..... 177  
 3:8 ..... 137, 199  
 3:10 ..... 85, 120  
 3:10-13 ..... 177

3:12 ..... 85, 120  
 3:13 ..... 66, 98, 117,  
 138(2), 160

### 1 John

1:1 ..... 207  
 2:18 ..... 183  
 3:2 ..... 227(2)  
 4:3 ..... 183  
 5:7 ..... 59, 244  
 5:18 ..... 90  
 5:19 ..... 147

### Jude

3 ..... 35, 63, 110  
 4 ..... 30, 216  
 9 ..... 143  
 10 ..... 10  
 11 ..... 30  
 13 ..... 84, 101, 220  
 14 ..... 5, 8, 245  
 14, 15 ..... 66  
 23 ..... 51  
 25 ..... 6

### Revelation

1:1 ..... 2, 75, 96, 125  
 1:3 ..... 2(2)  
 1:4 ..... 13, 15(2), 65,  
 69, 136  
 1:5 4(2), 6(2), 7, 75, 243  
 1:6 ..... 6, 7, 77  
 1:7 ..... 10, 162  
 1:7, 8 ..... 9  
 1:8 ... 4(2), 11(2), 12,  
 13(2), 15, 72, 242(2)  
 1:8 ..... 242  
 1:8 ..... 12  
 1:10 ..... 125  
 1:11 ..... 12, 15, 242  
 1:12 ..... 69, 139  
 1:12, 13 ..... 23, 126  
 1:13 ..... 17(2),  
 1:13, 14 ..... 18, 19  
 1:13-16 ..... 17, 19  
 1:14 ..... 206  
 1:16, 20 ..... 123  
 1:17 ..... 12, 21, 60  
 1:18 ..... 214(2)  
 1:19 ..... 125  
 1:20 ... 17, 21, 22, 25,  
 44, 49, 69(2), 126(2)  
 2:1 17, 21, 25, 69, 126(2)

2:1-29 ..... 21, 94  
 2:2 . 27(3), 55, 84, 101  
 2:2, 3 ..... 26  
 2:5 ... 29(2), 126, 142  
 2:6 . 27, 30(2), 79, 139  
 2:7 ..... 30, 31, 168  
 2:8 ..... 12, 17, 21(2),  
 31(2), 37, 60  
 2:8-10 ..... 140  
 2:9 .. 32, 33(2), 55, 89  
 2:10 .... 33, 35(3), 63,  
 109, 140, 230  
 2:10, 11 ..... 206  
 2:11 ..... 30, 158, 168  
 2:12 ..... 17, 21, 37  
 2:13 ..... 38, 39(2)  
 2:14 36, 40, 44, 46, 206  
 2:14, 15 ..... 30  
 2:15 ..... 30(2), 79  
 2:16 ..... 40  
 2:17 .... 30, 41(3), 63,  
 168, 206  
 2:18 ..... 17, 21  
 2:19 ..... 43, 47, 48  
 2:20 ..... 46  
 2:20-25 ..... 44  
 2:21 .. 44, 53, 127, 192  
 2:22 ..... 45  
 2:22, 23 ..... 127  
 2:25 ..... 46  
 2:26 ..... 47, 168  
 2:26, 27 ..... 47  
 2:27 ..... 135, 137  
 2:28 ..... 243  
 2:29 ..... 30  
 3:1 ..... 65, 69  
 3:1-22 ..... 21, 94  
 3:2 ..... 49  
 3:3 ..... 48, 50  
 3:4 ..... 51, 90  
 3:5 ... 35, 53, 168, 186  
 3:6 ..... 30  
 3:7 ..... 53  
 3:9 .. 33, 55(2), 56, 89  
 3:10 ..... 56(2)  
 3:11 .... 35, 53, 56(2)  
 3:12 . 42, 56, 168, 175,  
 203, 206  
 3:14 4(2), 10, 12(2), 19,  
 31, 32, 36, 59(2), 60,  
 72, 79, 123, 134, 242(3)  
 3:14-22 ..... 64  
 3:15, 16 ..... 134  
 3:16 ..... 60, 61, 134,  
 160, 170, 193  
 3:17 ..... 62, 192

