

to get into and remain in Christ—will be eternally tragic. Of such Jesus said, "Ye shall die in your sins." (John 8:21)

"Henceforth" is a precious word. Having scripturally become a Christian, death offers blessedness. "For me to die is gain." (Phil. 1:21)

Those from henceforth do rest from their labors. The realm of departed spirits is not some sort of purgatory where labors on both sides of the veil must be entered into in order to complete salvation, but the Spirit, after a long silence—since the first chapter, speaks up to say, "that they may *rest* from their *labors*."

How timely this message after the long Thyatira period of Catholicism! In this period arose, and flowered to fullness, the diabolical dogma that the departed must reside in Purgatory and are only released through much labor and purchasing of many masses *to secure rest for them*. If such a dogma is true, how would one on this side of the veil know when sufficient masses had been said to complete the transaction? No, the Scripture declares plainly that they are already at rest.

The words, "Their works do follow them," promises a reward awaiting the saints *there* for their works done *here*. Paul said: "For as much as ye know that your labor is not vain *in the Lord*." (I Cor. 15:58)

The character the true saint acquired, the influence for truth exerted, the results of transformed souls attained—all follow him into the presence of Christ.

The Vision of the Harvest

Proclamation has now gone forth that the hour of judgment has come, that Babylon has fallen, that the damnation of beast-marked worshippers is at hand, that "the dead in Christ rest in their labors." We now are given a vision of the reaping of the harvest. First, the righteous are reaped, followed by the reaping of the "grapes of wrath."

vs. 14-16 "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. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped."

A work of separation takes place between the sixth and seventh trumpet. (Rev. 11:1, 2). Here, in Rev. 14:14-16 the separation of the good and bad again appears prominently.

The Son of man, as seen in this vision, has a golden crown on his head, showing that he comes back as a *King*.

John said, "I saw, and behold a white cloud." The cloud is a signal of the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. When He ascended, "A cloud received him out of their sight;" and at the same time two men stood by the apostles and said, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come *in like manner* as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:10-11)

The cloud took him up and the cloud will bring Him back. Luke said, "They shall see the *Son of man* coming *in a cloud* with power and with great glory." (Luke 21:27)

Let the Master, himself, clarify this dual harvest. In Matt. 13:24-30, he speaks a parable concerning the sowing of the good seed of the Kingdom and the harvest thereof:

"Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field."

Then he proceeds to show what this Kingdom is to be like, down to the time of the harvest. It was to be a mixture of tares and wheat together. He, seed of the woman, Himself, the Christ sows good seed—the children of the Kingdom; the tares are sowed by the devil and are the "children of the wicked one."

When his disciples asked for the interpretation, He thus explained the good and bad seed and then proceeds to explain how the wheat and the tares will be separated at the time of the harvest. The description coincides in the finest way and parallels the order of gathering the harvest as portrayed in the fourteenth chapter of Revelation. Hear him: "The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world."

"The Son of man," (same title as found in Rev. 14:14) shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: "there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 13:39-42).

In (Mark 4:26-29) he said:

"And he said, so is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep, and rise night and

day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how, for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the *sickle* because the harvest is come."

So we see the evil has its harvest as well as the good.

The setting of Christ on the cloud was to inaugurate the harvest and to this end, this gold-crowned King holds in his hand a sharp sickle.

Seeing Him with this harvest-sickle in his hand caused another angel to cry with a loud voice: "Thrust in thy sickle, and reap for the time is come for thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." This is another angel, other than to those mentioned in verses 6, 8 and 9. Even the angel seems to cry out for speedy vengeance.

"And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." What awesome words! What an experience in the wind up human affairs, and with what brevity! Nothing but inspiration could have confined itself to such narrow limits of recording an event, a mere human being would have required volumes to relate.

But this is only one phase of the reaping. After the *grain* harvest comes the *grape* harvest. So we read: Rev. 14:17, "And another angel (this is the fifth thus far mentioned) came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also had a sharp sickle.

Whereas the angel in verse 15, (the fourth angel mentioned in this chapter) came from the temple—not the temple which is in heaven, but evidently the spiritual temple as made up of those who keep his commandments, this angel in the 17th verse came out of the temple which is in heaven. This angel comes from the holy place not made with hands. It is in this heavenly temple that Christ is now appearing in the presence of God for us as our great High Priest. And it is from that temple He is to come when He returns the second time.

vs. 17 Again we come to a parallel. Just as when Christ was seen coming on a cloud with a sickle in His hand (Verse 14), and the fourth angel in (Verse 15) cried with a loud voice, "Thrust in thy sickle," so here, as the fifth angel in verse 17, came out of the temple which is in heaven, having a sharp sickle in his hand, another angel, the sixth introduced in this chapter, came out from the altar and also cried with a loud voice saying, "Thrust in thy sickle." Shall we read the account:

vs. 18 "And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe."

This last angel, one who has power over fire, comes forth from the altar where the fire was kept burning, or the altar of burnt offering. Fire is an emblem of judgment and punishment.

John, the Immerser, referred to this scene when he said, "I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (Matt. 3:11). The "fire" here refers to the final judgment, and John continues to so apply it: "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

This angel of the altar-fires is so outraged by the awful vintage of the wickedness of the earth that he cries with a loud voice for the angel to thrust in his sickle.

vs. 19 "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God."

Here we observe that "the vine of the earth" is set over against "the vine of heaven." The true vine is Christ and Christians are the branches, as Christ himself declared: "I am the true vine," (John 15:1) Ye are the branches." (John 15:5)

The grapes of the vine of the earth are the fully matured children of the wicked one, They are "fully ripe".

Into this mass of "vines of the earth" the sickle was thrust. The vine of the earth is cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God. The judgment is final and complete.

vs. 20 "And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horses' bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs."

The winepress is said to be trodden "without the city." First, this would mean that it was without the church, for in the apocalypse, the city, unless a wicked city is under consideration, refers to that institution. And, second, it would mean the Holy City of the future. There will be nothing unclean or defiling in that city. Speaking of that future city, John said, "For without are dogs" etc. (Rev. 22:15)

And who will do this treading of the wine press without the city?

None other than an outraged Christ himself. In a definite prophesy of the Christ, Isaiah said:

"I have *trodden* the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will *tread* them in my anger, and *trample* them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my *redeemed* is come." (Isaiah 63:3, 4).

And what a horrible flow of blood follows! From the trodden vintage there flows a stream of such magnitude that it rose to the horses bridles to the distance of 1600 stadia, or furlongs. What an appalling result!

Since this is a symbol in a book which is, of all the books of the Bible, preeminently symbolic, this doubtless symbolizes the terrible final destruction of the hosts of wickedness. A symbol of a river of human blood, one hundred and sixty miles in length, to the depths of the horses mouths, tells the tragic story.

The very mention of horses bridles here causes our minds to leap forward to the nineteenth chapter where Christ is pictured mounted upon a white horse, followed by the armies of heaven, also mounted on horses. (Rev. 19:11-16)

The whole seems to be symbolic of the awful carnage in the punishment of the wicked in that day. The figures 40 times 40 equals 1600, or 4 times 4 multiplied by 10 times 10 is a symbol of the completeness of the final judgment.

Four seems to be the apocalyptic symbol of the earth as there are said to be four corners, four winds, or four directions and four quarters of the earth. The earth 4 times 4 times 100 implies the completeness of the Divine Judgment.

CHAPTER XV

Text (15:1-8)

1 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having seven plagues, which are the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God.

2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingle with fire; and them that come off victorious from the beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, standing by the sea of glass, having harps of God. 3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are thy ways, thou King of the ages. 4 Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only

art holy; for all the nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy righteous acts have been made manifest.

5 And after these things I saw, and the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: 6 and there came out from the temple the seven angels that had the seven plagues, arrayed with precious stone, pure and bright, and girt about their breasts with golden girdles. 7 And one of the four living creatures gave unto the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. 8 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and none was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels should be finished.

This chapter takes up a detailed account of the final judgments poured out upon the beast, the image of the beast and those who have his mark.

The preceeding chapter simply gives a preview or a summary of events that lie in the future; the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth chapters cover the same territory but give a more detailed account.

Throughout these above mentioned chapters the theme is the destruction of spiritual Babylon. Looking back, the seven seals recount the history and overthrow of Roman paganism. The seven trumpets carry us through the overthrow of the Roman Empire of the west by the Goths, Vandals, Huns and Heruli and the ruin of the Eastern portion of the empire by the Saracens and Turks. The seventh trumpet terminates with the trump of the archangel. The seven vials, or bowls, give the history of an epoch and like each series of sevens before it, carry us to the end of that epoch. Particularly do the events of the seventh seal refer to the ecclesiastical or spiritual Rome, called the papacy. The seven seals have as their object, the overthrow of Roman paganism. The seven trumpets have as their design the overthrow of the Roman Empire. The seven vials have as their goal the overthrow of the blasphemous power, the papacy which is spiritually called Babylon.

This is not the ancient capital on the Euphrates, nor the Roman imperial city situated on the Tiber, but Rome as a spiritual symbol.

The last chapter closed with the two harvests, one of the wheat and the other of the grapes; now we would naturally expect the presentation of the new heaven and the new earth. But again there is a new series of judgments. John reviews, recapitulates and enlarges upon the scenes sketched in the fourteenth chapter. He does this under the symbolism of the emptying of seven vials; or seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God.

Here in the fifteenth chapter we encounter the third and last of the three great *signs in heaven* given by John. In Revelation, the 12th chapter, the word "wonder" in the first and third verses, we have found to be *signs*.

The first *sign in heaven* was the *woman* clothed with the sun, or the Church of Christ. The second *sign in heaven* was the great red dragon, or the devil, or Satan. It is the sign of "the mystery of iniquity" spoken of by the apostle Paul. The third *sign in heaven* which is now before us, is the vision of the seven last plagues. This sign is described by John as "great and marvelous." Hear him:

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

The seven angels and their vials do not begin their work until we reach the sixteenth chapter. But the emphasis in the fifteenth chapter is that these are the seven *last* plagues and that by them the purpose of God will be fully and finally accomplished, because God's wrath will be "filled up."

The word "plagues," not used in reference to the trumpet judgments, is evidently intended to refer us back in the Scriptures to a parallel case of God's deliverance of His persecuted people in Egypt. The plagues of Egypt were ten in number to symbolize fullness of Divine visitations; here they are seven in number to symbolize completeness and finality.

vs. 2 "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."

John here sees the victory gained by the saints over the beast. There is a sea as of glass mingled with fire." It was the sea that overwhelmed the Egyptians in the ten plagues visited upon them. But the people of God passed safely through it. Here is a greater victory. They *stand* upon the sea. The fire with which this symbolic sea is intermingled represented the judgments of God fully and finally accomplished. The saints are *standing on this sea*. They are represented as above, or beyond the reach of the sea of judgment.

They have the harps of God to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. It is very worthy of note that in these visions of the triumphant saints, they are ever pictured as singing to the tune of instrumental music.

vs. 3 "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and

the song of the Lamb, saying, "great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, thou king of saints."

They sing in a higher key and in a more glorious diapason the old "song of Moses" which the ancient Israel of God sang on the shore of the Red Sea on the morning of their deliverance. (Exodus 15th Chapter) Now into the old redemption song mingles a new and loftier strain the song of completed redemption. Shall we listen to this song of the Lamb as it reaches its grand crescendo:

vs. 4 "Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee for thy judgments are made manifest."

Whereas the worshipers of the beast glorified "the number of the name of the beast," these true worshipers glorify "the name of the Lord." They sing in ecstasy of spirit because the judgments of God are made manifest.

The truth and righteousness of God's judgments are revealed in that Christ manifests himself as the King of the true saints of all nations.

As the strains of praise sink into sacred silence the apostle's attention is turned again to the agents of divine judgments. He sees the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven.

The fifth verse of the fifteenth chapter resumes the thread of thought dropped in Revelation 11:19 which reads, "and the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." So after the great interruption in which were given the three celestial signs in heaven—the woman, the dragon and the sign of the seven angels with the seven last plagues, John now returns to his starting point of the opened temple.

vs. 5, 6 "And after these things" (the celestial signs and other visions Rev. 12:1 to Rev. 15:1-4) "I saw and the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: and there came out from the temple the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles."

The garb is royal and priestly. Their ministry is priestly although involving duties marked by severity of punishment. Now they are empowered to perform and execute their tasks.

vs. 7 "And one of the four beasts (or four living creature) gave unto the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who liveth forever and ever."

This living creature,—one of the four,—we found in the study of the fourth chapter to be one of the cherubim. In Ezekial 10:20 Ezekial said, "I knew they were cherubim."

So, one of the cherubim who appears again and again in Revelation, gave the seven bowls full of God's wrath, to the seven angels.

vs. 8 "And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and his power; and no man was able to enter the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled."

So it was of old. Smoke covered Mount Sinai when God spoke the "ten words." (Exodus 19:18) The cloud filled the house, when the erection of the tabernacle was finished. "And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place that cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priest could not stand to minister because of the cloud for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord." (I Kings 8:10, 11)

We also find that "the house was filled with smoke" when Isaiah was granted his vision as described in (Isaiah 6:4).

"And the posts of the door moved as the voice of him cried, and the house was filled with smoke."

All this imagery symbolized divine majesty. Here, in Revelation, the smoke proceeds "from the glory of God, and from His power."

And no one was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled."

This does not mean that no one can enter the church until after the seventh plague has been poured out. The door of the church was opened at Pentecost and no man can shut that door until the final judgment. But here the meaning seems to be that the true saint of God cannot enter the final place of eternal reward until after these plagues.

Christ, in his life, said, "I go to *prepare a place for you*" (John 14:2) To do this, Paul said, "He ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things." (Ephesians 4:10) And in Revelation 21:2 we read:

"I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, *prepared* as a bride adorned for her husband."

Until the place Christ went to prepare is finished, which certainly will be after the time of the seven plagues, no one could enter therein.

CHAPTER XVI

Text (16:1-21)

INTRODUCTION

1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go ye, and pour out the seven bowls of the wrath of God into the earth.

2 And the first went, and poured out his bowl into the earth; and it became a noisome and grievous sore upon the men that had the mark of the beast, and that worshipped his image.

3 And the second poured out his bowl into the sea; and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living soul died, even the things that were in the sea.

4 And the third poured out his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of the waters; and it became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying, Righteous art thou who art and who wast, thou Holy One, because thou didst thus judge: 6 for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and blood hast thou given them to drink: they are worthy. 7 And I heard the altar saying, Yea, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

8 And the fourth poured out his bowl upon the sun; and it was given unto it to scorch men with fire. 9 And men were scorched with great heat: and they blasphemed the name of God who hath the power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory.

10 And the fifth poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast; and his kingdom was darkened; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, 11 and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they repented not of their works.

12 And the sixth poured out his bowl upon the great river, the river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way might be made ready for the kings that come from the sunrising. 13 And I saw coming out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, as it were frogs: 14 for they are spirits of demons, working signs; which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. 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.) 16 And they gathered them together into the place which is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon.

17 And the seventh poured out his bowl upon the air; and there came forth a great voice out of the temple, from the throne, saying, It is done: 18 and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since there were men upon the earth, so great an earthquake, so mighty. 19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and Babylon the great was remembered in the sight of God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. 20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. 21 And great hail, every stone about the weight of a talent, cometh down out of heaven upon men: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof is exceeding great.

The sixteenth chapter describes the pouring out of the plagues

from the seven vials, or bowls. These are the final judgments visited upon the Roman Empire. One finds himself confronted with confusion unless he keeps in mind that the major theme of the book of Revelation is the unfolding of the history of the church as that institution relates to the Roman Empire, whether it be pagan, political or papal Rome.

Shall we briefly review the path over which we have come in the "series of sevens" we have studied.

The seven seals carried us to the triumph of Christianity over paganism, or pagan Rome. The seven trumpets brought us to the overthrow of the western half of the empire by the Goths, Vandals, Huns and Suevi, and the collapse of the eastern half of political Rome under the onslaught of the Parocens and Turks. Those, trumpets, in the main, reveal the fall of political Rome.

Thus we see that each of these three "series of Sevens" had a distinct purpose. Briefly again: The seven seals fulfilled a definite purpose, the overthrow of Roman paganism. The seven trumpets had as their purpose, the overthrow of the Roman Empire, politically. The seven vials also have a definite design, the overthrow of that blasphemous religious institution variously described as, a beast which had two horns like a lamb, the city of fornication, a scarlet adulteress and "that great city Babylon."

While we are still on the subject of the "series of Sevens," we note, as in the case of the seven seals and the seven trumpets, there was an interruption, or a parenthesis between the sixth and seventh seals and trumpets, respectively, (see Rev. 7:1-17 and Rev. 10:1-11, 11:1-14). So, here between the pouring out of the sixth and seventh bowls, there occurs a brief parenthesis, or interlude.

Furthermore, we should take cognizance of the fact that while the fifteenth chapter introduces the seven vials in immediate connection with those who *have overcome* the beast, his image mark and number of his name, here in this chapter as the first vial is poured out, its wrath falls upon the men *who have* the mark of the beast and worshipped his image. The second bowl of wrath is emptied upon those who had "Poured out the blood of saints and prophets. The fifth vial is poured out upon the seat, or throne of the beast. The sixth vial is poured out upon the river Euphrates, and, like stirring as a snakes nest, three unclean Spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, of the beast and of the false prophet.

The emptying of the seventh bowl is upon the great city Babylon, spiritually speaking.

All these considerations help us to identify the arena of activity portrayed by the seven last plagues. The definite purpose of these plagues is the destruction of spiritual Babylon, or papal Rome.

The symbols of this "series of sevens," in a great measure are drawn from the record of the plagues of Egypt, and, while there are differences, they do have a close correspondence to the ten plagues.

The term "plagues" applied to this "vial, or bowl series" recalls God's punishments visited upon the Egyptians. How natural it is that "plagues" should also be applied to the punishments visited upon papal Rome, for in Rev. 11:8, we found that apostate Christendom is also called Egypt, spiritually speaking. "And their dead bodies shall be in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, when also our Lord was crucified."

Having determined the purpose of pouring these bowls of wrath and the object on which they are to be poured, we are ready to take up their historical fulfillment. We must ever remember that John was to write, "the things he had seen, the things that are, and the things which shall come to pass hereafter." This being true, we are not to spiritualize these symbols away, but to treat them as prophetic symbols of historic events to come to pass.

So the seven angels begin to empty their vials.

The First Vial Poured Out

vs. 1, 2 "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."

As the plagues of physical Egypt were designed to destroy the oppressor of the Israel of God, in the Old Testament economy, and to bring about the deliverance of God's chosen, so this vial and its companions are for the destruction of the oppressor of the Israel of God of the New Testament, and to bring about their deliverance from spiritual oppression.

The time of the pouring of this vial and its following bowls without doubt, follow the 1260 year period when the apostate church, or papal Rome was in full flower. This time period we have found to be that time when the bishop of Rome was first blasphemously called "the Lord of the church," and continued until 1793 when he was humiliated. Then the time of these vials must follow that termination of the 1260 year period.

In 1793, exactly at the close of the 1260 years, there broke out in France a moral ulcer which had been festering for a long while. The

church had become so corrupt and the royalty, acting as the temporal arm of the church so rotten, that the pendulum swung to the opposite extreme and the "age of Reason," dawned upon the world.

Hear Myers on the terrible condition of the church of that time:

"The upper clergy formed a decayed feudal hierarchy. A third of the lands of France was in their hands, and this immense property was almost wholly exempt from taxation. The bishops and abbots were usually drawn from the ranks of the nobility, being attracted to the service of the church rather by its enormous revenues and social distinction, than by the inducements of piety. They spent their princely incomes in luxurious life at court. . . .

Though there were noble exceptions, the most of these dignitaries were narrow-minded and self-seeking, and many of them so shamelessly immoral that as a class they had lost all credit and authority with the people. They had brought the church into disrepute. The hatred of the people felt toward them was transferred to the religion which they so unworthily represented."

Myers Mediaeval and Modern History, pages 502, 503.

Under these was what was called the Third Estate or *Tiers Etal*. This embraced all the nation aside from the nobility and clergy.

Hear Myers again page 503:

The peasants constituted the majority of the Third Estate. The condition of most of them could hardly have been worse. Their only recognized use in the state was "to pay feudal services to the lords, tithes to the priests, and imports to the King."

La Bruyère, in *Les Caractères*, wrote of human slaves:

"One sees certain fierce animals, male and female, scattered through the fields; they are black, livid and burned by the sun, and attached to the soil, which they dig up and stir 'with indomitable industry; they have what is like an articulate voice, and when they rise to their feet they show a human face,—in truth they are human beings. They retire at night into dens, where they live on black bread and water and roots; they save other men the trouble of sowing and delving and harvesting."

No wonder, then, when the mob cried for bread and they were contemptuously told 'to eat cake,' that the match was struck to the fagots of the revolution, in which the King, Marie Antonette, the girondins and thousands of lesser lights were executed. This in-

augured the Reign of Terror in which the enslaved masses, maddened to fury, sent the Catholic King, royal families, nobles and priests to the guillotine, by the tens of thousands. The nation declared itself atheistic, inaugurated a new calendar, and forever unshackled the world from the tyranny of papal Rome.

As a result of this breaking out of greivous sore upon those who worshipped the beast and his image, the mightest Catholic nation of that time was plunged into Civil war and as a result Europe was deluged in blood.

The Reign of Terror resulted in the pouring out of the first vial or bowl.

The Second Vial Poured Out

vs. 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."

How fitting that this second vial was emptied on the sea. The revolution in France unsettled all Europe. Keeping in mind that the destruction of papal Rome is the prime object of this pouring out of the vials, shall we proceed to the historical fulfilment of this vial. In some way it will affect the fortunes of spiritual Babylon.

There is a noticable parallel here in the vial series with the Trumpet series. Under the second trumpet a great and burning mountain was cast into the sea. And historically the Vandals swept the Mediterranean, to drive the Roman navy from its waters. Likewise from the sea, under the second vial, papal Rome was weakened.

France, a Catholic power was evenly matched with England. At the time of this vial began a death struggle for the mastery of the seas. This contest lasted for twenty years.

France, after the revolution, again became Catholic, by reason of Napoleon's concordat with the papacy. She rallied other Catholic nations, namely, Spain, Italy and Portugal—all great maritime powers of that day, to battle with Protestant England, another great sea power.

From the Indian Ocean to the Carribean, from the North Sea to the Nile, over the Atlantic and Pacific, their navies fought. And the Catholic flag was lowered everywhere. We can only grasp the significance of this by a review of hisotry.

Upon the return of Columbus from his successful expedition to the new world, Pope Alexander 6th, with a view to adjusting the

conflicting claims of Spain and Portugal, issued a bull wherein he drew from pole to pole a line of demarcation through the Atlantic, one hundred leagues west of the Azores, and gave the Spanish sovereigns all pagan lands, not already in possession of Catholic princes, that their subjects might find west of this line, and to the Portuguese, all unclaimed pagan lands discovered by Portuguese navigators east of the designated meridian.

How the mighty had fallen! Catholic power had been swept from the oceans. Spain, the discoverer of the new world and once the greatest naval power of the world, Portugal, great in naval equipment, France, long the rival of England on the seas, did not have a ship left to hoist their flags to the salty breeze.

"On Oct. 21, 1805, Lord Nelson, having, near Cape Trafalgar on the coast of Spain, the combined French and Spanish Fleets, almost completely destroyed the combined armaments. This decisive battle gave England the control of the sea. The "wet ditch," as Napolen was wont to call the English Channel, was hence forth an impossible gulf. He might rule the continent, but the sovereignty of the ocean and its islands was denied him."

Myers, Mediaeval and Modern History, page 557.

So we behold the maritime power which supported Rome, swept from the seven seas. Truly a terrible blow to papal power, prestige and pride!

The Third Vial Poured Out

vs. 4-7 "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 and shall be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments."

Never does the divine chronicler permit us to forget the object of these bowl judgments. Interpreters have gone far afield in applying these vial punishments to fanciful objects like, "humanism," commercialism and atheism, but we are ever told that the object of this 'bowl series' is the apostate church which "has shed the blood of saints and prophets."

This oft reminder keeps us in line on the time, place and object in the circle of Revelation's visions.

This third angel pours out his vial upon the rivers and their sources. This is understandable when we remember that papal Rome had for years wrecked her vengeance upon the dwellers of the Piedmont, source of Italy's river system, because they dared to resist the Pontiff's pronouncements.

This very region was the home of the Albigenses and the Waldenses, against which the papacy hurled its legions generation after generation. The blood of the Protestants of the Alps had oft flowed, until Oliver Cromwell informed the Pope that unless he called off his wolves from preying on the flock in the Piedmont, the cannon of his army would teach him mercy around the castle of St. Angelo. The river system of Italy was the center of papal persecution and in the time of the third vial, became the arena of war.

One glance at a map of Northern Italy and one will be abundantly convinced that this is a region of rivers and fountain of waters.

And one of the results of the French Revolution was the invasion of Northern Italy, the gage of battle being fought on the Rhone, the Po and their tributaries. It is a remarkable corroborating bit of history. The French fought the battles, that punished papal Rome, upon the Rhone, the Po, the Adda, the A'dege and Bromida.

Myers mentions among the noted engagements of Napoleon's campaign, the battles of Lodi (May 10, 1796), Castiglione (Aug. 5, 1796), Arcola (Nov. 15-17, 1796), Rivoli (Jan. 14, 15, 1797), and the siege of Mantua (July 1796-Feb. 1797)

In Student's France, we read:

"The French crossed the *Po* at Piacenza and drove back Beaulieu upon the line of the *Adda*; the strongly fortified bridge of *Lodi* was carried after a severe struggle, and the enemy retreated upon the line of the river *Mincio*. Page 581.

Marching secretly from Verona, the French descended the *Adige* river . . . on Nov. 14th, they made a furious attack upon the bridge (over the *Adige*) of *Arcole*. Page 583.

From the theater of their triumphs upon the *Adige* and *Mincio* rivers, Bonaparte led his armies into the territory of the *Pope*, against whom the Directory had resolved to proceed to extremities. Page 584.

Bonaparte took up a position with his whole army upon the great plain of Marengo, being separated by the river *Bromida* from the enemies lines. Page 598.

A convention was signed the day after the battle by which the Austrians agreed to retire beyond the river *Mincio*." Page 598.

So at the hand of two witnesses a thing is firmly established. The persecution of the saints centered for generations upon this river system and the fountains, or source of rivers. And here also the third vial was poured out upon those who, "shed the blood of saints and prophets."

We can almost hear the Albigenses and Waldenses joining with the angel in saying, "Righteous are thou, who art and wast and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy!"

While it is entirely aside from our present consideration of Revelation, it is interesting to notice that angels are employed about such regulations as the flow of rivers and streams. It was the angel of the waters who spoke here. John writing by inspiration said: "Now there is at Jerusalem, by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the *moving of the water*. For an *angel* went down at a certain season into the pool and troubled the water." (John 5:2-4).

Throughout the Scriptures we find the angels performing many and varied tasks, and it doubtless will be quite an eye-opener on the other side to learn just how intimately they are connected with the activities of mankind.

This brings us to the pouring out of the fourth vial:

The Fourth Vial Poured Out

vs. 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."

We have already found that the "sun" is a symbol of a great ruler or King. Anyone who attains great prominence may be so designated. Joseph, in his dream is likened to a sun, with his father Jacob and his brothers bowing in obeisance to him. Christ is called the Sun of Righteousness.

In this fourth vial period, the contents are poured upon the sun, and power is given it to scorch men with fire. Remembering always we are walking in the realm of symbolism, we recall that at this particular time in history, Napoleon was elevated from a Corsican Corporal, to first Consul and ruler of France. Then in 1802, was elected and made Consul for life. Thus did he move a step higher,

nearer the imperial throne. Following a royal custom, Napoleon, from that time on, used only his first name. In 1804, the Senate conferred upon him the title of Emperor of the French. The coronation took place in Paris, on Dec. 2, 1804. Napoleon had forced the Pope to come to Rome to crown him, because it was the little Corsican's design, to have himself regarded, not only as the successor of the Bourbons, but, also, as the successor of Charlemagne and the Caesars. Hear Myers at this juncture:

"The pope poured the holy oil upon the head of the kneeling Emperor and girded him with the imperial scepter; but when he would have placed the crown upon his head, Napoleon checked him, and, taking the diadem from the pope, crowned himself with his own hands. What portion of the spirit of the old divine-right monarchies entered into the new French Empire, may be inferred from the doctrines which in less than a year after Napoleon's coronation, the subservient French clergy were teaching the youth of France. "The Emperor is the minister and the power of God, and his image on earth," ran the new catechism; "to honor and serve him is to honor and serve God." Myers, Mediaeval and Modern History—pages 551, 552.

Thus we see the sun of the fourth vial given power to scorch men. And scorch men, Napoleon did. No such scorching sun had risen on the political horizon for more than a thousand years. He conquered Italy and invaded Egypt and as he sat his horse in the shadow of the Pyramids, inspired his soldiers with a now historic challenge, "Soldiers," he exclaimed, pointing to the Pyramids, "forty centuries are looking down upon you." Austria, Germany, Prussia, Portugal, Spain, Holland, fell in rapid succession to this "scorching sun."

"The empire which this soldier of fortune had built up stretched from Lubeck to beyond Rome, embracing France proper, the Netherlands, part of western and northwestern Germany, all western Italy as far south as the Kingdom of Naples, together with the Illyrian Provinces and the Ionian Islands.

He, himself, was King of the Kingdom of Italy, Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine and Mediator of Switzerland. Austria and Prussia were completely subject to his will . . . Not since the time of the Caesars had one man's will swayed so much of the civilized world." Myers Mediaeval and Modern History, page 569.

And we read that under the scorching heat of this "sun," men

blasphemed the name of God. The sweep of atheism over France in Napoleon's day surely fulfils this phase of the prophetic symbolism of the fourth vial.

And in spite of it all, we read that, "men repented not to give Him (God) glory."

We now, advance to the pouring out of the fifth vial of wrath.

The Fifth Vial Poured Out

vs. 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, and repented not of their deeds."

Thus far the four vials, or golden bowls have followed the sequence of the first four trumpets. The first trumpet and the first vial affect the earth, the second trumpet and vial, the sea; the third trumpet and vial, the rivers and fountain of waters; and the fourth trumpet and vial, the sun. Now a departure is made, and the fifth vial's scene of action is entirely different from the fifth trumpet.

The explanation lies in the fact that the trumpet series followed the history of the fall of political Rome, whereas the vial series described the fall of religio-political papal Rome.

The only similarity between the fifth vial and fifth trumpet is the prominence of darkness in each case. Under the fifth trumpet, the darkness was occasioned by a dense smoke coming up out of the bottomless pit. There, we found, the smoke was a symbol of the spiritual force of Mohammedanism which brought darkness to the earth.

By the same token, since this activity is concerned with the seat or throne of the beast, or religio-political papal Rome, the darkness here is a spiritual one, brought on by apostacy. Surely, the Kingdom of the beast is full of darkness.

Rome was the seat, or throne of the papal power of this period indicated by the fifth vial, so naturally we look to the "seat of Satan," or Rome, for the fulfilment of the events symbolized. In our study of the Thyatira period, we found that the church of this period, now known as the Catholic Church, reached "the depths of Satan." (Rev. 2:24)

Therefore, the scenes of the fifth vial will be, Italy and Rome, for this had been the seat of the beast for thirteen centuries. The very seat, or throne of the beast is to receive the blow that will cause great dismay and anguish, to where men will gnaw their

tongues in pain—an expression sybolical of terrible suffering and anguish of heart.

We found under the fourth vial that Napoleon, as the scorching sun, converted the whole of Europe—the ten horn Kingdoms succeeding the beast, or political Rome—into an armed camp. Every nation was torn with war and crimsoned with blood-shed. It is estimated that his wars, from 1796 to 1815, took the lives of two million soldiers, besides civilians who perished from attendant causes.

But this scorching sun exerted its most baleful power upon the papacy. We know, by history, that Napoleon and his armies invaded the papal provinces in 1797, and took the city of Rome, the seat of the beast, imposing a forced peace upon papal Rome in which the pope paid a rich tribute. In 1798, Pope Pius 6th was carried, a prisoner, to France, where he died. His successor was elected not in Rome, but in Venice. I take time to quote from Allison's History of Europe, Vol. I—page 546:

“Immediately after the entry of the French troops commenced the regular and systematic pillage of the city. Not only the churches and the convents, but the palaces of the cardinals and of the nobility were laid waste . . . Not only the palaces of the Vatican, and the Monte Cavallo, but those of Castel Gandolfo, on the margin of Iban Lae, the villa Ablani, and others, in the environs of Rome, were plundered of every article of value. The whole sacerdotal habits of the pope and cardinals were burned, in order to collect from the flames the gold with which they were adorned. The Vatican was stripped to its naked walls. A contribution of four millions in money, two millions in provisions, and three thousand horses, was imposed upon a city already exhausted. . . .

Nor were the exactions of the French confined to the plunder of palaces and churches. Eight cardinals were arrested and sent to Civita Castellona, while enormous contributions were levied on the papal territory. At the same time, the ample territorial possessions of the church and the monasteries were confiscated, and declared national property, a measure which, by drying up, at once, the whole resources of the affluent classes, percpitated into the extreme of misery, the numerous poor who were maintained by their expenditure or fed by their bounty.”

No wonder, under the fifth vail it was said they should “gnaw their tongues for pain!”

While this was going on in Italy, the same procedure obtained in France. Hear Myers on this:

"One of the most important of its (the National Assembly) measures, and one far reaching in its effects was the confiscation of the property of the church. Altogether, property consisting largely of lands, and worth, it is estimated, over a billion francs, was by decree, made the property of the nation." Myers, *Mediaeval and Modern History*—page 518.

Note: This decree was made Nov. 2, 1789.

In 1808, Pius 7th, was dragged from his palace, as his predecessor Pius 6th had been, and taken as a prisoner to France. His states of the church were confiscated and the pope was left without temporal possessions. The pope was forced to sign an agreement by which he gave up the power of appointing bishops, in the French Empire, to Napoleon.

The length of these vial outpourings is not stated, but the contents of the fifth vial continued to be poured until 1848.

In that year, the citizens of Rome rose in rebellion to papal authority and drove Pius 9th into exile. He was later restored to his throne by the French army—France now being in alliance with the Vatican. But in 1870, France was compelled to withdraw her troops to defend her own soil from German invasion.

Hear Myers on this:

"This sharp, quick war between France and Prussia gave the coveted capital to the Italian government. Upon the overthrow of the French Empire and the establishment of the Republic, Victor Emmanuel was informed that France would no longer sustain the papal power. The Italian government, at once gave notice to the pope that Rome would henceforth be considered a portion of the Kingdom of Italy and forthwith an Italian army entered the city, which by a vote of almost one hundred to one (Exactly 133, 681 to 1507) resolved to cast its lot with that of the Italian nation.

This marked the end of the temporal power of the pope, and the end of an ecclesiastical state, the last in Europe, which long before Charlemagne, had held a place among the temporal powers of Europe, and all that time had been a potent factor in the political affairs, not only of Italy, but of almost the whole continent." Myers *Mediaeval and Modern History*—pages 629, 630.

Albert Barnes quotes an old writer by the name of Robert Fleming, who in 1701, wrote and published a work called, "Apocalyptic Key." On the fifth vial, or bowl, this author said: "The fifth vial which is to be poured out on the seat of the beast, or the dominions which belong more immediately to, and depend upon, the Roman see; that I say this judgment will begin about AD 1794 and expire about A.D. 1848."

And looking now upon history, Napoleon invaded Italy in 1796 and in 1848, the citizens of Rome arose in rebellion against papal authority and drove Pius 9th into exile. And, to think Robert Fleming writing two and one-half centuries ago, and one full century before the beginning of events he predicted and one and one half centuries before the culmination of these same events, saw it all so clearly!

The popes have steadfastly refused to recognize the legitimacy of the act which stripped them of their temporal power, maintaining there can be no settlement of the Roman question save through the restoration of the pope to his former status, as an independent temporal sovereign. Thus it is true, as the concluding words of the fifth vial declares, "They repented not of their deeds."

As for blaspheming God, in 1870, the pope declared himself infallible and made it a canon law of the church to which, all, who have the mark of the beast, and the number of his name, must subscribe, under penalty of excommunication.

But, in spite of all this the power of the papacy is forever broken to the extent that the church can no longer resort to forceful means in suppressing non-conformist teaching, or rebellion against her spiritual despotism. We now come to the sixth vial.

The Sixth Vial Poured Out

vs. 12 "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof dried up, that the way of the Kings of the east might be prepared."

The Euphrates was always regarded by the Roman world as its furthestmost eastern boundry and it served as a barrier against the invasion of hostile tribes living east of that river. We will recall how in the sounding of the sixth trumpet, four angels were loosed, who set in motion the hords of Turkish soldiers.

Here the pouring out of the sixth vial dries up, or removes the Euphrates as a barrier, thus foreshadowing the fall of the Turkoman.

The symbol "drying up," does not indicate a sudden calamity,

but a gradual decay. This indicates extinction by slow degrees, and this is just what is taking place in the case of Turkey, the modern descendant of the ancient Turkoman Empire.

The Turko-Egyptian fleet was destroyed by the combined fleets of England, France, and Russia, in the Bay of Navarino in 1827. In 1828, Nicholas declared war against the Ottoman Porte. The Russian troops crossed the Balkans without serious opposition, and were marching upon Constantinople when the Sultan sued for peace. The Treaty of Adrianople (1829) bought the war to a close. Hear Myers again:

"Tsar Nicholas held some provinces in Asia which gave him control of the eastern shore of the Euxine. The Turkish provinces of Moldavia (now Roumania) and Wallachia, were rendered virtually independent of the Sultan. All Greece, south of Thessaly and Epirus, was liberated, and along with most of the islands of the Aegian, was formed into an independent Kingdom, under the guardianship of England, France and Russia. Myers, *Mediaeval and Modern History*—page 655.

In 1849 Mohamet Ali revolted in Egypt. Since that time Egypt has been independent of Turkey.

Then came the Crimean War (1853-1856). We again quote the very reliable historian, Myers:

"A celebrated parable employed by the Tsar Nicholas in conversation with the English minister at St. Petersburg, throws a great deal of light upon the circumstances that led to the Crimean War. 'We have on our hands,' said the Tsar, 'A sick man—and very sick man; it would be a great misfortune if he should give us the slip some of these days, especially if it happened before all the necessary arrangements were made.'" Nicholas had cultivated friendly relations with the English government, and he now proposed that England and Russia should divide the estate of the 'sick man,' by which phrase Turkey, of course, was meant. England was to be allowed to take Egypt and Crete, while the Turkish provinces in Europe were to be taken under the protection of the Tsar, which meant, of course, in the complete absorption, in due time, of all Southeastern Europe into the Russian Empire." Myers *Mediaeval and Modern History*.—page 656.