3:18 ..... 62(2)  
 3:20 ..... 63(2)  
 3:21 30, 47, 63, 64(2),  
 72(2), 91, 168, 202  
 4:1 ..... 65  
 4:2 ..... 64, 65  
 4:3 ..... 230  
 4:4 ... 66, 71, 107, 136  
 4:5 ..... 5, 69  
 4:6 .... 70, 71(2), 104  
 4:6-8 ..... 71  
 4:7 ..... 78, 104  
 4:8 .... 71, 72(2), 136  
 4:9 ..... 72  
 4:9-11 ..... 72(2)  
 4:10 ..... 72  
 4:11 .. 72(2), 117, 193  
 5:1 ..... 74, 77, 96  
 5:1, 2 ..... 1  
 5:1-13 ..... 206  
 5:2 ..... 73  
 5:2, 7 ..... 97  
 5:5 ..... 65  
 5:5, 6 ..... 97  
 5:6 ..... 5, 69(2), 72  
 5:6-10 ..... 157  
 5:7-9 ..... 1, 117  
 5:8 ..... 76(2), 107  
 5:9 ..... 7  
 5:9-13 ..... 73  
 5:10 6(4), 7, 77, 89, 233  
 5:12 .... 9, 19, 77, 193  
 5:13 ..... 76, 77(2)  
 5:14 ..... 77, 107  
 6:1 ..... 78  
 6:1-17 ..... 94  
 6:2 ..... 78, 206  
 6:3 ..... 78  
 6:5 ..... 78, 80  
 6:7 ..... 78  
 6:9-11 ..... 81, 168  
 6:10 ..... 82, 168  
 6:11 ..... 82  
 6-14 ..... 85(2), 120  
 6;15 ..... 86  
 6:15-17 ..... 10, 86  
 7:1 ..... 87  
 7:1-3 ..... 86  
 7:1-8 ..... 89  
 7:3 ..... 87, 117  
 7:3, 4 ..... 156, 158  
 7:4 ..... 88, 156  
 7:4-8 ..... 88, 89, 231  
 7:5-8 ..... 208  
 7:9 ... 90, 91, 93, 201,  
 202, 205, 210(2)

7:9-17 . 91, 93, 204(2)  
 7:10 ..... 90  
 7:12 ..... 91, 92  
 7:13, 14 ..... 202  
 7:13-15 ..... 90  
 7:14 90, 92, 93(2), 158,  
 170, 207, 208, 210, 211  
 7:16 ..... 94, 225  
 7:17 ..... 94  
 8:1, 2 ..... 96  
 8:1-13 ..... 94  
 8:2 ..... 97, 133  
 8:3 ..... 97(3)  
 8:3-5 ..... 97(2)  
 8:4 ..... 98, 117  
 8:5 ..... 97, 98  
 8:7 ..... 80  
 8:12 ..... 103  
 8:13 104(2), 105, 108,  
 117, 121, 133  
 9:1 ..... 105  
 9:1-11 ..... 133  
 9:1-12 ..... 106  
 9:2, 3 ..... 128  
 9:3 ..... 108  
 9:4 ..... 80, 108  
 9:5 ..... 108  
 9:6 ..... 108  
 9:7 ..... 108(2), 109  
 9:8 ..... 108, 109(2)  
 9:9 .... 108, 109, 110  
 9:10 ..... 108(3)  
 9:11 ..... 110  
 9:13 ..... 105  
 9:13-19 ..... 106  
 9:14 ..... 175  
 9:16 ..... 117, 209  
 10:2 .... 122(2), 123  
 10:4 .... 122(2), 123  
 10:5 ..... 175  
 10:7 . 77(2), 87, 96(2),  
 122, 123(2), 134  
 10:8-10 .. 122(2), 123  
 10:10 ..... 123  
 10:11 ..... 168  
 11-1, 2 ..... 168  
 11:2 .... 124(2), 125,  
 11:3 .. 125(3), 127(3),  
 131, 148  
 11:4 . 125, 126(3), 127  
 11:6 ..... 127(2)  
 11:8 ..... 129  
 11:9 ..... 129, 131  
 11:10 ..... 129  
 11:11 .... 129, 131(2)  
 11:12 ..... 130