In 1876, Herzegovina revolted along with Montenegro. The war of 1877 resulted in the loss of the greater part of the Turkish possessions in Europe, as well as a part of Armenia, to Russia. Today the

Turkish Empire, once so great, is a very sick nation, and only manages to keep alive because greater nations preserve her as a barrier between them. The Eurphrates is surely drying up. And for what reason? That the way of the Kings of the east may be prepared.

No further hint is given who these Kings of the east will be, but the prophecy implies that when this obstacle is entirely removed, the way of the inhabitants of the east shall be opened. The drying up of the Euphrates is still going on. Before the final destruction of this Mohammedan power it seems destined to receive help which will aid it in its last struggle which undoubtedly will end in utter ruin. John proceeds to describe this future gathering of the Kings of the whole world:

vs. 13-16 "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 prophets. 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. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together in a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon."

Just as in the case of the seven seals and the seven trumpets, there was an interlude between the sixth and the seventh of each series, so here between the pouring out of the sixth and seventh bowls, there occurs a brief parenthetical interruption.

In this interlude we are given the process, the purpose and the place of the gathering of the Kings of the whole world. First, the process:

These Kings are gathered through the Satanic influence of the three great enemies of Christ and his church. All three have appeared before in our study in Revelation. They are a monstrous trinity of evil in contradistinction to the blessed trinity of good in the God-head, namely, the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit. This evil trinity consists of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet.

The first of this trinity, the dragon, is called "the old serpent, the devil and satan." (Rev. 12:9). He it is who has animated the age-long opposition to the church.

But he has as his agents, the last two of this unholy trinity, the beast and the false prophet. The beast, we have found to be, political Rome, which John saw coming up out of the sea (Rev. 13:1), "unto whom it was given to make war with the saints," and "to

hold authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation." (Rev. 13:17)

The false prophet is, beyond all question, the second beast which John saw, "coming up out of the earth," or papal Rome, as we have found him to represent. This is the apostate religion-political church which "exercised all the power of the first beast before him" and "to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." (Rev. 13:11, 12)

These three, the devil, political and papal Rome exercise their influence by means of three unclean spirits, as they were frogs. From the mouth of each one of these goes forth one such spirit. The mouth is ever the instrument which the devil has used to persuade people by falsehood. "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it," said Christ. (John 8:44)

In Christ called Satan the father of lies, and he did; then the first beast, political Rome would stand in the place of the Son, who had all power, and the false prophet, or papal Rome would occupy, in this unholy trinity, the place of the Holy Spirit. As the Holy Spirit animated the life of the true church, so the papacy animated the life of the apostate church. And isn't it more than a coincidence that the pope calls himself, the Vicar of Christ?

Christ said, the Holy Spirit would speak for Him, so the pope tries to take the place of the Holy Spirit, by claiming himself to be the Vicar of Christ.

To the mind of John the frogs represented uncleanness. So, were they considered in the plagues of frogs in Egypt. Thus, we see here Satan's promptings, political lust and malice, and religious fanaticism unite to precipitate a war involving the whole world.

Already, we see this alignment coming about. The way of the Kings of the east is being prepared and all the Kings of the whole world being "gathered together unto the war of the great day of God Almighty."

We have now considered the "process" and the "purpose" of this gathering; we now would logically consider the "place" of gathering. But just as we are ready to do so, John breaks the sequence of thought by inserting a message intended to emphasize the nearness of that final gathering, and the need for watchfulness on the part of the true saints. It is as though Christ were himself speaking, for the words are his very own: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

To come "as a thief," means to come suddenly and unannounced and these words are unmistakably those of Christ. "But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched. Therefore, be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh. (Matt. 24:43, 44)

To the church in Sardis, Christ also said: "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee *as a thief*." (Rev. 3:3)

To this, Peter by inspiration, adds his testimony, "But the day of the Lord will come as a *thief in the night*." (II Pet. 3:10)

Two things are to be kept in mind by the true Christians. They are to watch and they are to keep his garments, dressed, ready. Wakeful attitude and proper raiment will ever guarantee his readiness for Christ's sudden return.

And "Blessed" is such a one. This is the third of the seven beautitudes of the Apocalypse.

To the mind of the Lord, his triumphant return at the time of the final conflict, were very near in the period of the sixth vial.

Now we are ready to return to the consideration of the "place" of this gathering of all the Kings of the East and of the whole world. The Kings of the whole world are to be there.

The place of this final struggle is described by a striking symbol, freighted with deep meaning. "And he gathered them together in a place called in the Hebrew tongue (Har-Magedon) Armageddon."

The name denotes "the hill of Megiddo." Jackson's Dictionary of Scriptural names gives the meaning, "The Hill of Slaughter." This battlefield is in the plain of Esdraelon, the depression between Judea and Galilee. Armies passing through the country from north to south, or from south to north, always sought the advantage of this plain.

This famous valley eight miles southeast of Mount Carmel is one of the most fought over spots of earth. Here, Barak defeated Sisera. In this valley Josiah fought at Megiddo with Pharaoh-Necho. Here, Gideon and his three hundred men routed the Midianites in the beginning of the middle watch. Near here Saul and Jonathan fell on Mount Gilboa. Here, the Crusaders fought the Moslems. Here, Napoleon battled with the Turks. Here, the British army, under Allenby, fought the Turks of his day. And here, the Kings of the East and the Kings of the whole earth are to be gathered, at the Hill of Megiddo, the Hill of Slaughter, in the plain of Esdraelon.

And they are gathered there by the lying mouths of the Infernal

Trinity. This reminds us of an Old Testament illustration, how a lying spirit can lead one to certain death:

"The Lord said: who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said: I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, where-with? And he said: I will go forth, and I will be a *lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets*. And He said: Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also; go forth and do so . . . the Lord put a lying spirit in the *mouth* of these thy prophets." (I Kings 22:20, 23)

The result was that Ahab was deceived by the lying spirit and went up and fell at Ramoth-Gilead.

So here the devil, the father of lies, uses the mouth of the beast and the mouth of the false prophet to deceive the Kings of the East and the Kings of all the world to gather for the Battle of Armageddon and there perish.

With the gathering of the Kings of all the world and their armies to this place of Armageddon, this sixth bowl ends. It breaks off suddenly, because it simply brings things into readiness for the final catastrophe, which only the seventh vial, or bowl can bring forth.

The Seventh Vial Poured Out

vs. 17-21 "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

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

This seventh vial, which completes the perfect number, symbolizes the consummating catastrophes to fall upon Papal Rome. As

the seven seals covered the events which brought about the downfall of Pagan Rome; and the seven trumpets described the historical happenings which terminated in the destruction of Political Rome; these seven vials delineate the events which bring about the utter wiping out of Papal Rome.

This seventh vial is poured out upon the air. Two applications might be made here.

First, the air, or atmosphere which all must breathe is affected, by which health and life are endangered. Since this is the time of the end, we are able to see this first application very readily. The nations airy navies battle with increasing ferocity as greater wars follow one after the other. Bomb, atomic and chemical warfare fulfil the physical aspects of this plague. But, *Second*, if the air visited with this bowl is spiritual, the sense in which Paul once used it in (Eph. 6:12), then this vial seems to refer to the spiritual warfare between principalities against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world and against spiritual wickedness in high places.

When the vial was poured there came forth a voice from the throne, saying, "It is done." Literally, in the Greek, there is just one word, "Done!" The work of visitation of judgments was done, even as Christ, in completing the work of sacrifice for our redemption, cried from the cross, "It is finished!"

The result was the usual symbolic manifestations of divine judgments in a demonstration of voices, thunderings, lightnings. Then follows a great earthquake, such as was not since there were men upon the earth.

These features are attendant to the tremendous movements of the divine will and purpose. In the closing period of the history of the church, society is to experience an upheaval that will shake it to its very foundations. This being near the time of Christ's return, Haggai's prophecy in (Hag. 2:6-7), is most fitting:

"For thus saith the Lord of hosts, 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."

Of course, Christ is "the desire of all nations" whose coming is predicted. But before his coming there shall be a marvelous shaking of all the nations of the world.

This seventh vial must be upon us, for never have all nations, the

world over, been so shaken economically, ideologically, politically, religiously and even physically.

This Old Testament prediction re-echoes in the New Testament, for we read in Heb. 12:25-29:

"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven. Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, and those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom that cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire."

The dividing of the city into three parts is most difficult to explain, since that event lies in the future, but we have found out that "the great city," refers to religio-political Rome. The proof will be even more clinching in the next chapter which we are approaching.

But it would seem that all that is embraced in the phrase, papal Rome, will be divided into three parts, It is to be broken asunder and shaken to pieces.

And with her fall, the cities of the nations fall. What a cataclysm awaits the end of this age!

And Babylon, another name for that city, the city, the confuser of spiritual tongues, is brought up in remembrance before God. A fuller description of her fate is given in the eighteenth chapter.

Babylon which is at the base of the pyramid of rebellion and sin against God, Christ and His church, is made to drink the bitterest draught of all. God gives to her the "cup of the wine of the fierceness of His anger."

Furthermore, the islands and mountains fled away at the climax of the seventh plague. Islands and mountains denote earthly powers. He does not say that islands ceased to be, or that no mountains are to remain or exist after this mighty shaking, but there is to be a recession of the islands from their present places and the mountains were not found.

In other words, great portions of the earth, with its present national standings will be drastically altered, as to their boundaries and relations to one another, and particularly to that "great city"

called Babylon, or Papal Rome. It would seem that old lines between states and nations are to be obliterated and pass away.

Three quarters of a century ago, Loxely Hall seemed to have dipped his poetic pen into the ink of inspiration, to write of this very prediction contained in the events of the seventh vial:

“For I dipped into the future, far as human eye
could see
Saw the vision of the world, and all the wonders
that would be;
Saw the heavens filled with commerce,
Argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down
with costly bales;
Heard the heavens filled with shouting, and
there reigned a ghostly dew,
From the nation’s airy navies, grappling in the
central blue;
Far along the world-wide whisper of the
south wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples, plunging
through the thunder storm;
Till the war-drums throbbed no longer, and the
battle flags were furled,
In the Parliment of man, the Federation
of the World!”

The grand climax of the plague is marked by the dropping of hail stones. The symbolism of these vials have followed, in many respects, that of the ten plagues of Egypt, in which one of the plagues was one of hail.

Hail is a symbol of Divine judgment and hail stones of such weight signify terrible judgments. One might see in these hailstones the falling of bombs, but we have studiously steered our course away from the treacherous shoals of speculation.

“And men blasphemed God because of the plague of hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”

We who now live in the days of the seventh vial, have never ceased to marvel that, in spite of a rising tempo of wars, men have not been driven back to God and the church, but, rather, go on in their sins, blaspheming God!

With each war there have arisen the false prophets who declared, “with the end of this war, men will go back to the church

and seek God." But men have gone their wilful way, little heeding the pious pronouncements of the pink tea prophets!

Here the seventh vial discussion draws to a close, not an end. The symbolism here indicates only a mere outline of what is set forth in more detail in the visions of the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters.

The kings of the east and the Kings of the whole world have been summoned to the battle of Armageddon. Babylon has come into remembrance "in the sight of God." An outline has been given of the changing picture of national upheaval and a description is given of continued ungodliness, in spite of the awful visitations of Divine judgment.

We are now ready to "uncover" the closing scenes of awful grandeur and the glories of the new heaven and the new earth wherein will dwell righteousness.

CHAPTER XVII

MYSTERIOUS BABYLON SITTING UPON THE BEASTS

Text (17:1-18)

1 And there came one of the seven angels that had the seven bowls, and spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the judgment of the great harlot that sitteth upon many waters; 2 with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and they that dwell in the earth were made drunken with the wine of her fornication. 3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness: and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication, 5 and upon her forehead a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 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 a great wonder. 7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou wonder? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and the ten horns. 8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition. And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, they whose name hath not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the

world, when they behold the beast, how that he was, and is not, and shall come. 9 Here is the mind that hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth: 10 and they are seven kings; the five are fallen, the one is, the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a little while. 11 And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven; and he goeth into perdition. 12 And the ten horns that thou sawest are ten kings, who have received no kingdom as yet; but they receive authority as kings, with the beast, for one hour. 13 These have one mind, and they give their power and authority unto the beast. 14 These shall war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they also shall overcome that are with him, called and chosen and faithful. 15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the harlot sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. 16 And the ten horns which thou sawest, and the beast, these shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her utterly with fire. 17 For God did put in their hearts to do his mind, and to come to one mind, and to give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God should be accomplished. 18 And the woman whom thou sawest is the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

INTRODUCTION

Beginning with the Vision of the Three Signs, namely, the Women (Rev. 12th chapter), the Two Beasts (Rev. 13th chapter) and the Seven Vials (Rev. 15th and 16th Chapters), we have found that the woman (or the true church of Christ) has had three great adversaries.

These three were the Dragon, or the Devil and Satan, political Rome, the beast coming up out of the sea and papal Rome, the beast coming up out of the earth and later called the false prophet in (Rev. 16th chapter). In this chapter, in which we now enter, papal Rome is called "Mystery, Babylon, the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and the abominations of the earth."

It is altogether fitting that as we reach the climax of the "uncovering" of her identity, she should be so designated in the chapter upon whose threshold we now stand.

The introduction, of this new revelation of the apostate church, is linked to the judgments visited upon her under the Seven Vials, by the declaration:

vs. 1 "And there came one of the seven angels that 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."

The seven "vial" angels had given a sweeping account, of the overthrow of this spiritual Babylon, by the pouring out of their vials. This one of the seven angels will present to John, Babylon's overthrow in greater detail. This, and the two following chapters, relate to her final fate.

Twice before, in chapters 14:8, and 16:19, this Babylon has been named and her fall foretold, yet in neither mentioning has she been described, nor has her identity been disclosed. Here the mystery of her is to be "uncovered," or revealed.

There is a second definite linking of this description with the Babylon of the Seven Vials. Under the third vial, we read: "They have shed the blood of saints," In this present chapter and the sixth verse, this Babylon, characterized as a woman, "is drunken with the blood of saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus."

This repeating of "unfoldings" of revelation, in a series of visions is proof positive that the Apocalypse is divided into a series of approaches, in which there is a constant returning in later visions to territory, that has already been covered, either for a fresh start, or to show a vision in greater detail.

The seventeenth chapter is expressly an "uncovering" of the judgment of the "great harlot"—the apostate church.

This great harlot is described as sitting upon *many waters*. Here again, we meet with one of the few times in Revelation *when the book itself, interprets the symbol given*. The symbol of "waters," is explained in the fifteenth verse of this same chapter, "And he saith unto me, the waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations and tongues." These waters, then, are symbolic of the many nations and races that support the whore.

The papal church calls herself the "Catholic" church, meaning, the universal church. It is a church, here in Revelation, under the characterization of a harlot, which sits upon, or has dominion over peoples and nations and races, the world over. The very name "Catholic," even if no other identification were given, is enough to prove she is the harlot depicted here in Revelation. How unwittingly has this apostate church revealed herself by the very name she wears, as the Babylon of the Apocalypse! By her very name she presents the student of the Bible, not with mere circumstantial evidence, but with positive, incontrovertible, direct evidence.

God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. He not only will not allow a church to wear a scriptural name, which ob-

serves unscriptural practices and follows unbiblical doctrine, but He brings it about that every church that so departs from the truth *wears a name in keeping with that departure*. We continue to read:

vs. 2 "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."

In the first verse she is called a whore or harlot, and in this verse, the participants with her in her harlotry, are disclosed.

For centuries past the kings of the earth, or earthly governments have had unholy relations with this Jezebel. Since she is a religio-political institution, she has enticed the governments of the world to support and sustain her unholy ambitions, by secret, as well as open alliances. History breathes in the record of her political and religious concordats with the rulers and governments of the earth.

"And the inhabitants have been made *drunk* with the wine of her fornication."

Fornication, in the Scripture, spiritually speaking, refers to false worship, and disloyalty to Christ and His word. Judged by this stand, the Roman Church stands self condemned. When she endeavors to obtain mercy and redemption through Mary as Mediatrix, rather than through Christ, directly, she is untrue to Him. When she teaches doctrines of men, rather than a "thus saith the Lord," she is guilty of spiritual fornication.

The Scripture here says, "They are drunk with the wine of her fornication. Intoxication addles the brain, and affects the muscles so the intoxicated cannot walk straight. The wine of spiritual fornication also addles the mind so the one drunk cannot think God's thoughts after Him, and their walk is crooked. Not according to the straight and narrow way of New Testament truth. A drunk thinks himself sober; likewise, the deluded think themselves right and everyone else wrong. Hence, you hear the apostate church declaring, "The Catholic Church is the only true church."

vs. 3 "And he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness."

The true church fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God. (Rev. 12:6), but here it is a place of the apostate church's own preparing. Her growth and development was so obscure and unnoticed, until her true nature was revealed, that she was like one living hidden in a wilderness. John had to be carried away in the spirit to clearly see her true nature and only those with God-opened eyes can spiritually see this great apostasy and departure from the truth.

vs. 3 "And I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns."

We have already learned in Rev. 13th chapter, that the beast was political Rome, one of those heads was wounded as to death, but whose deadly wound was healed. We learned from history how the old political Rome fell during the seven trumpets, but how, simultaneously, the papal, political state arose to heal the head of government and cause it to continue to live.

So, here, the woman rides upon political Rome, or a secular power. It was a scarlet colored beast, a color symbolical of bloodshed. Both old imperial Rome, and later papal Rome, that arose from the ashes of the destruction of the former, were guilty of shedding the blood of the saints.

John saw the heads of the beast full of names of blasphemy. Blasphemy is the sin of claiming the attributes of God. Because Christ claimed that he was the Son of God, the high priest accused him of blasphemy. (Matt. 26:63-65)

We shall find, presently, that these heads represented forms of government. Did the Roman rulers claim deity, and in so doing become guilty of blasphemy? Let history speak for itself, on this point.

Alexander, reading Homer, found that the ancient heroes were sons of gods, so he, also, claimed and received divine honors, reserved for a god.

The infamous Antioches Epiphanes was assigned a place among the holy gods. We read, in the Scriptures that, Herod, with all his vileness, was hailed as a god.

"And upon a set day, Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an ovation unto them.

And the people gave a shout, saying, it is *the voice of a god*, and not of a man." (Acts 12:21, 22)

Caius Marius (about 156 to 86 B.C.), seven times elected to the consulship of Rome, was classed with the gods, by the people of Rome.

Julius Caesar was worshipped as a god, and after his death many temples were built and frequented in order to worship him.

Trajan worshipped Nerva and honored him with chief priests, with altars and with scared gifts.

Plury, the younger, in turn, honored Trajan as a god.

The vile Caligula claimed to be a god, calling himself by names of

the diety. He boasted that every nation, except the Jews, worshipped him.

The King of Parthis, kneeling before Nero, said to him: "You are my God, and I am come to adore you as I adore the sun."

Domitian filled the earth with his statues, to which sacrifices were offered, and required that all letters written, or published in his name should begin with, "Our Lord and god commands."

One of the underlying reasons for the martyrdom of the early Christians, was that they would not worship, nor sacrifice to the Emperors, as gods.

And the woman herself, patterned after old imperial Rome, in that she was an eccleseastical state springing up out of the old empire, also is full of names of blasphemy.

The pope claims to be the vicar of Christ, or the representative of Christ on earth; but Christ declared that he sent the Holy Spirit to speak for him on earth. (John 16:12-14) He also claims to be the head of the Church, but Paul's words come to us across the centuries saying that God "hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be *the head over all things* to the church, which is his body." (Eph. 1:22, 23)

Some of these blasphemous names come to light in the Mariolatry, or worship of Mary of the apostate church.

Some of these names have been spoken so often by this institution of blasphemy that they no longer shock the world whose spiritual senses have been dulled and deadened. Listen to a few of them as we hear Mary called: "Mother of God," "Queen of Heaven," "Mary, the Immaculate." And listen to those pronouncements of blasphemy: "There is one mediator between Christ and men, "the Holy Mother, Mary." How blasphemous this sounds when read along beside I Timothy 2:25: "For there is one God, and *one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*"

Or listen to this blasphemy, "Mary is the way, the Truth and the Life, no man cometh to Jesus, but by Mary," in comparison with Christ's own words, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6)

The Psalter of Bonaventure, reads: "We praise thee, O Mary! We acknowledge thee to be the Virgin. All the earth doth worship thee, spouse of the Eternal. To thee angels and archangels cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, art thou, Mary, Mother of God."

Archbishop Vachon, of Ottawa, who sponsored the Marian Congress, (June 1947), in his pastoral letter, given in the Canadian

Register (Feb. 8, 1947), quoted the encyclical of Leo 13th (Sept. 22, 1891). "No portion whatsoever of the immense treasury of graces accumulated by the Savior, is bestowed upon us except through Mary, such is the will of God . . . no heavenly gift comes to men which does not pass through her virginal hands."

The canonized saint, Liguori, in his work, "The glories of Mary," says, "this good Mother, for the love she bore us, wished also to help the cause of our salvation with the merits of her sufferings, which she offered for us on Calvary." (Vol. 2, page 19)

Again same author, Volume I, page 409:

"The wills of Christ and of Mary were then united, so that both offered the same holocaust; she thereby producing, with him the one effect, the salvation of the world. At the death of Jesus, Mary united her will to that of her Son; so much so, that both offered one and the same sacrifice."

No wonder Cardinal Gibbons, in his book, "Faith of Our Fathers," page 215, 38th Edition, attempted to escape the accusation of Mariolatry, by saying, "And yet the admirers of Mary's exalted virtues can scarcely celebrate her praises without being accused in certain quarters of Mariolatry."

Then, there is the familiar claim of the power to forgive sins, which only Christ has the power to do. Truly, both imperial Rome and religio-political papal Rome are full of names of blasphemy!

We also note that papal Rome, or the apostate church, here is presented under the symbolism of a "woman." The very circumstance that this woman is seen *in the wilderness*, places her in contrast to the other woman of the twelfth chapter of Revelation who, as the true church, was forced to flee *into the wilderness*, where she had a place prepared of God.

Since the woman of the twelfth chapter, represented the true church, this woman in the seventeenth chapter, being a harlot, symbolizes the false or apostate church.

This is further substantiated by turning to the twenty-first chapter of Revelation. Just as one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, had revealed to John, in the seventeenth chapter, the apostate church, here, in this chapter, one of the seven angels, also, shows John the true church, the Lamb's wife:

"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 show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

And he carried me away in the Spirit, (Just as in Rev. 17:3) to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God."

Here the Lamb's wife is called a city, just as the harlot woman is also called a city, "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the Kings of the earth." (Rev. 17:18)

Further, the harlot woman of the seventeenth chapter is identified with the earthly city of Babylon, or the city of confusion and instead of being the immaculate bride of Christ, she is one with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication.

This, beyond a scintilla of a doubt, is the false church, which came into being in the Pergamos Period, characterized by the doctrine of Baalam, or the doctrine of compromise, and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes or the doctrine of overlordship. This is the apostate church which came to full flower in the Thyatira church period, when the church reached "the depths of Satan." Removing all symbolism the false church is known, in history, as the Roman Catholic Church.

The only symbolism left in this verse yet to be considered the seven heads and the ten horns—will be taken up in the more logical place where they are mentioned later in this chapter. Shall we proceed with the description of the woman.

vs. 4 "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls."

Purple is the color of royalty. She has ever claimed temporal and spiritual sovereignty, hence the mention of this color. As for scarlet, her cardinals wear the color scarlet with their red hats. Her altars throughout the world are decorated with gold and precious stones. These colors, purple and scarlet are characteristic of the vestments of the Roman hierarchy, scarlet being particularly identified with the cardinals, who are called, "princes of the church." The red color also identifies this church with the great red dragon or the devil and satan.

The gold and precious stones and pearls are truly representative of the earthly gorgeousness and magnificence of the embellishments with which the Roman church adorns her altars, temples, rites and ceremonies.

Over against the showy attire of the harlot church, Paul speaks of the true church as follows:

"Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting of hair, and wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." (I Peter 3:3, 4)

Even the pope is reported using a solid gold telephone and has a car in which to ride on six hundred feet of track in the Vatican grounds. And that car is covered within and without with pure gold.

Besides all this, this apostate church is the richest institution in all the world, that is materially, though not spiritually. The papal church has enriched herself at the expense of peoples, multitudes and nations (many waters), upon which she has fastened her tenacles. Her treasures are fabulous beyond the knowledge of men. Her revenues are enormous. Her land, factory and building values run into astronomical figures, much of which is non-taxable, though oftentimes competing with legitimate business, which must bear a staggering tax burden. Never in history, was there ever a more flagrant example of contempt for and regard of Christ's pronouncement, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on the earth." (Matt. 6:19)

Continuing this verse, we read: "Having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication."

This harlot woman, the apostate church, had in her hand the means of conveying the truth—a golden cup; but instead she filled it with her own abominations and filthiness of false teaching, called fornication.

Later this woman is called, "Babylon," which, in connection with the mentioning of a cup in her hand, brings to our mind a statement made concerning the Babylon, of the Old Testament, which was a type of this spiritual Babylon: "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine, therefore the nations are mad." (Jeremiah 51:7)

Shall we note also, that the cup is one. In all the varied systems of religion, whether Roman Catholic, the degenerate catholicism of the Byzantine church, or the false teachings and worship of denominationalism—all have the essence of the old harlotry of Babylon.

Shall we continue to the next verse.

vs. 5 "And upon her forehead was a name written, *Mystery*."

Of all the institutions of the world, whether secular or spiritual, there has never been one so mysterious as the apostate church. Her rising out of the ashes of the old Roman empire, her hold upon the souls of men, as well as the life of nations, her political machina-

tions, her age-long ability to seduce men to subscribe to her half-pagan ritualism, her power to demand an unquestioning blind following of her devotees, her seductive influence to induce men to substitute the worship of Mary, in the place of Christ, her strong hold of slavish fear over the hearts and minds of men—all combine to make her the most mysterious religio-ecclesiastical-political organization in all history.

But there is even more hidden in this word, "Mystery." It is entirely fitting that this name should be written upon her forehead—the seat of all false thinking and teaching. Paul, looking down through the corridors of time, saw this coming, whose beginning was manifest, even in his day:

"For the *mystery* of iniquity doth already work; only he who letteth will let until he be taken out of the way: and then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." (II Thess. 2:7, 8)

This church that went into the wilderness of error, superstition and false teaching, yea even humanism became the monstrous mystery Babylon.

The second name by which she is called is *Babylon the Great*.

Here we come to one of the deepest symbols. In the tenth and eleventh chapters of Genesis—the book of beginnings, we have in these two chapters the record of the beginning of various nations. These chapters may rightfully be called, "the chapters of origins." In this catalog of nations, we are given the origin of the Kingdom of Nimrod, the grandson of Ham. This kingdom is called Bab-el or Babylon, in the land of Shinar.

Nimrod, we read was a mighty hunter before the Lord. The Targum of Jonathan renders this, "a mighty rebel before the Lord, the mightiest rebel before the Lord that ever was on earth."

The apostate church, or New Testament Babylon is likewise, the greatest rebel before God, scripturally and spiritually speaking.

As Nimrod was such a brazen offender, who hesitated not to withstand God, Himself, so the Roman church is the world's worst offender in God's sight, because she wilfully rejects God's authoritative pronouncements.

"Bab-el," means, "the gate of God." The Catholic Church teaches no one can come to God but by that particular church, thus claiming she is "the gate of God."

"Bab-el," or Babylon, means, "confusion," because there began

the confusion of tongues. The apostacy, by its false teaching, has confused the religious world.

The people, in the days of the erection of the tower of Babel, did it to make a name for themselves. (Genesis 11:4) Literally it is, "make a sem," meaning token, sign, banner, name or mark, "lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth." (Genesis 11:4)

That name, "sem or "sema," was a mark of their greatness. In the language of that day, a "sema-rama." From this we derive the name, "semiramis," the dove-goddess, the ensign of all Assyrian princes. This mark, or name figures prominently in the national lives of the pagan nations. It came to be the name of a woman closely resembling the Virgin Mary of the Roman Church. In ancient Babylon, she was Semirani, in Assyria, she was Astarte; in Egypt, Isis, in Greece, Aphrodite, in Rome, Venus. Hesiod, one of the earliest Greek writers, described her as, "the mother of the gods. Catholics call her, "mother of God."

The symbol of such a mark came to take the place of a god and became the holy mother, the great heavenly protectress.

She is called, Babylon the Great. She is the *great* church that ruled over the kingdoms of earth. History substantiates this with an abundant flood of proof.

She is called, "The mother of harlots." The Catholic Church habitually calls herself, "the Mother Church," and ever urges her children—the churches who broke away from her—to return to the fold.

Revelation not only calls her a harlot, but the "Mother of Harlots."

This church is pictured as the mother of a family of churches. Since she is a harlot and a church, then her children, being harlots, are likewise churches. How necessary for each person to examine with extreme care the domination to which he belongs, to see whether it may not be like its mother, holding a cup full of humanisms and doctrines of men, rather than a "thus saith the Lord." The apostate church surely has a numerous and growing family of daughters. And ever this "Mother Church" longs to gather her daughters to her ample arms.

She is also called the mother of "abominations of the earth." How astonished the entire world will be when "that Wicked shall be revealed!" The more one studies the harlotry and abominations of this apostate church, the more utterly amazed he becomes that he never realized before her hideousness in God's sight, and, also, that

the world is so blind to the true character of this God-hated institution.

And speaking of how abominable she is in God's sight. One of the, if not the most characteristic features of this woman is her *harlotry*. Harlotry is the standing symbol, in the Scriptures, for a system of debauched worship, idolatry, and false teaching.

The Scriptures call it adultery, whoredom and fornication.

Harlotry uniformly symbolizes the apostacy of God's church. The word, "harlot," is used at least fifty times to describe spiritual fornication. In eighteen out of twenty occurrences of this figure of speech, the import is that God's church and people have forsaken Him. There are only three times in the entire Bible where the figure is applied to heathen cities or nations, twice to Tyre and once to Nineveh. So she is a harlot and the Mother of Harlots, or other false churches which have followed in her footsteps.

vs. 6 "And I saw her drunken with blood of saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration."

She not only made "the inhabitants drunk with the wine of her fornication" (Rev. 17:2), but she herself has become drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs.

The word "drunken" expresses the state of being gluttoned or surfeited with blood; although, judging by her persecution and slaughter of the saints, her thirst is insatiable.

There have been harlot daughters who have also engaged in persecution, but there is only one church who could be styled, "drunk with the blood of the saints." And, note she was drunken with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. That identifies her as an institution this side of the time Jesus walked on the earth, was crucified, died, was buried and rose again.

Her blood-drunken state made the Apostle to wonder with great wonderment.

vs. 7 "And the angel said unto me, wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman and the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition."

We have found this beast to represent a government, and in this case Imperial Rome, which perished during the seven trumpets, but arose from the ashes of destruction, as the papal hierarchy restored the government, but in another form. And this restored government, ascended out of the bottomless pit, the final abode of the devil. In other words, it was devil born and satan inspired.

vs. 8 "And they that swell 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."

vs. 9, 10 "And here is the mind which hath wisdom." Of course, this refers to spiritual wisdom for, "the natural man (the unrenewed man through the new birth) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

"The seven heads are seven (I Cor. 1:14) mountains, on which the woman sitteth."

While there is a much deeper meaning hidden here, Rome has always been recognized as the "seven-hilled city," from the seven hills on which she stood. They were Mt. Aventine, Mt. Capitaline, Mt. Palatine, Mt. Esquiline, the Caelian Mount, the Quirinal and Viminal. Ovid, Horace, Levy, the early church fathers, Tertullian, as well as Jerome, all called Rome the seven-hilled city.

Jerome, born 342 A.D., wrote a letter to a certain Christian lady urging her to "read what is written in the apocalypse of the seven hills."

But there is a deeper meaning. A mountain, in symbolism, represents a government of some form or nature. The seven heads are also seven kings, or kingdoms, or governments, for the original term may signify either of the three. Rev. 17:10, "And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is yet to come; and when he is come, he must continue a short space."

Rome, in all her political history, had seven forms of government, as follows:

1. The *first* form was *Kingly*. The first king was Romulus; the last, Torquin, the Proud. There were seven kings in all.
2. The *second* form, that of Consulers. Two consuls were elected annually.
3. The *third* form was that of *Dictators*. In this form one man was invested with dictatorial power.
4. The *fourth* form was that of *Tribunes*. Under this form, the chief magistrates were the Tribunes of the people.
5. The *fifth* form was that of *Decemvirs*. Under this system absolute government was invested in ten men who were superior to all laws.

These first five forms had come and gone before John's day, because "five are fallen." The sixth form was in existence at the time, for we are here told that "one is." We know from earlier studies, that the system of government, at the time of the revelation given to John, was that of Emperors. John had been banished to Patmos by the Emperor, Domitian. The form was that of an Imperial government.

So, now we have found six of the heads to be, (1) Kings, (2) Consuls, (3) Dictators, (4) Tribunes, (5) Decemvirs and (6) Emperors.

But we are informed that "one is to come." We have already discovered this seventh form in our study of the "Seal Series." Following the overthrow of the Emperors, there followed a period in which Rome was ruled by Military Governors. Under this form, the Roman Legions set up their own Generals as Military Governors. Of this form, John said, "And when he cometh, he must continue a short space." This seventh form was to give way for an eighth. Shall we read about it:

vs. 11, 12 "And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition."

In the light of our already gained knowledge, we know with the fall of Rome, a new form of government had already begun to rise, like an empire within an empire. Long before the fall of Rome, there had begun to grow up within the secular state, an ecclesiastical state, which in its constitution and administrative system, was shaping it-

self upon the imperial model, with finally the pope becoming temporal sovereign, with the states of the church, its domain.

This eighth form then, was an image of the old secular government, yet with something distinctly new added—the merging of church and state. The eighth form was, then, a religio-political form.

This is the reason why the woman is said to be seated on the beast. The secular system supported the papal form. The temporal form carried the religious system.

It is worthy of note that it is never said of the other seven forms that they should go into perdition. It is only of this eighth form—that of religion and politics combined, that it is said “And goeth into perdition.” This is the Babylon of the seventh vial (Rev. 16:19) that “came into remembrance before God to give her the cup of the wine of fierceness of His wrath.”

Now, we are ready to advance to the next verse. Rev. 17:12, “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.”

We have, earlier in this study, learned that a horn represents power, especially a Kingdom, not necessarily a world power. When John wrote, those Kingdoms did not yet exist.

After the fall of Rome, the dominion of the Caesars divided into ten smaller states. Sir Isaac Newton traced this ten as follows:

1. Kingdom of the Vandals in Spain and Africa.
2. Kingdom of the Visigoths.
3. Kingdom of the Suevi.
4. Kingdom of the Alans in France.
5. Kingdom of the Burgundians.
6. Kingdom of the Franks.
7. Kingdom of the Britons.
8. Kingdom of the Huns.
9. Kingdom of the Lombards.
10. Kingdom of the Revenna.

So the Roman Empire broke up into ten lesser nations, but all the ten carried or supported the Papacy. They are not to exist very long as ten, for a part of them soon passed away.

vs. 14 "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of Lords, and Kings of Kings: And they that are with him are called and chosen, and faithful."

These are evidently mentioned again in (Rev. 19:19) when the Kings of the earth and their armies come forth to battle the Lamb.

vs. 15 "And he saith unto me. The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."

This verse is one of the few in Revelation that seems to be included in that book to give us an interpretation of some symbol. We will recall that the verses mentioning seven candlesticks, the seven stars, and the one explaining that the dragon was the devil and satan, are verses employed as interpreters of symbols.

Rome, in the Papal form, or eighth governmental system, held vast sway of the power over peoples and nations and tongues.

vs. 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."

We have already shown how France, one of the ten horn Kingdoms, conquered the Papal states and humiliated the pope by taking him a prisoner to France. With the action of France, we read of how "a tenth part of the city (or papal Rome) fell. As nations threw off the Roman yoke, they made the Harlot on the Tiber, desolate, and naked, by stripping her of her treasures, her power and her temporal states. The seven vials recounted how these made war on religion-political Rome. And how did it happen that they were of one mind to do this? Judging from the historical viewpoint, we would say they did this because of oppression and through a desire to throw off the papal yoke.

But John was permitted to step in behind the scenes, and see the hand back of it all, "For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree and give their Kingdom unto the beast, until the Word of God shall be fulfilled."

He caused them to agree and used these ten agencies to carry out His divine will.

First, they unitedly gave their support to the woman, or the apostate church, until God's word was accomplished; then they turned on the woman or ecclesiastical Rome to destroy her.

vs. 18 "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the Kings of the earth."

There is but one church that ever ruled over the Kingdoms of this earth, the City of Babylon, spiritually speaking, or the Roman Catholic Church.

This entire seventeenth chapter seems to have been dedicated to to the task of leaving the world without the faintest doubt as to what the beast is, as to what Babylon is, what the Mother of Harlots is, and what church, in God's sight, is the abomination of the earth. Mystery, Babylon the great, has now been fully revealed so that all who runs may read.

CHAPTER XVIII

BABYLON IS FALLEN

Text (18:1-24)

1 After these things I saw another angel coming down out of heaven, having great authority; and the earth was lightened with his glory. 2 And he cried with a mighty voice, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and is become a habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird. 3 For by the wine of the wrath of her fornication all the nations are fallen; and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth waxed rich by the power of her wantonness.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: 5 for her sins have reached even unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. 6 Render unto her even as she rendered, and double unto her the double according to her works: in the cup which she mingled, mingle unto her double. 7 How much soever she glorified herself, and waxed wanton, so much give her of torment and mourning: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall in no wise see mourning. 8 Therefore in one day shall her plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the

Lord God who judged her. 9 And the kings of the earth, who committed fornication and lived wantonly with her, shall weep and wail over her, when they look upon the smoke of her burning, 10 standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. 11 And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth their merchandise any more; 12 merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stone, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet; and all thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble; 13 and cinamon, and spice, and incense, and ointment, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and cattle, and sheep; and merchandise of horses and chariots and slaves; and souls of men. 14 And the fruits which thy soul lusted after are gone from thee, and all things that were dainty and sumptuous are perished from thee, and men shall find them no more at all. 15 The merchants of these things, who were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning; 16 saying, Woe, woe, the great city, she that was arrayed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearl! 17 for in one hour so great riches is made desolate. And every shipmaster, and every one that saileth any whither, and mariners, and as many as gain their living by sea, stood afar off, 18 and cried as they looked upon the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like the great city? 19 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, wherein all that had their ships in the sea were made rich by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. 20 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye saints, and ye apostles, and ye prophets; for God hath judged your judgment on her.