|                 |                               |                 |   |                |   |                        |                             |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|---|----------------|---|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 11:13 .....     | 133                           | 15:1 .....      | 106, 165  | 18:2           | 192, 194, 201, 210  | 20:6 ...               | 6(2), 7(2), 82,<br>158, 175 |
| 11:14 .....     | 120                           | 15:1-3 .....    | 158   | 18:2, 4 .....  | 160, 193  | 20:7-10 ..             | 218, 219(2)                 |
| 11:15           | 105, 117, 133, 134            | 15:2 .          | 69, 157, 166, 168   | 18:2-4 .....   | 60  | 20:8 .....             | 218                         |
| 11:15-18 ...    | 134, 136,<br>137(2), 164      | 15:2, 3 ...     | 88, 156, 167  | 18:3           | 44, 181, 184, 194(2)  | 20:9 .....             | 218, 219                    |
| 11:15, 18 ....  | 96, 134                       | 15:2-4 .....    | 157   | 18:4 ..        | 45, 61(2), 106,<br>129, 134, 158, 160, 168,<br>193, 195(3), 199(2), 201 | 20:9, 10 .....         | 221                         |
| 11:16 .....     | 107                           | 15:3 .....      | 157, 168  | 18:5-7 .....   | 199   | 20:10 .....            | 219, 234                    |
| 11:17 .....     | 4 214                         | 15:3, 4 .....   | 167, 172  | 18:7           | 44, 45, 46, 58, 79,<br>182, 192, 196 197                                | 20:11 .....            | 219                         |
| 11:17, 18       | 11, 208, 209                  | 15:4 .....      | 46, 66  | 18:8 ...       | 127, 177, 196,<br>197, 199  | 20:11-15 .....         | 220                         |
| 11:18 .....     | 135, 137                      | 15:5-8 .....    | 169, 228  | 18:9 .....     | 200   | 20:12 .....            | 221                         |
| 12:1 ....       | 19, 20(2), 84,<br>172, 233    | 15:8 .....      | 169   | 18:9-19 .....  | 198   | 20:15 .....            | 219, 221                    |
| 12:1, 2 .....   | 139(2)                        | 15:14, 16 ..... | 163   | 18:11 .....    | 194, 200  | 21:1-8 .....           | 224                         |
| 12:3 .....      | 132, 185(2)                   | 16:1 .....      | 177   | 18:14 .....    | 199   | 21:2                   | 223(2), 228(2), 229         |
| 12:5 .....      | 139(4 142)                    | 16:1-6 .....    | 181   | 18:15 .....    | 194   | 21:2-5 .....           | 227                         |
| 12:6 .          | 83, 127(2), 142,<br>145, 148  | 16:5, 6 .....   | 171   | 18:16 .....    | 198   | 21:2, 10, 11, 16, etc. | 235                         |
| 12:7 .....      | 143(2)                        | 16:7 .....      | 172(2)  | 18:17-19 ..... | 200   | 21:3 .....             | 223, 235                    |
| 12:7-9 .....    | 144                           | 16:12 .....     | 117, 119,<br>175(3), 191                                    | 18:21 ...      | 58, 191, 197,<br>199, 200(2)  | 21:3-5 ...             | 138, 223, 228               |
| 12:9 .....      | 144, 185                      | 16:13 ....      | 147, 154(2)   | 18:23 ....     | 170, 201(4)   | 21:4 .                 | 224(3), 225, 239            |
| 12:10-12 .....  | 144                           | 16:14 .....     | 176   | 19:1, 2 .....  | 198   | 21:4, 5 .....          | 210, 224                    |
| 12:14 ....      | 145(2), 149                   | 16:15 .....     | 51, 52  | 19:1-21 .....  | 204   | 21:6 .....             | 11, 12, 15,<br>225, 242(2)  |
| 12:15, 16 ..... | 146                           | 16:16 .....     | 177   | 19:2 .....     | 44, 199   | 21:7 .....             | 52, 225                     |
| 12:19 .....     | 33                            | 16:16-18 .....  | 178   | 19:3 .....     | 163, 202  | 21:7, 8 .....          | 218                         |
| 13:1 .....      | 185(3)                        | 16:18 .....     | 178   | 19:4 .....     | 107   | 21:8                   | 221, 225, 234, 243          |
| 13:2            | 140, 144, 147(2),<br>185, 186 | 16:18, 19 ..... | 178   | 19:6, 7 .....  | 203   | 21:9 ....              | 225, 229, 244               |
| 13:3 .....      | 104, 148                      | 16:19 .....     | 179, 199  | 19:6-9 .....   | 202   | 21:9, 10 ..            | 47, 57, 227                 |
| 13:5 .....      | 127, 174                      | 16:20 .....     | 85, 179   | 19:7 ....      | 202, 205, 228   | 21:9-27 ....           | 223, 227                    |