21 And a strong angel took up a stone as it were a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with a mighty fall shall Babylon, the great city, be cast down, and shall be found no more at all. 22 And the voice of harpers and minstrels and flute-players and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft, shall be found any more at all in thee; and the voice of a mill shall be heard no more at all in thee; 23 and the light of a lamp 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 princes of the earth; for with thy sorcery were all the nations deceived. 24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth.

vs. 1 "And after these things."

After the descriptions given us in the seventeenth chapter to reveal to us the identity of that great city of Spiritual Babylon, or papal Rome which rules over the kings of earth, we now come to the consideration of her downfall.

"I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory." (Rev. 18:1)

The introduction of such a mighty angel at this juncture emphasizes the importance of the subject matter of this vision before us. This is another angel than one of the seven angels which had the seven vials who talked with John in the seventeenth chapter.

To this present angel was given great power or authority because of the world-shattering events introduced in this chapter. The earth was lightened with his glory, because he came with a revelation of great enlightenment concerning the final destruction of that great city Babylon which had darkened the earth doctrinally, spiritually, politically and economically.

vs 2 "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon 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."

Here this angel repeats a former angelic pronouncement recorded in (Rev. 14:8), "Babylon is fallen is fallen." By referring back to that setting we find that this first pronouncement falls into the time of the seventh vial, because in the pouring out of his seventh plague "great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath." (Rev. 16:19)

The repetition of this announcement of Babylon's fall calls our attention to the importance of this climactic event of history's consummation. Again the emphasis becomes apparent in the double declaration "is fallen is fallen."

When Joseph explained to Pharaoh why his dream was "doubled," he said: "And for that the dream was *doubled* unto Pharaoh *twice*; it is because the thing is *established*, and God will shortly bring it to pass." (Genesis 41:32)

For the same evident reason the word "fallen" is repeated twice, even *doubled* unto us *twice*,—one *double* in 14:8 and the second double in 18:2.

The importance of all this is readily seen when we realize that all the activities of men, all their religious or business enterprises,

eventuate in that condition of a godless civilization as typified by the literal Babylon of antiquity and the spiritual Babylon symbolized under that name in Revelation.

The confusion that obtains in religion, education, economics, finance, industry, government, politics and morality—all is traced back to that great city that rules over the Kings of the earth the "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth." This Babylon we have proved by the testimony of Scripture and History alike to be the religio-political heirarchal system known to the world as the papacy and the apostate church.

With a false church dominating the world, it follows, as naturally as daylight comes after dark, that men would have false conceptions of right and wrong in the moral, spiritual, intellectual, financial, economic and political realms of activity.

Our present state of civilization is the harvest. Rome sowed the wind and the closing period of this age is reaping the whirlwind.

The angel describes this present age of which the world is so blindly proud, as a habitation of devils, a hold for every foul spirit, a cage for every unclean and hateful bird.

Of course to the spiritually deluded and the worldling this all sounds absurd. They point to the grandeur of the Roman church, her multitudes of earnest devotees, her pronouncements on peace, her denunciation of intellectual evils, etc. This generation boasts of its material accomplishments in the way of scientific research and inventive genius, but they do not see all this through God's eyes.

Surely, the world, in its evaluation of things, needs to hark back to the declaration God made to Samuel who was trying to select a king to be anointed. Samuel was one of the noblest men of history, yet even this fine man illustrates how far wrong a good man can be in property evaluation. Hear God's council to him:

"And the Lord said to Samuel; Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature: because I have refused him: for the Lord *seeth not as man seeth*; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." (I Samuel 16:7)

This twice repeated expression "is fallen is fallen" describes a twin falling action. Babylon, as a system of false teaching and worship in an apostate church, and, Babylon as a system of commercialism resulting from a scriptural departure in doctrine and practice, falls.

Twin falls are thus portrayed. Both Mother and child, both spiritual and carnal, both cause and effect are included in this repeated expression, "is fallen is fallen."

And the reason by both fall together is given in the very next verse:

vs. 3 "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."

Then John hears a call for God's people to come out of this Babylonish nightmare: vs. 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 her plagues."

This call to come out of this spiritual Babylon, producer of all the evils of our present civilization, is not the first time such a call has been heard. The call to flee from either physical or spiritual Babylon has been issued seven times in all the scriptures. The call occurs five times in the Old Testament. They are: (Isaiah 48:20; 52:4-11) (Jeremiah 50:8, 9; 51:6, 8) (Zechariah 2:6, 7)

In the New Testament there are two calls. Although in the first of the two the name "Babylon" is not actually mentioned, but is implied by the confusion caused by the mixing of believers and unbelievers. The two instances are: (2 Cor. 6:17, 18) (Rev. 18:4)

The seven-fold, or fullest possible measure of calling, for the people of God to flee this great Babylon is impressive indeed.

However, we should recall that whereas God brought His people out of Egypt in a body, with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm, in the case of this call to flee Babylon is an individual one.

Again his people were forced to flee out of Egypt, but here only those who have a mind to come out may do so.

It will not be a mass evacuation, but rather an individual and voluntary leave of this world-wide institution of confusion and apostasy.

vs. 5 Regardless of man's human judgment her sins are enormous, for we read: "For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."

While the promise to the obedient believer is "Their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more" (Hebrew 8:12), the sins of Babylon are remembered and unforgiven by God, because we read:

vs. 6 "Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double."

Contemtpuous flaunting and defiance of the word of God is the essence of the sin of Babylon. If Revelation did not here declare it so plainly we would know it applied to our age in which we live.

Rome's disregard for the Scriptures and the authority of Christ's word has caused the world to hate what they know as the church. They have falsely and mistakenly judged the church of Christ by what they have beheld in the Catholic church. The result has been that men have turned away from God's word, the church and drifted into utter indifference, agnosticism, skepticism, free-thinking and out right infidelity. We live, as a result of Babylons heaven reaching sins, in this age of humanism.

God's principle of judgment is that every individual, as well as every institution, is to be rewarded according to his or its work. What is sown must be harvested. This Thyatira church as "given space to repent of her fornication and she repented not." (Rev. 2:21)

He further adds, "Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation except they repent of their deeds." (Rev. 2:22)

But an added measure of punishment is revealed here. Babylon, or Rome shall be rewarded *double*.

Not only was she and still is unrepentant, but she is the most arrogant institution in all the world. Hear the angel describe her haughty attitude: "How much hath she glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her."

vs. 7 "This recalls the case of the rich man and Lazarus: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day," but at the end, in hell a far different scene is presented: "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented. (Luke 16:19, 25)

Likewise, she who lived deliciously shall be meted out torment and sorrow.

But her boasting continues: "for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow."

What a strange statement of the angel concerning Babylon—the papal church! The holy word of God, says Christ is the bridegroom and the repentant baptized believers are his bride. But inform a member of this apostate church of his condition and he will immediately declare, "the Roman Catholic church is the only and true church." It is the voice of the apostacy crying "I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow."

And as for this ungodly and unregenerate civilization she has produced, if you tell them of the impending danger of living in sin until Christ comes, they if not in substance, at least in their actions will reply, "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation (2 Pet. 3:4). But Christ said of these last days,

"As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah

entered the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Even so shall it be when the Son of man is revealed." (Luke. 17:26, 27, 30)

So shall the plagues of Babylon come suddenly:

vs. 7 "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 who judgeth her."

Man's disbelief that God will punish, notwithstanding, God will destroy her suddenly.

Like the saints under the fifth seal the true saints of this day, cry out, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

I know all who have perused the contents of this book are crying out, How long? When will Babylon fall? In answer will say that such time has never been revealed. There is the highest authority for such a reply, even Christ himself:

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father." (Matt. 24:36)

Christ continued after this declaration "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." (Matt. 24:37)

So even the angel who here announced the suddenness of Babylon's destruction knew not the hour, so could not tell us when the destruction shall be."

vs. 9-11 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.

And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:"

The follows an enumeration of the articles in which they made traffic.

vs. 12, 13 "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 and souls of men."

In this lamentation over the sudden fall of Babylon, the merchants of earth and king's of earth join in their voices.

Probably not until God himself reveals all things to us will we begin to realize how this spiritual Babylon has her hand in business and politics—as symbolized by the lament of merchants and kings.

For a book of such brevity as the apocalypse to devote so much space and divulge so many articles of traffic as here confronts us, it must be that the angel wanted to make plain to a startled world how vast are the ramifications of Rome's activities in all the affairs of men.

The whole world is conscious of the political activities of this apostate church which maintains embassies and sends ambassadors to almost every nation on earth, but it may come as a complete surprise to learn of her commercial activities.

But the last statement of these verses is the most startling—a revelation of her traffic in the "slaves and souls of men." Literally, the word "slaves" should read, "bodies." Thus the Greek reads.

Here it is that men and women barter their souls and bodies. There are multitudes of Esaus who will barter their spiritual birth-right for a mess of this world's pottage.

How pertinent are Christ's words about the conditions of the near approach of His return.

"For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." (Matt. 16:26, 27)

The spiritual Babylon has with business made traffic of the bodies and souls of men. And when we recall the masses for the dead which are said by the priesthood of Papal Rome, in which the devotees pay to have their loved ones prayed out of Purgatory, surely there has been a long and lively traffic in the souls of men.

But the things for which Babylon longed are gone forever at the time of her fall.

vs. 14-19 "And the fruits that thy soul lusteth after are departed from thee, and all the things that were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shall find them no more at all.

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 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!"

Thus we see merchants, kings and shipmaster with their sailors lamenting the fall of Babylon. In other words, business, politics and transportation were under the denomination of and blessed by a false religious system that fostered their respective ungodly world-systems.

And three times we hear the cry, Alas, alas! Once it comes from the kings of the earth, or the political realm; once it is uttered by the merchants, or the commercial realm; and once from the ship-masters and sailor, or the transportation realm. It is a triple voice, each part of which is double. It is that evil number six complete.

The repeated Alas, alas! is striking. The word is the same as that of the angel in Rev. 8:13, when he cried, "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."

The casting of dust on the head is a symbolic act of one who thus expresses his utter hopelessness and despair. Because of the sin of Achan which brought defeat to Israel we read:

"And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell on the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put *dust upon their heads.*" (Joshua 7:6)

Again this recurrence of the word "woe" or "alas" (verses 10, 16, and 19) helps us to identify the time of the fall of Babylon as being in the period of the third and last woe. (Rev. 11:14)

We have had symbolized to us the suddenness of Babylon's downfall in the expressions: "in one day" Verse 8, "in one hour" verses 17 and 19. Now we are informed as to the violence of the downfall.

vs. 20 "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great mill-stone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more."

This symbolic action of the mighty angel as portrayed in this verse is an intensified picture of a typical act which Jeremiah commanded Seraiah to perform when he came to that Babylon on antiquity:

"And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, when thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words, . . . and it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it and cast it into the midst of Euphrates. And thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her." (Jeremiah 51:61, 63, 64)

Thus we see that the destruction of ancient Babylon was typical of the destruction of spiritual Babylon.

Thus we see that the fall of mysterious Babylon, that Romish church; that great Harlot woman; the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth; is one of the, if not the most outstanding and marvelous events of all time. More is said about Babylon in the Scriptures than any other great religious and secular occurrence.

But the rejoicings of heaven, and those whose affections are set on things above and not on things on the earth (Col. 3:2), are now set forth in exact contrast with the lamentations of the kings, merchants and shipmasters and all their peoples they represent.

vs. 21 "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her."

While earth rings with the chorus of lamentation, dissatisfaction and despair, a grand jubulation fills the heaven. While the world cries, Woe, woe over the fall of this religio-political system, the citizens of heaven pour out of their mighty halleluias.

The angel then announces:

vs. 22 "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 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."

It will be an event unbelievable to the world. The world has become so accustomed to seeing the Roman church, her priesthood and religious processions and pronouncements played up with such righteousness in the press, magazines and periodicals; propagated in

the movies, on the radio and television screen; eulogized in song, poetry and story; kowtowed to by politician, merchant, transportation interests, advertisers, rulers and common citizens that the fall of such a church with such suddenness and violence will be shock that will shake the whole earth.

And it will be the immediate act of God. No earthy power or agency could bring to an end an institution so hoary with age and deeply intrenched in every activity of man.

And to think that all of this could have been avoided! If there had been the New Testament church, with Christ as head and supreme authority upon the earth since Pentecost there would have been no spiritual Babylon to confuse the world religiously, corrupt political governments, compromise truth and morals, and finally to condemn the world to eternal destruction and damnation.

CHAPTER XIX

THE HALLELUJAH CHORUS AND FINAL JUDGMENT

Text (19:1-21)

1 After these things I heard as it were a great voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, Hallelujah; Salvation, and glory, and power, belong to our God: 2 for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great harlot, her that corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

3 And a second time they say, Hallelujah. And her smoke goeth up for ever and ever. 4 And the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God that sitteth on the throne, saying, Amen; Hallelujah. 5 And a voice came forth from the throne, saying, Give praise to our God, all ye his servants, ye that fear him, the small and the great.

6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth. 7 Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8 And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are true words of God. 10 And I fell down before his feet to worship him. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

11 And I saw the heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 And his eyes are a flame of fire, and upon his head are many diadems; and he hath a name written which no one knoweth but he himself. 13 And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood; and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure. 15 And out of his mouth proceedeth 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 of the wrath of God, the Almighty. 16 And he hath on his garment and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid heaven, Come and be gathered together unto the great supper of God; 18 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 thereon, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, and small and great.

19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the horse, and against his army. 20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought the signs in his sight, wherewith he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image: they two were cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone: 21 and the rest were killed with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, even the sword which came forth out of his mouth: and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

vs. 1 "After these things."

Following the stirring scenes pertaining to the fall of Babylon, John hears these songs of rejoicing and thanksgiving. Such anthems are heard whenever some great triumph or blessing is about to come.

In the twentieth verse of the eighteenth chapter there was a call to heaven and the holy apostles and prophets to rejoice over the downfall of Babylon. Here we have the response to that call. John said:

vs. 19:1-18.

"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. And the four and twenty elders and the four

beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia."

"And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye servants, and ye that fear him both small and great.

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

This has been a lengthy quotation, but it includes the verses which present this great Alleluia Chorus. This Hallelujah Chorus contains the only Hallelujahs of all the New Testament. It would seem as if these Hallelujahs were reserved for this wonderful victory in the downfall of spiritual Babylon.

These first verses of this chapter are an interlude between the fall of Babylon, Chapter 18, and the fall of the beast (Rev. 19:11-21). This is the fifth parenthesis thus far in the book of Revelation. These interludes are thus familiar features throughout the book. This parenthesis consists of a fourfold chorus and each chorus has the same theme: "Hallelujah." We note that the music and singing of heaven has been heard often throughout the "uncovering" of the mysteries of God, but not until now has the "Hallelujah Chorus" sounded.

The Hallelujahs are four in number. Perhaps this points the divine finger to God's victory over the powers of the earth, because four seems to be the numerical symbol of the earth—four corners, four winds, four directions.

The first two Hallelujahs celebrate the fall and utter destruction of Babylon, the harlot. John hears the "voice of a great multitude, saying, "Hallelujah: Salvation, and glory, and power, belong to our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great harlot." (Rev. 19:2).

"And, again (second time) they say, Hallelujah, and her smoke goeth up for ever and ever." (Rev. 19:3).

The third Hallelujah is uttered by the twenty-four elders (we found them to be heavenly princes) and the four living creatures (we found them to be Cherubim).

Then a voice came forth from the throne, as it were the voice of a heavenly director or conductor, saying, "Give praise to our God, all ye his servants, ye that fear Him, both small and great."

Then this majestic chorus is heard in answer to the voices bidding. The chorus is like "the voice of a great multitude," and like "the voice of many waters," and like "the voice of mighty thunders," saying,

"Hallelujah: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

As the majestic heavenly chorus comes to its grand finale John hears a voice commanding him to open the fourth of the seven beatitudes of the apocalypse.

"Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb."

A solemn confirmation of this beatitude follows: "And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." (Rev. 19:9).

What a contrast is this with that of the eighteenth Chapter! There we read "And the voice of the Bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee" (Babylon); here is pictured the approaching marriage of the Lamb. This vision brings us only to the announcement of the coming marriage of the Lamb. The subject will be taken up again in the twenty-first chapter.

So deeply impressed was John and so overwhelmed by such a glorious revelation from this voice that came out of the throne that he fell at the feet of the messenger to worship him.

vs. 10 "And he said unto me, See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of all thy brethren, that have the testimony of

Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

While the apostate church worshipped saints, Mary and the angels, members of the true church are forbidden thus to do so. This ought to be sufficient warning to the devotees of such a false worship.

In this verse and also in Rev. 22:7, 8, the apostle, John, offered to worship the angel and in each instance the prohibition is instantaneous.

Another comparison between the two instances is enlightening. Here the angel says: "See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren." In Rev. 22:9 he adds, "of thy brethren, the prophets." Here the explanation is added, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

In testifying of Jesus the angel seems to present himself as becoming one of the prophets. This spirit of prophecy is the witness to Jesus of His being the Messiah, the Son of God, the Redeemer, the Lamb that was slain, the Bridegroom and the King of the Kingdom, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord and His Christ.

Now we seem to come to the opening of a new vision, because of the similarity of the wording to that used at the beginning of other new visions.

In Rev. 4:1, where the vision of the throne, the slain Lamb and the seven seals began, we read:

"After this I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven."

"In Rev. 11:19, another beginning, we read: "And the temple of God was opened in heaven."

And here in Rev. 19:11-16 we read: "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 and the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: And He shall rule them with a rod of iron; and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, *KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*"

All this is symbolism at its highest and best. Some have called this the Battle of Armageddon and thereby made such statements literal. We shall never see a white horse with a sword projecting out of the mouth of its rider. Truly, and without doubt this is a spiritual presentation of symbolism. And how logical and natural should this follow the Hallelujah Chorus.

Up to this point the false apostate church has been under consideration. Now we see the triumphant church with presentations of conditions that would have obtained had it not been for the departure from the truth.

Here we get a glimpse of what can, and will obtain when Babylon is burned. Shall we briefly consider some of the characterizations here, remembering always that we are walking in the realm of symbolism.

First: He rides upon a white horse. This is the first time Christ has appeared since a door was opened in heaven in Rev. 4:1 and a vision was given of God sitting upon His throne and Christ standing like a Lamb as it had been slain. There he was portrayed in His mediatorial work, now he is presented as a conqueror. We have already found that a horse is an emblem of war, and a white one as a symbol of victory.

As the King of the Jews he rode, in his entry into Jerusalem, upon an ass, a colt the foal of an ass. There he was meek and lowly, but here he rides a martial charger, as the King of the entire world.

Second: He is called Faithful and True. This presents Him in sharp contrast to the previous visions, where the Harlot church is unfaithful and the dragon, or the devil, is a deceiver.

Third: "In Righteousness He doth judge and make war."

In the last church period, the Laodicean period, corresponding to the time element of this present chapter, Christ is called "the Faithful and True Witness," (Rev. 3:14). Christ is here presented in a dual role, namely, Judge and avenger, or executioner, but in both, Jesus Christ the righteous."

Fourth: "His eyes were as a flame of fire."

To be able to judge justly he has eyes that seeth all things, hence this flaming vision.

Fifth: "And on His head were many crowns."

This presents Him as a victorious King, whereas, heretofore he was the Lamb slain. The many crowns are significant.

When Ptolemy entered Antioch, he wore two crowns on his head (1 Macc. 11:13). When the popes put on their headgear it is a triple crown, emblematic of three sovereignties in one. The dragon or the devil had seven crowns on his seven heads. The beast, or political Rome, had ten diadems on his ten heads, signifying the union of ten sovereignties. In all these instances, the accumulation of diadems symbolized accumulated victories and increased dominion.

Christ is crowned with many diadems, symbolical of His complete dominion over heaven and earth.

Sixth: "He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood."

If it were not immediately said "and His name was called the Word of God" we would still know by his blood-stained garments that he was the Christ, "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world," by virtue of His shed blood.

Seventh: "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword that with it he should smite the nations."

Already we have found this symbol stands for the word of God (Heb. 4:12). This would certainly indicate that this whole action is spiritual.

Eight: "And He shall rule them with a rod of iron." Literally, it means "He shall shepherdize them with a rod of iron." In other words, His rule is to be firm yet at the same time in the spirit of a shepherd.

All this is highly symbolic. The armies which follow him in heaven are also portrayed riding on white horses—a symbol of triumphant warfare—and clothed in fine linen, white and clean, which symbolizes the righteousness of saints.

These wear no armor and we notice that they are not the executors of this vengeance. The victory belongs to Christ alone. He bears the only weapon, the sword, or the word of God. He treadeth the winepress alone. Those who accompany Him need no weapons for the victory is represented as already won. Therefore, the sword of the Captain of their salvation is sufficient. They merely follow up the achievements of the sword he wields.

This is according to (I John 3:8).

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

Here is being fulfilled the prophetic utterance of the Psalmist concerning Christ's great triumph to be followed by a description of His glorious wife:

"Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips . . . gird on thy sword upon thy thigh, O Most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of the truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things . . .

Thy throne O God is forever and ever, the scepter of thy Kingdom is a righteous scepter . . .

Kings' daughters were among thy honorable women, upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir." (Psalms 45:2-9).

The name used here is not "Jesus," one who saves, but is the "word of God" as the destroyer of His enemies.

The "Word of God" is all powerful, because it was "the Word of God" who in the beginning made all things (John 14:1-3). Therefore, none can stand before Him as He comes in the might of that name.

That the victory is certain is further emphasized by the verses that follow:

vs. 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 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."

Thus the call to the great supper of God. What a startling contrast between this great supper of God, and that of the marriage supper of the Lamb.

This passage carries our minds back to Ezekial 39:17, 18.

"Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every bird of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you.

You shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth."

vs. 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."

There is deep symbolism employed here and a different type of warfare conducted so that the whole struggle is wrapped in mystery, which doubtless will only be fully understood when the fulfillment comes.

The description of this great battle in which the Kingdoms of this world become the Kingdom of our Lord and his Christ is as strange in its weapon of warfare as it is brief in detail. Its very brevity amazes us. But the result is decisive.

The beast, representative of all political despotism and tyranny and the false prophet, the embodiment of false religion are taken, are seized and thrown alive into the lake of fire and brimstone.

And their followers alike are dispatched. Again the strange weapon that destroys them is the sword which proceedeth out of His mouth—that spiritual weapon of irresistible might.

Such a strange warfare and such a feast of death has never before been witnessed. Thus is terminated the present order of things as we know it. Only the dragon's, or the devil's fate remains to be uncovered.

Truly, more we would like to know, but we must not speculate. Neither dare we read in human opinions or theories. It is still true, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever." (Deut. 29:29).

We dare not be wise above that which is written.

CHAPTER XX

THE THOUSAND YEARS

Text (20:1-15)

INTRODUCTION

1 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound

him for a thousand years, 3 and cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished: after this he must be loosed for a little time.

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

7 And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down out of heaven, and devoured them. 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. 15 And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

Shall we take a very brief parting look at the preceding chapter, before taking up the consideration of the one before us.

The portrayal of Christ coming seated on a white horse, followed by his armies, also on white horses, has been interpreted by some, who are advocates of His visible return before the Millennium, as substantiation for their theory called "Pre-millennialism."

They maintain this description as given in Revelation 19:11-16, pictures a personal coming visible to all eyes, and is the second advent often referred to in the Scriptures. Such advocates need to consider some very serious objections before accepting such a theory with too much enthusiasm, or spiritual fervor. Only a few objections are listed here:

First, The language here is in the realm of symbolism.

Second, That this being so, how can they interpret this as a visible return at this particular time, without including a literal sword protruding out of his mouth?

Third, Then, this must be an actual horse and he must have eyes from which flash a flame of fire.

Fourth, He must actually be clothed in a vesture dipped in blood.

Fifth, His armies must be real men with literal bodies (and that before the resurrection of the body) riding upon real horses.

That there is to be a literal, personal return of Christ is a well-established truth in the Scriptures, but in this instance to make His return literal and personal when the language is purely symbolical leads to confusion. Logic demands that if this is His personal and literal return, then that return is accompanied by literal horses and all other manifestations attendant to this description here must be considered literal.

All this false, unscriptural and misleading concept has come about by those who advocate the doctrine known as "Pre-millennialism."

The term "pre-millennialism" is nowhere to be found in all the Scriptures. Then, does not reason, logic and love for God's "thus saith the Lord" prompt, yea compel us "to be silent where the Scriptures are silent?" All who believe in the divine inspiration of God's Word recognize the truth that "we must speak where the Bible speaks." Ought not there be as reverent a recognition of the necessity of "being silent where the Bible is silent?"

Never once did Christ mention "Pre-millennialism." Was it because He had not the time in his brief ministry to refer to it? Or is it as John said, "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written?" (John 21:25)

Of all that has been written in God's inspired Word, not once is the expression "pre-millennialism" included. Yet, today, perhaps no word is used so much or heard so frequently as this one, even by those who pride themselves as being fundamentalists—another unscriptural term, by the way.

Upon another occasion Christ said to His apostles, and, in his farewell conversation when every word was freighted with sublime meaning:

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot hear them now" (John 16:12)

Was the term "pre-millennialism" to be among the things yet to be revealed? He promised that further revelation (all things) should be completed after the Spirit should come, even to the giving of new prophecies—"He will show you things to come." His words to them are:

"Howbeit 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." (John 16:13)

Yet those same apostles who were all filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost spoke, even with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance (Acts 1:26); (2:1-4) never in all their labors ever so much as once let fall from their lips this oft heard word of the present day—"Pre-millennialism."

It could not be because their memories failed them, for the spirit was *to bring them remembrance all things* Christ had said to them. Said Christ on this matter of remembrance:

"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." (John 14:26)

Then we are forced to one of two, or even both conclusions.

First, Christ did teach "pre-millennialism" and sent the Holy Spirit to remind his apostles of all things, among which would be this doctrine, if its advocates are right, and that the Holy Spirit failed to remind, not one, but all the apostles, including Paul chosen out of due season, to mention this doctrine by the name used so frequently today.

Or *second*, the Holy Spirit did remind them and they failed to speak as the Holy Spirit was to give them utterance.

Either conclusion is utterly untenable and preposterous, even sacreligious.

There is only one logical, ethical and scriptural decision left us. The term "pre-millennialism" never once crossed Christ's lips, therefore the Holy Spirit did not have this word to bring to their remembrance. Pre-millennialism was never among "all things to be remembered."

Furthermore, it was not among the many things Christ had yet to say unto them, which they yet were not able to hear.

It was not among the things the Holy Spirit was to hear of Christ, neither was it among the things of which it was said, "*He shall show you things to come.*"

It was not among the "all truth" into which the Holy Spirit was to guide them.

There is a truism recognized by every close student of divine truth, a self-evident fact, requiring no demonstration, a sound accepted principle.

"If *anything*, be it a matter of belief or practice, is called by an unscriptural name, it is axiomatic that the thing which the name represents, *is also unscriptural.*

Applying this self-evident truth to the usage of the term "pre-millennialism," since the name is unscriptural, then it follows that the belief in it is also unscriptural.

Then this nomenclature must be dropped, or we are not being "silent where the Scriptures are silent."

But coming back to the verses we have had under observation, namely Revelation 19:11-16, not only is the language here symbolic, but the description is not in harmony with Christ's own account of His personal return. Shall we review a few of his declarations concerning the manner of His return:

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see power and great glory.

And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matthew 24:30, 31)

Again "when the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall he sit upon the throne of His glory:

And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats," (Matt. 25:31, 32)

To this may be added Paul's description of Christ's return: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (I Thess. 4:16, 17)

Thus we see that (Rev. 9:11-16) does not rightly describe Christ's

return, as some have interpreted these verses in order to substantiate their teaching that he returns before the millennium.

Shall we now proceed with the unfolding of this chapter before us.

The Dragon Bound for a Thousand Years

vs. 1 "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand."

There has been considerable discussion as to who this angel is, but the point is of no great consequence. We remember that it was Michael, the archangel, who fought against the dragon and his angels, as recorded in chapter twelve.

There it was a forensic foray; here it is the seizing, binding, and casting of him into prison. Certainly, Michael could be a victor in either contest, but, of course, the name and rank of the angel are not given here.

This angel possesses the key to the bottomless pit, or the abyss. This key is mentioned once before in Revelation in relation to the bottomless pit. It is first referred to in Revelation 9:1. There we read:

"I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth and *to him* (a star is an angel Rev. 1:20) was given the *key* to the bottomless pit."

The bottomless pit, or abyss is mentioned in (Rev. 9:1, 9:11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, and 20:3). This comes from the greek "Abusoos," meaning "a very deep place," sometimes translated the "Abyss." This is not the same place into which the beast and the false prophet were thrown. That was "the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone." After a thousand years the devil is to join them there. Here he is cast into the "abyss," or a very deep place, from where the beast ascended to go into perdition. (Rev. 17:8)

And what is the difference between these two places? Briefly, the "lake of fire" is the final hell; the "abyss" is a very deep place, a prison in which the dragon and evil spirits are retained prior to the final judgment.

A homely comparison would be like that of a county jail where a criminal is incarcerated prior to his sentence, and the Lake of fire is like the state penitentiary where he is confined for final punishment.

"Having a great chain in his hand." Some have been troubled about the nature of that chain. Was it of iron or brass? If so how could such a chain bind a spirit being, like the dragon? The

book does not declare it is a chain made of any earthly material. This, we must remember, is a book of symbolism. The chain is the symbol of some binding agent of Divine construction. It is a chain of such a nature that spirits and angels can be bound by it. Jude speaks of such a chain, which is actually binding rebellious angels *right now*. Hear Jude:

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath received in *everlasting chains* under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." (Jude 6).

What they are made of or how they are able to bind spirit beings is beyond our knowledge now.

vs. 2 "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and satan and bound him a thousand years."

Here we find the arch enemy of Christ and the church called by four names, the same names assigned to him in Rev. 12:9.

And interesting parallel presents itself here. Christ, the rider on the white horse in the nineteenth chapter also had four names, namely, "Faithful and True," "a name written, that no man knew but Himself," "The Word of God" and "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

But back to the four names of the Dragon, the enemy of the woman's seed. Shall we briefly consider these four names.

First, He called "the Dragon." This is the name given him with especial reference to his connection with political and spiritual powers, particularly that of Imperial and papal Rome.

Since these have by this time already been cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, when this evil spirit comes up out of the bottomless pit, or the abyss, at the end of the thousand years, he comes with only two of his former four names, viz. "Satan," and "the devil."

Second, he is called "the old serpent."

The "old" has reference to his existence since the beginning of man on the earth.

The "serpent" has reference to his subtlety, his deceiving ways, his deadly poison. It was the serpent that deceived Eve. It is as the serpent that brought in the false doctrine which corrupted the church. This name draws our attention to the subtlety of his temptations.

It does not appear from the symbolism employed here that he ever comes after his being chained, in the capacity of a serpent. He

is the same evil spirit when he is loosed for a short season but he induces God and Magog to "compass the camp of the saints," in the role of "the devil" and "Satan."

Third, he is spoken of as the "devil." This word means, a slanderer and a malignant liar. To this angel of his nature Christ referred when He said, "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth; when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." (John 8:44)

Evidently, in his deepest malignity he is a liar. As a liar he will deceive the nations at the end of the thousand years.

Fourth, he is called "Satan," which means "The adversary," "the accuser." It really is a Hebrew word transferred and means "a hater."

As an accuser he charged God with a lie in the beginning when he said to the woman, "ye shall not surely die." in reply to Eve's statement "God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." (Genesis 3:3)

He was Christ's great adversary when he made the attempt to snuff out His life in the murder of the babes of Bethlehem, through the temptation in the wilderness, in the casting of doubt upon Christ's diety, even to the struggle to make the gates of Hades prevail against his rising again to prove his Sonship to God.

He has been the adversary to every human soul. As an adversary he appears again in the short season in which he is unchained following the thousand years.

But it was, in all four of these characterizations, that the angel laid hold upon him to bind him a thousand years. Reading further:

vs. 3 "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 was to be loosed for a little season.

He is cast into the abyss, and sealed there, from whence there is no escape, instead of into the lake of fire, the place of no return.

This arch adversary is dealt with in two different stages. First, as described, he is shut up and a seal put upon him "for a thousand years." After this period he is "loosed for a little season."

Judging by the books-without-end which have been written on the subject of the "millennium," it has been quite apparent that men have overcentered their thinking upon that subject, rather than the real theme here, which is the imprisonment of Satan, first in the

abyss, and then this final destruction in the lake of fire and brimstone. In the vision of the previous chapter, the last two of the unholy trinity, the beast and the false prophet were disposed of; here the third of those three is dealt with.

Whatever is included in any mention of the thousand years, its mention seems decidedly incidental to the importance of the doom of the dragon—the principle subject of this vision. This passage, the modern millennialist notwithstanding, is concerned chiefly with a prediction of the overthrow of satan. By a series of bold strokes John is presenting to us first the restraining and then the final destruction of the age-old enemy of Christ, who must be destroyed before the City of God can descend out of heaven.

This verse declares that the dragon or satan must remain in the abyss "till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season."

There is absolutely no reason given here why he must be loosed for this brief time. A reason is assigned why the devil was bound, "that he should deceive the nations no more 'til the thousand years should be fulfilled," but no reason is given why he is loosed after the thousand years.

Of course we might raise the question, "why was the devil put into the scheme of things from the very beginning? A brief answer is that when God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let him have dominion," He was launching out on an age-long process. Since God knew right and wrong and had volition, man made in God's image, must have volition. Therefore, he had to have both good and evil influences play upon him. Thus, the devil's place in the scheme of things is to provide man with the opposite influences; that he may be tested and tried and act under his own volition.

If God had placed man in the garden eastward in Eden and left him there millennium after millennium without a tempter, he would have been *innocent*, but perfect in nothing.

But through overcoming, by a divinely designed plan, he would be made in God's image and after His likeness.

By the same token perhaps the devil is loosed for a little season. This is a logical reason based upon analogy. It still remains a fact that God has here revealed no reason, so we must not be wise above that which is written.

So we advance to the next verse:

vs. 4, 5 "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given 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."

We have made a sincere and earnest attempt to move cautiously throughout "this wonder book of the Bible," letting the Holy Spirit lead all the way. But as carefully as we have moved thus far we wish to use the utmost caution at this point.

There has been so much written upon this subject of the thousand years that we want to move with extreme care.

This period of a thousand years is not mentioned anywhere else in the entire Bible and here in rapid succession it occurs six times in the space of seven verses.

Six mentions in so short a space would, at first thought, give us the impression of the importance of the thousand years, yet, on the other hand, its importance lies primarily in the interval of the binding and loosing of the dragon or devil. Three, or half of the mentions, refer directly to the devil, two to the souls who had part in the reigning with Christ and the sixth mention relates itself to the rest of "the dead who lived not again until the thousand years were finished."

But the fact that this thousand year period is mentioned six times, is rather significant. "Six" is short of "seven" or perfection. Therefore it is not the new heaven and the new earth. It is not the eternal dwelling place of the redeemed.

This fact leads us to another startling truth. Since it is not the eternal home of the children of God, then Christ is not personally present during the thousand years for He was not to return until that place was prepared. Let Christ speak for Himself at this point. He said in his confidential conversation with His apostles at the Passover meal, and the communion which followed it:

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also."

Shall we carefully scrutinize this first intimation of the day of the coming of Christ. We learn from this that the Father's House of many mansions is a place already existing—"are many mansions."

Christ said, "*I got to prepare a place for you.*" Paul tells us in Eph. 4:10, "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things."

The father's house is the third heaven, as taught in the Scriptures. Christ ascended above all heavens to prepare a place for us.

Therefore, since this thousand year period, with all its blessings is not the eternal home, then Christ has not at that time returned, because He said, "I go to prepare a place for you and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again *to receive you unto myself, that where I am*, ye may be also. He never, himself, promised to return to dwell with the saints here personally and visibly, but He did promise to receive them unto Himself to be with Him where He is.

Truly, we must take exceeding care not to read into a passage that which is not there and particularly if it is contrary to what Christ promised He would do.

Judging by the outstanding importance which some have placed upon this passage in Revelation, would it not seem logical that somewhere Christ would say something about it?

If so notable an event as His coming to be here personally during the thousand years was to come to pass at that time does it not seem that Christ would have made some statement concerning it?

In the fourteenth chapter of John He does mention His return but only *to receive us unto Himself* that where He is we might be also. He is strangely silent here, where human beings have been so vociferous. Would it not be more becoming of the saints to keep silent where He has done so?

Not only was Christ silent about coming at the beginning of the thousand years, but so was John, the divine Revelator, silent. He mentions an angel coming down from heaven and binding Satan for a thousand years, but never a word about Christ also coming at the beginning of the thousand year period.

And not only was John utterly silent on this point, but so, also, were all the other apostles. Of the early church it was said: "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42) but never once was the personal visible return of Christ during the thousand years mentioned as a part of the apostles' doctrine. The conclusion is, that such a teaching is not apostolic.

Paul charged Timothy "the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." (II Timothy 2:2)

So this teaching of Christ's personal return during the thousand years is not included in the same which Paul committed to faithful men. All this evidence is rather heart searching, to say the least.

Now just what did John say? "I saw thrones and *they* sat upon them, and judgment was given unto *them*."

Now who are the "*they*?" "The *souls of them* that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God . . . *they* lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

"*They*" had thrones but where is the mention of a throne for Christ to occupy? Where does John say that Christ was here sitting on a throne? He is strangely silent.

Shall we delve a little further into the antecedent of "*They*." Looking ahead in the sixth verse of this twentieth chapter this "*they*" occurs again, and of them we read, "*They* shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

Where have we heard of the redeemed being *priests* and *reigning with Christ* before? Why, back in (Rev. 5:9). "They (that is the four beasts, or living creatures and the four and twenty elders) sang a new song, saying, 'Thou art worthy to take the book, and open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed (not *us* as in the Authorized version) to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation; and has made them (not *us* as in the common version) unto our God *kings and priests, and they shall reign upon the earth*.'"

In this reference the redeemed are called kings and priests; in Revelation 20:6 they are called priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. Also John here in the twentieth chapter saw them sitting upon thrones in this reigning.

Now, going back to the fifth chapter again where was Christ while these kings and priests were reigning? Hear John: "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." (Rev. 5:6)

Here we find that God is sitting on the throne and Christ is at His right hand. Paul said, "When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on hand" (Heb. 1.3)

While John saw the souls of the martyrs sitting on thrones and reigning over the earth he mentions no throne for Christ. Why? Because Christ, until His return is at the right hand of God.

Into what a maze of errors we fall when we read into a passage something which is not there! By what authority can we assert that

Christ will be on earth, simply because John said these martyrs live and reign with Him for a thousand years. Have we become so earthly minded that we can not conceive of Christ reigning in any place except upon His footstool, the earth?