| 13:5-7 .....    | 124                           | 17:1 .....      | 180, 185  | 19:8 .....     | 52(2), 82,<br>203(2), 204(2)  | 21:9, 15 ....          | 228(2)                      |
| 13:7 .....      | 56                            | 17:1-5 ..       | 159, 179 181  | 19:9 .....     | 204, 205  | 21:10 .....            | 229                         |
| 13:11 .....     | 212                           | 17:1-6 ..       | 181, 192, 195   | 19:10 .....    | 205   | 21:11 ....             | 227, 230(2)                 |
| 13:11-18 .....  | 155                           | 17:1-15         | 180(2), 182, 192  | 19:11 ....     | 78, 119, 206  | 21:11-23 ....          | 65, 227                     |
| 13:14 .....     | 153(2),                       | 17:2 ....       | 44, 181, 194  | 19:12 .....    | 78  | 21:12 .....            | 227                         |
| 13:14-17 .....  | 194                           | 17:2-6 .....    | 182, 192  | 19:13 .....    | 206, 207  | 21:14 .....            | 27 228(2)                   |
| 13:14-18 .....  | 213                           | 17:3 .....      | 185   | 19:14 ....     | 168, 208(2)   | 21:15 .....            | 234                         |
| 13:15           | 153, 154, 155(2)              | 17:3-6 .....    | 197   | 19:15 ..       | 164, 206, 207,<br>208, 209(3), 213(2)                                   | 21:16 .....            | 228 229(2)                  |
| 13:15-17 .....  | 156                           | 17-4, 5 .....   | 44  | 19:16 ..       | 190, 206, 209,<br>210(2)  | 21:21 .....            | 231                         |
| 13:16, 17 ..... | 156                           | 17:5 .          | 45(2), 148, 153,<br>174, 180, 181(2),<br>182, 186, 191, 202 | 19:17 .....    | 164, 208  | 21:22 .....            | 233                         |
| 13:17 .....     | 155                           | 17:5, 6 .....   | 45  | 19:18 .....    | 208, 213  | 21:24 .....            | 57, 223                     |
| 14:1 .....      | 57                            | 17:6 .....      | 130   | 19:19 .....    | 151   | 21:24-26 ...           | 233, 234,<br>235, 243       |
| 14:1-3          | 88, 156, 157, 167             | 17:8 .....      | 185(2)  | 19:19, 20      | 151, 212(2)   | 21:26 .....            | 236                         |
| 14:1-5 .....    | 89, 156                       | 17:9 .....      | 184   | 19:21 .....    | 208, 213  | 21:27 .....            | 234, 236                    |
| 14:2, 3 .....   | 166                           | 17:9-11 .....   | 187   | 20:1 .....     | 222   | 22:1 .....             | 72, 236(2)                  |
| 14:4 .....      | 159                           | 17:10 .....     | 187   | 20-1, 2 .....  | 214(3)  | 22-1, 2 .....          | 236                         |
| 14:6 .....      | 159(2)                        | 17:12 .....     | 188(2)  | 20:1-3 .....   | 214, 215  | 22:2 ....              | 238(2), 239                 |
| 14:6-9 .....    | 161                           | 17-14 ....      | 12, 190(2),<br>208(2), 210                                  | 20:4 ....      | 21, 154, 178,<br>212, 216, 233  | 22:3 ....              | 224, 239(2)                 |
| 14:7 ....       | 156, 159, 160                 | 17:15           | 174, 179, 191(2)  | 20:5 .....     | 47, 136, 217  | 22:4 .....             | 57                          |
| 14:8 .....      | 44, 61, 160                   | 17:16 ....      | 192(2), 199   | 20:6 ...       | 77, 217   | 22:5 .....             | 13                          |
| 14:9-11 .....   | 161                           | 17:17 .....     | 192   | 20:1 .....     | 222   | 22:13 ..               | 11, 12, 242(2)              |
| 14:12 .....     | 162                           | 17:18 ...       | 117, 182, 193   | 20:1-3 .....   | 214, 215  | 22:15 .....            | 228                         |
| 14:13 .....     | 138, 161                      | 18:1 .....      | 193   | 20:4 ....      | 21, 154, 178,<br>212, 216, 233  | 22:16 .....            | 47, 243                     |
| 14:14 .....     | 127, 163                      | 18:1-5 .....    | 197   | 20-4, 6 .....  | 77, 217   | 22:17 .....            | 225, 228,<br>239, 244(2)    |
| 14:16 .....     | 162                           | 18:1-24 .....   | 180   | 20:5 .....     | 47, 136, 217  | 22:18, 19 ....         | 244(2)                      |
| 14:18 .....     | 181                           |                 |   |                |   | 22:20 .....            | 245                         |
| 14:18-20 .      | 163, 164(2),<br>207, 209      |                 |   |                |   |                        |                             |