Did not the Jews make the same mistake in the days of His flesh? They were looking for an earthly kingdom with a temporal throne and the Messiah sitting upon it. Because Christ declared His kingdom was not of this world (not one with a temporal throne, and material appointments) they rejected him.

Has not the Roman Catholic church made the same mistake, placing the pope on an earthly throne, himself crowned with a golden crown and maintaining ambassadors at the courts of temporal kingdoms?

That the Roman Catholic church considers itself a temporal, visible kingdom is further substantiated by their official explanation of the triple crown worn by the pope.

"Among his (the pope's) insignia are the *pallium*, which signifies his rank as a Primate, and the tiara or triple crown. In the early centuries the pope wore a simple mitre, like other bishops; but about the ninth century a crown was added to it, to denote the pontiff's *temporal* power as ruler of the states of the church. Later a second crown was added, and about the year 1365 a third—signifying, according to some, the supreme authority of the pope in spiritual things, his jurisdiction over the church considered as a human society, and his dominion as a *temporal* monarch. According to others, the triple crown typifies his threefold office as teacher, law-giver and judge." External of the Catholic church—page 9.

How ill becoming, then, for those who renounce the authority of the pope and the claims of the Catholic church to temporal dominion, to fall into the same error of teaching that Christ will sit upon a temporal throne ruling over a visible and temporal kingdom during the thousand year period! Why should the pot call the kettle black?

There have been those who have taught that a literal, temporal kingdom of Israel is to be set up by God at the end. Constant reference is made to the Jews return to Palestine and the setting up of their national government.

While such a return is being witnessed by our eyes, yet how can one, by the greatest stretch of his prophetic imagination see God's hand in this, when there is no acceptance of Christ by these returning Jews after the flesh? We are witnessing a return as an escape from persecution and earthly desire to restore their national life, but

these motives are no different in nature from those of the Jews who fought the wars of the Maccabees with the same objectives in mind, during the four hundred years preceding Christ's incarnation.

Christ's crucifixion swept aside forever the entire Jewish ceremonial of the temple, the priesthood and the sacrifices. Thus the Scriptures make it utterly impossible for God to ever recognize Israel after the flesh, or to establish the Jewish ritual again. Even if the nation should revive its Old Testament ceremonies, God's hand will not be in it nor His blessing upon it.

The whole Jewish system was a fore-shadowing of better things to come, and like the old covenant, of which it was a part, is done away forever.

Reformed Judiasm is not looking for a *personal Messiah*, but teaches that the Messianic hope is the restoration of national life. They still reject Christ as the long-looked-for-Messiah.

The teaching of the restoration of the Jewish nation with its old covenant ceremonies, is an out right denial of the very work Christ accomplished upon the cross.

This whole system of modern day teaching of a certain school of the prophets is based upon the same fallacious and utterly carnal system of interpretation that caused the Jews of Christ's day to reject Him as the Messiah.

The only Israel recognized by God since Christ's first coming is a spiritual one—a kingdom that cometh without observation, a kingdom that is within the heart of the obedient, repentant, baptized believer.

And yet earnest, but nevertheless misguided souls, blithely talk of a temporal kingdom being set up during the thousand year period, with Christ personally and visibly reigning over it!

Thousands of so-called fundamentalists will stand before classes and condemn the Jew of Christ's day for rejecting their Messiah because they looked for a temporal ruler reigning over a temporal kingdom. Yet these same folk will piously and fervently pray for and preach that a temporal kingdom will be set up during the thousand years with Christ personally, visibly reigning over it.

Some Insurmountable Objections to a Physical Resurrection

There are some insurmountable objections to physically resurrected saints living on the earth during the thousand years. Such would have bodies like the resurrected body of Christ.

He could instantly make Himself visible or invisible. He could immediately appear in a closed room without use of a door, and just as instantly vanish from sight.

How can advocates of a literal, physical resurrection during the thousand years keep a straight face. Imagine two kinds of beings existing on the earth simultaneously for that length of time!

Christ for a few days did so appear on the earth between His resurrection and His ascension, but for a definite purpose, viz., to provide indubitable proof of His resurrection and to teach His apostles that He was always with them whether visible or invisible.

But a thousand year condition with multitudes of martyrs living with other multitudes still restrained to human limitations raises so many insoluble problems as to render such a teaching impossible, if not ridiculous.

A second objection, and perhaps the greater, to this fallacious teaching is that this text does not so state such a resurrection. John said:

"I saw the *souls* of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, etc. and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

John does not say one word about the bodies of the martyrs being resurrected. He is very particular to call our attention to what he actually saw. He saw the *souls* of the martyrs living and reigning with Christ.

How different the language here from the account of the resurrection of those who came forth out of their graves at the time Christ died upon the cross. There we read:

"And many *bodies* of the saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves after His resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared unto many." (Matt. 27:52-53)

Here John saw no bodies raised; only the *souls* of the martyrs, who lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

These had been beheaded and put to death and had never ceased to exist. There is an indication that in some way they now have a

different existence than they had before, but it certainly cannot mean that they had come to live, for they had never ceased to live.

Just what is the meaning here? Certainly it refers to spiritual resurrection, not a physical one. The glorious reign of Christ is so manifest at that time because the spirit of the martyrs is resurrected and pervades all who name Christ's name and that they are filled with the spirit of the ancient martyrs.

And let us not entertain for a single second that this is a forced interpretation.

When the Bohemian martyr, John Huss was about to die, he prophesied, "And I, awakening from among the dead, and rising so to speak, from my grave, shall leap with great joy."

One hundred years later when Luther was engaged in a life-and-death-struggle with the papacy and the Roman Catholic church, Pope Adrian sent a letter to the German Diet meeting in Nuremberg, containing the following words:

"The heretic's Huss and Jerome are now alive again in the person of Martin Luther."

No one understood such a statement to mean that Huss and Jerome had literally been raised and were dwelling again in their bodies long since returned to the dust.

But shall we turn to a Scriptural parallel. It was prophesied that Elias should come again before the Messiah's first advent. In Malachi 4:5 we read:

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord."

Did this refer to a literal and bodily resurrection of that old Testament prophet. No. Hear none other than Christ interpret this for us.

"For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

Verily, I say unto you, among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding he that is least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he, for all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Matt. 11:10-11, 15)

There is that statement, "Let him that hath ears to hear, let him hear—a characteristic declaration of Christ when he wishes to call

our attention pointedly to some truth he wishes us to especially understand.

Elias, or Elijah was not bodily resurrected, but he did come in spirit and power, not in person, but as the fearless, rugged reformer in the wilderness of Jordan.

In speaking of the return of the captive Jews from captivity to their own land, Ezekial said:

"I will open your graves, oh my people, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." (Ezekiel 37:12-14)

God didn't bodily resurrect these Jews in Babylonian captivity, but the return of the Jews as a nation to their homeland is spoken of as a resurrection.

Oh we are conscious that some claim if the first resurrection is not literal and bodily, then the second cannot be literal either.

But such miss the point. The second resurrection is the calling up of the Spirits of all the dead for judgment. The bodily resurrection is for those who having been judged righteous are to have their bodies raised. Hear Paul:

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies."

(Rom. 8:22-23)

This redemption of our bodies comes after "the manifestation of the Sons of God" (Rom. 8:19) for which the whole creation waits. And the manifestation of the sons of God is not to be until after the Judgment.

Christ appears at the time of the Judgment and John said that is the time when the sons of God shall be made manifest.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as he is."
(I John 3:2)

We do not have our bodies raised incorruptible until the last trump:

"Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." For this corruptible must put on incor-

ruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (I Cor. 15:51-53)

This is to occur at the last trump, but there is no trump sounded at the beginning of the thousand year period. Therefore, the first resurrection is not a physical and bodily one.

Oh how much confusion has been brought in by reading into a passage that which it never declared. John simply said, "I saw the *souls* of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

But one writer pens such confusion, others read it and quote it to others and confusion is added to confusion. One pulpiteer proclaims such confusion and his hearers go out and quote that confusion. Thus like a tidal wave, such unscriptural and unsound teaching sweeps far and wide.

"Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!"

Having considered the insurmountable objections to the bodily resurrection of the martyrs during the thousand years, we turn now to another such objection which pertains itself to Christ visibly and personally reigning over a temporal Kingdom during that time.

We again are reminded that we must not read into this passage more than it says. Earlier in this chapter we have found that John did not *say*, nor ever hint at Christ sitting on a throne and reigning during the thousand years.

We also proved that Christ remained at God's right hand while the martyrs as priests reigned on thrones.

Now we take up the third objection. If Christ were reigning on earth personally during the thousand year period we must admit His temporary defeat when the devil is loosed for a short season.

When Christ was upon the earth the first time He was in His body of humiliation. Therefore the devil had power. Christ, Himself, said, "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." (John 14:30) Thus Christ freely acknowledged the devil's power, calling him the prince of this world.

But Christ is never pictured as coming to this earth again except in His ineffable glory and His unlimited power. Such demonstration of His omnipotence would render the devil incapable of restored power, even for a short season.

Christ gave the devil free reign during the days of His flesh because He came to perfect our redemption through His suffering and humiliation upon the cross. But the devil will be forever powerless when the glorified Christ comes at the judgment time.

"Then cometh the end (note: the thousand years period was not the end), when He shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."

"For He must reign, 'till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (I Cor. 15:24-26)

In this we learn that when He does return the second time, He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, He shall have put down all rule and authority and power and He shall have put all enemies under His feet, and finally He shall destroy the last enemy, or death.

None of these things mentioned was done before the thousand year period but rather earthly kingdoms and power and authority and rule and enemies and even death are still existant until after the thousand years.

All this precludes Christ being present and reigning personally during that period because the conditions do not agree with those obtaining at His second coming.

To take any other position requires us to admit that a returned, glorified Christ is powerless before the devil, even for a short season. The devil might and did have power over the Christ in the humiliation of the days of His flesh, but never has he power against a glorified Christ as portrayed at His second coming.

To advocate a return of Christ personally at the beginning of the thousand years and again at the judgment makes him come a *second* and a *third time*. Such a position is Scripturally untenable. Hear Paul on this:

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the *second time* without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9:28)

He was offered once at His *first* coming and He is to appear a *second time* without sin unto salvation. There will be no third coming.

The Scriptures only recognize *one visible* return of Christ and that does not take place until after the thousand years. Chapter 19:11-16 describes a coming in power, the power of the word, but not a visible coming.

This leads us forward to the consideration of what will be happening at His *second coming*, or appearing.

First: The second coming of Christ and the glorification of Christians will occur at the same time.

"When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." (Colossians 3:4)

Second: The second coming of Christ and the gathering of the elect from the four winds shall be simultaneous:

"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall He send His angels, and shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven." (Mark 13:26-27)

Only the souls of the martyrs were seen by John at the beginning and in duration of the thousand years.

Third: The second coming of Christ and the resurrection of both good and bad, will be at the same time.

"Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28-29)

Fourth: The second coming of Christ and the resurrection of those who have fallen asleep, or are dead in Christ, and the translation of the living will be at the same time.

"For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we that are alive that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (I Thes. 4:15-17)

Paul here asserts that the living shall not go before the dead to meet the descending Lord. He further declares that Christ "Himself" will come personally at His second coming. This rules out all possibility of Christ's coming being at the beginning of the thousand year period because then John said, "I saw *an angel* come down from heaven." (Rev. 20:1) "Himself" in I Thes. 4:16, proves that Christ will not come by representative, but in person.

Paul enumerates three sounds accompanying Christ's second coming. There will be the *shout* of Christ, the *voice* of the archangel, and the *trump* of God.

How can otherwise sincere and earnest folk confuse this scene of

the second coming of Christ with the beginning of the thousand year period? In the description of the beginning of this latter period only an angel, not archangel comes down from heaven and not a word is uttered by him.

There is no trump sounded at the beginning of the thousand years, but the trump of God sounds at the return of Christ after the thousand years, or at the end.

Again how can sincere folk teach two resurrections, one for the righteous (the first resurrection) and one for the wicked (the second resurrection?) Shall we quote John W. McGarvey on this. It is so clear and fine and logical and scriptural and sound that it ought to be incorporated into every book upon this vital subject:

"Of course such a doctrine is abhorrent to the idea of a single hour of judgment, with the saved on the right hand and the lost upon the left. Those who hold this theory appeal to this passage (Rev. 20:4-5) in proof of it, reading it thus: 'The dead in Christ shall rise first, and the dead out of Christ shall rise second.'

But in order to make it read thus they have *supplied* a correlative clause which is totally foreign to the context, and which crowds out the correlative which Paul himself has given; for "shall rise *first*" is correlative with "then shall be caught up."

The apostle has been drawing a comparison, not between the righteous dead and the unrighteous dead, but between the dead and the living at the hour of the advent. He began His comparison at verse fifteen and he here completes it by showing that the supposition that the living would precede the dead is so contrary to the facts that, on the contrary, the dead will be raised *before* any ascension is allowed the living, and *then* after the resurrection of the dead, the living and the dead shall be caught up together to meet the Lord.

That glorious change, wherein the mortal puts on the immortal, as indicated at I Cor. 15:51-55, will no doubt be simultaneous with the resurrection of the dead."

McGarvey's Commentary on I Thessalonians—pages 22 and 23.

Fifth: The descent of Christ with clouds at His second coming and the dead and living saints being caught up occur at the same time.

We are not to understand that we are caught up with clouds, but that we are to meet Him who comes in the clouds.

Daniel in (Dan. 7:13) said, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man, *came with the clouds of heaven.*"

Matthew said in Matt. 24:30, "They shall see the Son of man *coming in the clouds of heaven* and with power and great glory."

John said in Rev. 1:7, "Behold He cometh *with clouds.*"

The Psalmist said, "Who maketh the clouds His chariots." (Psa. 104:3)

This coming of Christ with clouds is after the thousand years, because no clouds are mentioned at the ushering in of that period, neither is Christ's coming mentioned there; only the descent of an angel.

At this coming we are to be caught up in the air to ever be with the Lord (I Thes. 4:17) This corresponds with Christ's description of His return:

"And if I go to prepare a place for you I will come again and *receive* you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:3)

At no time is Christ ever said to stand upon the earth at His second coming. Of His first coming Job declared: "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." (Job 19:25)

But this is not said of Christ at His second coming. Rather:

Sixth: The second coming of Christ and the destruction of the world will be at the same time. How then could He stand upon the earth at His second coming? No wonder we must be *caught up to meet Him in the air*. And again we see why at His coming He descends *to receive* us unto Himself.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (II Peter 3:10)

He further declares, "Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved," and again, "Wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." (II Pet. 3:11-12)

Seventh: The second coming of Christ and the changing of our vile body will occur at the same time.

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ:

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." (Phil. 3:20-21)

Eighth: At the second coming of Christ then shall be the restitution of all things, and this restitution and His coming are at the same time.

"And He shall send Jesus Christ, which was before preached unto you. Whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution (Greek-restoration) of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:20-21)

Ninth: The second coming of Christ and the judgment will be at the same time.

"When the Son of man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.

And before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." (Matt. 25:31-32)

While in Rev. 20:11 the scene of the judgment, nothing is said of the coming of Christ, it is said in Matt. 25:31, as quoted above, that when the Lord comes he shall be seated on the throne of judgment, while in (Rev. 20:11) John sees the throne and the Lord sitting thereon. John there does not describe His coming, as Matthew does, but shows Him *already come* and engaged in judgment.

Summary

Summing up our investigation we have found:

1. That the name "pre-millennialism" is unscriptural and the thing it represents is likewise unscriptural.
2. That neither Christ nor His apostles ever mentioned such a word or the system of belief the term signifies.
3. That the Holy Spirit never brought such a teaching to the remembrance of the apostles.
4. That in 'the things to come' which He was to show the apostles, the Holy Spirit did not mention pre-millennialism.
5. That Rev. 19:11-16 does not properly describe Christ's return as some have interpreted it to be, since this return was to be marked by coming with clouds, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and these verses describe no such scene.

6. That it was an angel who descended at the beginning of the thousand years and not Christ Himself.
7. That the principle theme here is the binding of Satan and not the thousand years reign of the martyrs with the Christ.
8. That it was in all four characterizations—the Dragon, the old serpent, the devil and Satan that the angel laid hold upon him and bound him for a thousand years.
9. That it is under the characterization of Satan, or accuser and liar that he is loosed for a little season.
10. That he was cast into the abyss, or deep place, not the lake of fire, for a thousand years.
11. That the mention of the thousand years period is not the primary theme but is incidental to the real subject under discussion, the binding of Satan.
12. That those sitting on thrones are the martyrs.
13. That Christ is not pictured sitting on a throne with the saint but is at the right hand of God.
14. That these thrones are not said to be upon the earth.
15. That this thousand year period is mentioned six times, just short of perfection, and Christ only returns when the place of perfection is completed, and then only to receive the righteous unto Himself.
16. That Christ mentioned His return, not to reign a thousand years on the earth, but to catch us up to be with Him.
17. That He never once said He, Himself would set foot upon the earth.
18. That there is no bodily resurrection mentioned here, but only a vision of the *souls* of the martyrs.
19. That the body is not to be raised until the consummation of all things.
20. That the incorruptable body is to be put on at the end of all things and not before the thousand year period.
21. That there is to be no setting up of a temporal Kingdom on the earth.
22. That a physical resurrection of the martyrs during the thousand years, would place two kinds of beings on the earth, one held to the limitation of the flesh, the other with a body which could become visible or invisible at will.
23. That the reigning of the martyrs with Christ is a spiritual rule. But some may ask the question, "How can the saints reign with Christ when He is not personally present? The

answer is so simple that we marvel men would even ask the question.

Jesus is reigning in the hearts of Christians *right now*. He does not require a temporal Kingdom, nor an earthly throne to be able to reign in this present age.

The King of England reigns over the great commonwealth of nations under the British flag without being personally present in each nation of that commonwealth. It is not absolutely necessary for an earthly king to be personally present with his subjects in order to reign over them. How much less it is necessary for Christ to have a temporal throne and be personally present in order to reign over the souls of the martyrs!

24. That the redemption of our bodies comes after "the manifestation of the sons of God, which is when God returns at the judgment.
25. That to have Christ come in His glory at the beginning of the thousand years and have the devil regain his power after that period would be acknowledging Christ's defeat.
26. That Christ is not to come until He has put down all rule, and power, and authority and destroyed the last enemy—death. This only occurs at the judgment time.
27. That to teach Christ returns before the thousand years and again at the judgment would make Him return twice, once in the beginning of the thousand years, and again at the judgment, whereas He is to return only once.
28. That the coming of Christ and the glorification of His saints are simultaneous.
29. That the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the good and bad are simultaneous.
30. That the second coming of Christ and the raising of the dead and translation of the righteous living are simultaneous.
31. That Christ's second coming and the catching up of the redeemed are simultaneous.
32. That Christ comes with clouds, and we are to be caught up into the air.
33. That Christ's second coming and the destruction of the world are simultaneous.
34. That the second coming of Christ and the changing of our vile bodies is simultaneous.
35. That the second coming of Christ and the restitution of all things are simultaneous.

36. That the second coming of Christ and the judgment are simultaneous.
37. That John never said a word about the tabernacle of God being with men during the thousand years. He would have mentioned this if Christ had been here personally; but it is not until after the thousand years and after the judgment that we read, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men."
38. That if Christ's second coming was to be at the beginning of the thousand year period, at which time Satan was to be bound, then it becomes manifest that this binding was in adequate and incomplete.

vs. 1 "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison."

Why Satan is loosed, even for this short season is an enigma to the mortal mind, but for some reason, hidden in the secret councils of the Almighty, he is deliberately and by divine design loosed out of his prison.

vs. 8 "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 numbers of whom is as the sand of the sea."

We have a gain come to the point where we must move with extreme caution. There are numerous explanations and interpretations many of the final battle of the earth. This battle has been referred to as the battle of Armageddon by some. Others believe the Armageddon to be the battle immediately preceding the thousand years. Still others maintain that the gathering of "the kings of the whole world" at Har-magedon of the sixth bowl (Rev. 16:14-16), and "the kings of the earth and their armies," destroyed with the beast in the vision of Rev. 19:19) may be the same as this gathering of the nations, Gog and Magog for the last struggle. (Rev. 20:7-10)

After careful research and prayerful looking to the Christ for guidance, the best answer seems to be that there is a twin phase to the culminating struggle of the last days.

The First Phase of the Battle

In Jeremiah 23:3, 5, 8 we read:

"And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds and they shall be fruitful and increase.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto

David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, "*The Lord Our Righteousness*."

Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, the Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land."

This is a gathering from the world-wide dispersion which they have experienced through the centuries. Whereas, they have had no rest for the soul of their feet, they at this gathering *dwell in their own land*. And the righteous Branch shall not reign over their own land alone, but "shall execute judgment and justice in all the earth."

In Jeremiah the thirteenth chapter the first seven verses we have a description of great trial and tribulation through which Israel is to pass before his deliverance from captivity. We have not space to quote it all here but a few words will suffice, directing the reader to read them all in his Bible:

"For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, and I will cause them to return to the land I gave to their fathers and they shall possess it. . . .

"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. . . .

"For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee."

Christ Himself said, while yet in the days of His flesh: that until the Gentile age comes to an end these promises will not be fulfilled.

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles *until* the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:24)

Thus we see the Jew shall not possess his own land which God gave him until Gentile domination shall come to an end.

But at the termination of the Gentile age the Jew will return to his own land to rebuild it and make it a treasure trove among the nations of earth.

This return is transpiring before our very eyes. During the first

World War 1914-1918, under the Balfour Declaration, England went on record in favor of the setting up, in Palestine, a national home for the Jewish people. On December 9, 1917 General Allenby marched into Jerusalem at the head of his triumphant army. In March 1918 the Jewish flag was unfurled from the tower of David and the General proclaimed a Jewish state.

On May 24, 1920 the League of Nations officially granted to England mandatory power over Palestine.

Then came the second World War and its terrible persecution of the Jews in Germany and the increased migration of the Jew to his homeland.

Finally, on May 14, 1948, the Jewish Nation officially came into being under the designation of "Israeli." David Gurion became the first President of the Jewish State.

This fulfilled the prophecy that at the end of the Gentile age the Jew must be in possession of his homeland, because that land is to be the scene of a great world conflict.

"The way of the Kings of the east is being prepared." "The kings of the earth and of the whole world" are being gathered for the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

The chemical wealth of Palestine and the oil field of Iran are drawing the forces of the nations together for this first phase of the conflict.

This battle, of course is not the final one, although it will be terrible in its consequences. After the thousand years have passed will come the last phase of the Battle of Armageddon.

Here in the twentieth chapter of Revelation we learn that the devil is to be loosed for a brief time *after* the thousand years are completed. Under his deception Gog and Magog take up the final struggle.

Thus we see if the Battle of Armageddon is to be the *last* battle, it is plainly obvious that it cannot occur until *after* the thousand years.

The first phase of this battle, which transpires *before* the thousand years, will occur in the invasion of Gog, the prince of Magog. This angel of the struggle is portrayed in the 37, 38 and 39th chapters of Ezekial.

The first of those three chapters declares that the Jews will return to Palestine. The second of the three predicts the invasion of the restored homeland by Gog and Magog. The third of the three chapters describes the defeat of the invaders.

As to who these invaders are, we pause to give a brief sketch of

identification. Before proceeding with this identification we wish to review the setting. Before this tragedy comes to Israel she must be in her homeland. Ezekiel did prophecy the return of Israel after the Babylonian captivity, but the invasion of the restored land following that captivity was inflicted by the Romans. It was under Roman brutality that Israel was dispersed among the nations. It is from this Roman dispersion that Israel was to be gathered again, not a remnant this time and not from Babylon alone. This last "gathering" is to be from *all nations*. After this last mentioned return there shall be a concentration of wealth in Palestine and Gog will invade the land for the frank purpose of taking the spoils. He says, according to Ezekiel, "I will go up to take a spoil and to take a prey." Also Ezekiel declares, that when this invasion occurs the people will be living in a defenseless existence. They, evidently, will consider themselves secure because of the covenants the nations of earth have made with them to guarantee them an unmolested occupancy of the land of Palestine.

Now we shall proceed to a consideration of the nations which will constitute the invading forces.

The starting clue is the declaration that the alliance will be headed by Gog, who comes from Magog. Ezekiel declares that Gog is the chief prince of "Meshech and Tubal." Gog is to be the ruler and Magog is his domain.

The name 'Gog' is a proper name and occurs for the first time in the Bible in I Chron. 5:4. The name is given to a descendent of Reuben. The time is about sixteen centuries before Christ. The second occurrence is in Ezekiel 38:2. In this last reference the name is applied to Gog the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. This is a region anciently called Scythia, or Tartary.

This Gog is also the chief prince of Magog. Magog is first mentioned in Genesis 10:1-3 as the second son of Japheth. It reads:

"Now these are the generations of the Sons of Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.

The sons of Japheth; Gomer and *Magog*, and Madai, and Javan, and *Tubal* and *Meshech* and *Tiras*.

And the sons of Gomer, Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah."

So here is the first occurrence of the name Magog. Later the name was applied to his descendents, and still later to their land. The land also came to be called Scythia.

Herodotus, a Greek historian who lived about 484-424 B.C., who is called the "Father of History," declared that in his day the Scythians were savages, and that Scythia was a region of vast extent, lying north of the Black and Caspian Seas, and also north of the Caucasus mountains.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, who wrote the Jewish Antiquities, a history of his countrymen from the earliest period down to the close of Nero's reign—says that Magog represented the Scythians, a race spread over the country now occupied by southern Russia. This region has always been and now is the land of Russia.

But this Gog is represented as being the chief prince of Meshech. Referring to the famous Table of Nations in the 10th chapter of Genesis, we find that Meshech was also a son of Japheth (Gen. 10:2). His descendents came to be called "Mosche" from which comes the term "Muscovites." The name originally referred to those Russians who come from Moscow and its nearby territory. The name "Muscovites" is still applied to greater Russia. The region was first called "Muscovi" and finally "Moscow." But the identification has always been Russia.

Now we turn to the third link in our lengthening chain of identification. The fifth son of Japheth was *Tubal* and Ezekiel mentions Gog as the chief prince of Tubal. His ancient descendents are always linked with those of Meshech.

Josephus calls the children of "Tubal 'the Moschoi'." The historians of Mesopotamia called these people "Tobali" and Muski." So Tubal and Meshech are associated together historically. They lived north of the Black and Caspian seas, or Crimea, which again is southern Russia. There was a city in primitive Russia called Tubal.

So Gog of the land of Magog, the chief prince of the land of Meshech and Tubal, refers to Russia and none other. And Gog and Magog are to head the alliance which invades Palestine in the first phase of the battle against the land of Israel.

There remain other nations which Ezekiel associates with Gog and Magog in this first phase of the final battle against Palestine.

There is Gomer to be considered. Referring to ethnology again and the Table of Nations as recorded in the tenth chapter of Genesis, we find that Gomer was the first son of Japheth, which makes him of the same blood as Magog, Tubal and Meshech.

In the Assyrian records we find that Assyria fought in wars against the inhabitants of Gomer. These Assyrian records inform us that Gomer was a barbaric tribe of Aryans which came out of Russia

through the Caucasian mountains. They overran Cappadocia and settled in the territory we know today as "the Balkans."

The Armenian name for Cappadocia is "Gamir," which comes from the ancient word "Gomer."

Russia and these people are kindred, being as we say today, of Slavonic blood.

Then Ezekiel (in Ezekiel 38:6) mentions "Togarmah of the North quarters". Genesis 10:3 declares that Togarmah was a son of Gomer and the grandson of Japheth.

Togarmah is now known as Armenia. It is so designated in the Assyrian records. Tacitus, a Roman historian, one of the greatest of all ages, who lived from about 55 A.D. to 120 (?) A.D., also declared that Togarmah was Armenia. Finally all Armenian literature allude to their land and its people as "The House of Togarmah." There is also Armenian tradition that they descend from the grandson of Japheth.

In Ezekiel 38:5 we have mentioned in rapid succession Persia, Ethiopia and Libya. These are also to be allies of Russia in this great battle before the thousand year period.

Persia, the first of the three has a long history reaching back into the dim shadows of antiquity. With Media she formed the second great world empire. Recently she assumed the ancient name of "Iran."

In recent years Persia, or Iran, has been the political battleground of Russian and British struggle for control of her fabulous oil fields. These fields contain one-fourth of the proven oil reserves of the world.

The other two nations mentioned by Ezekiel are Libya and Ethiopia. These are the modern names for the ancient countries called in the Hebrew language Phut and Kush.

The Egyptians called Libya by the word "Pessent," indicating that region of Africa directly west of Egypt lying on the coast of the Mediterranean.

The Persian record of Maqsh-i-Rusten applies the name "Kush" to Ethiopia.

In the Table of Nations in the tenth chapter of Genesis, Phut and Kush were the sons of Ham. The people of Kush occupied the country south of Egypt. Later they spread to include the territories of Nubia, Kordofan and Abyssinia. The Egyptians called the land "Kas," the Babylonians called it "Kusu" and the Hebrews called it "Kush."

All these countries, Gomer, or the Balkan states; Togarmah, or Armenia; Persia, or Iran; Lybia and the Egyptian countries are to be the allies of Magog, or Russia. This war is to be fought just preceding the thousand years and will bring to an end the "times of the Gentiles."

And where is this first battle to be fought? The one reference pertaining to it is in Rev. 16:16:

"And he gathered them together unto a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon." Armageddon is the Greek: Har-Mageddon the Hebrew. The word means "The Hill of Megiddo. The Hill of Megiddo overlooks the plains of Esdraelon far north of Jerusalem.

So the storm of Ezekiel's vision is even now gathering, but at what hour it will break only God knows.

God, who knoweth the end of the matter from the beginning to the end has revealed to us this struggle. And the storm clouds of this great conflict, which Ezekiel saw gathering, will break, even as John saw the kings of the east being gathered to meet the kings of the earth and of all the world.

But after the thousand years there will come the final stage of the "Battle of Armageddon," because we read: "When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of prison and "Shall go forth to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea."

But, whereas in the war before the thousand years a battle was to be engaged in by the nations involved, in this last struggle Gog and Magog, and the nations of the earth are to suffer divine punishment.

vs. 9 "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 out of heaven, and devoured them."

One brief sentence tells the whole story: "There came down fire out of heaven, and devoured them." No one escapes.

Then follows the record of Satan's final destruction. He has before been imprisoned in the abyss, now he is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. Hear John:

"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." Thus, Political and Papal Rome are joined by the devil. When Christ

was on earth, He talked with His disciples about "the everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matt. 25:41)

The Great White Throne

We now come to the last scene of the old, wicked and weary creation.

vs. 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 more place for them."

This fulfills Peter's prophecy: "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (II Pet. 3:10)

We now have come to the august day of divine judgment. Once before John, at the beginning of the second vision in Revelation, the fourth chapter, had beheld a throne and around that first throne were lesser thrones. Seven lamps, representing the seven spirits of God were before that first throne, manifesting the completeness of God's grace in the dispensation of mercy.

Here there is but one throne. There are no gracious seven lamps burning because the judgments meted out here are to be without grace and mercy.

In connection with the first throne there was joyous singing of redemption. There is no song, no voice of gladness for a word of triumph.

John is impressed by three things concerning this throne:

1. First, there was the greatness of this throne. This throne was great, not only because it is the final one of this sinful dispensation, but great because of the majesty of the occupant.
2. The second thing to impress John was the whiteness of that throne. White evidently portrays the glory of the judge.
3. Immeasurable power and invincible justice sit upon this throne, the Son, the Judge of all the earth. Christ had predicted His final judgment of the world: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son." (John 4:22)

John continues:

vs. 12 "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."

vs. 13 We learn from the next verse that these dead are of every land of earth and sea and even Hades, the realm of departed spirits. "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 judged every man according to his works."

The complete thought is that all the dead shall be judged.

The books that are opened contain the deeds of all men. The book of Life records the names of the saints. The overcomers are enrolled in the Book of Life:

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

The lost are not enrolled in this Book of Life. In Rev. 13:8 we read:

"All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him (the Dragon or devil), whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation "of the world." (Rev. 13:8) And again we read, "And the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life." (Rev. 17:8)

Christ while in the days of His flesh declared concerning those who obeyed His commandments, "that they should not come to judgment, but were passed out of death unto life. (John 5:24)

But to those whose names are not enrolled in the book of life, this is "the day when God shall judge the secrets of men."

The judgment of the dead according to those books is a judgment of condemnation.

The Codex Sinaiticus, one of the best three manuscripts of the Bible reads:

"The sea gave the dead ones in it, and Death and Hades gave the dead ones in them, and they were condemned, every one, according to their deeds." It seems that not one was judged worthy of a place with the blessed dead.

vs. 14, 15 "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."

Thus we see that sentence is followed by immediate execution. When the beast and the false prophet were taken "they were cast into the lake of fire burning with brimstone." (Rev. 19:20)

A thousand years later Satan was cast into the lake of fire and

brimstone" (Rev. 20:10) And into this lake of fire were cast the condemned ones. Some have asked, "Is this a lake of literal fire?" If it is not, and is but a symbol, we must keep in mind that the substance is always greater than the symbol. Revelation declares this is the eternal fate and destiny of those not written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

"This is the second death." Some have thought this means extinction, annihilation, but life continued after the first death. Likewise it would indicate continuation of life after the second death. The beast and the false prophet were in that death more than a thousand years and it is implied that they are still alive at the end of that time.

The fact that they shall be tormented day and night forever seems pretty solid proof that this is not a state of extinction or annihilation.

The first death was a killing of the body, but not an extinction of it. The second death must needs be still more terrific and disastrous. "There the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." (Mark 9:44-48)

The torment is to be eternal, or literally "to the ages of the ages."

CHAPTER XXI

BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW

Text (21:1-27)

INTRODUCTION

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: 4 and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away. 5 And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true. 6 And he said unto me, They are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. 7 He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

8 But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

9 And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, who were laden with the seven last plagues; and he spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the wife of the Lamb. 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God: her light was like unto a stone most precious, as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal: 12 having a wall great and high; having 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: 13 on the east were three gates; and on the north three gates; and on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15 And he that spake with me had for a measure a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and wall thereof. 16 And the city lieth foursquare, and the length thereof is as great as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs: the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal. 17 And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. 18 And the building of the wall thereof was jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto pure glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; 20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the several gates was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. 22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof. 23 And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. 24 And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it. 25 And the gates thereof shall in no wise be shut by day (for there shall be no night there): 26 and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it: 27 and there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie: but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life.

In the preceding chapter we beheld the final judgment of the dead, both small and great. In this present Chapter we are to behold that all things are made new. We Read:

vs. 1 "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away."

This "passing away" was first observed in the last Chapter we read:

"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." (Rev. 20:11)

Peter prophesied this cataclysmic change when he said:

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (II Pet. 3:10)

He goes on to say, "All these things shall be dissolved."

All this seems to indicate a great change, not necessarily annihilation. When we come to think of it, nothing is really destroyed in the sense of ceasing to exist. Water brought to the boiling point turns into steam. It changes its form but does not pass out of existence. Wood burns and seems to be annihilated, but it has not ceased to exist. It has only been changed. It is turned into gas, which burning is transformed into energy.

Christ in His resurrected body had not ceased to exist. Mark said, "He appeared in another form." (Mark 16:12)

The same word "regeneration" is used here as was used to describe the changed condition of the man who has put off the old man and put on the new in the new birth.

In II Pet. 3:11, Peter said, "All things shall be *dissolved*." This indicates a deliverance rather than a destruction. It is the same word used by Christ when He said of the colt: "*Loose* him," and, again, it is the same word employed by Christ at the tomb of Lazarus: "Loose him, and let him go."

This harmonizes with the scriptural teaching that the present world is in a state of captivity, or tied down, "Not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope." (Romans 8:20)

Creation and the recreated "shall be delivered from bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Romans 8:21)

Tremendous change in the whole physical set up of the earth and heaven is everywhere indicated, but not cessation of existence or annihilation.

Evidently the earth is to undergo a renovation, a purification, a renewal to make it a fit place for the redeemed.

The old earth was sadly out of joint. Therefore, old things are to be supplanted by new things.

"And there was no more sea." Seas have always been barriers between peoples and nations. This condition has ceased to exist.

vs. 2 "And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride for her husband."

Since this city is called the bride of Christ later in this Chapter, and since the Church is also called the bride of Christ in the New Testament, we logically conclude that this city is the glorified heavenly Church, prepared as a bride for the bridegroom. And the next voice that John hears is out of heaven:

vs. 3 "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."

This restores the condition which obtained in the Garden of Eden when sinless man had immediate fellowship and companionship with God.

After man's fall, God withdrew Himself and made His presence known in the Shekinah glory of the tabernacle and temple. There He dwelt between the Cherubim. In the future state He will make His tabernacle and dwell in companionship with the redeemed.

And now John describes the blessedness of this companionship with God.

vs. 4 "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."

Someone has said that human hands are poor at drying tears. This because we can never completely and permanently dry the tears of sorrow. Only the hand of Him who made us can wipe away all tears by removing us from the cause of weeping.

"And there shall be no more death." The last enemy of our souls will have been destroyed, by Him who was able to destroy him who had power over death. "Death," then will have been swallowed up in victory."

"Neither shall there be any more sorrow, nor crying." Isaiah also spoke of this new heaven and this new earth and said: "And the voice of weeping shall be no more heard." (Isa. 65:19)

"Neither shall there be any more pain." Pain is a part and portion of this life of sin, although some try to delude themselves into thinking there is no pain here. There, with sin, and its penalty-death-removed, pain will be unknown.

The former things—sin, pain, sorrow, death—will have passed away.

vs. 5 "And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." How could it be otherwise when there is a new heaven and a new earth and a new Jerusalem!

"And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."

This is the third instance in the Book of Revelation, after the letters to the seven churches in Chapters Two and Three, that John is commanded to write. The other two instances are Rev. 14:13 and Rev. 19:9. And both of these two former occurrences a matter of great import is under consideration. The first of the two is a pronouncement of blessedness pronounced upon the dead who keep His commandments and die in the Lord, the second refers to the blessedness of those who are called to the wedding feast of the Lamb.

This third instance of the word "write" is to call our attention to the wondrous words that follow describing the eternal City of God.

vs. 6 "And He said unto me, It is done." All the details of the divine plan have been filled in. There is nothing left to be done. It is finished!

"I am Alpha and Omega. These words add force to his words "These words are faithful and true." They declare also that all things begin with God—He is the originating source and cause of all things. Also they proclaim that He is closing the drama of human history. These words show that Christ is the speaker here.

"I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."

The fountain of the water of life is now available. Here is fulfilled the inspired prophecy of Isaiah, "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money; come ye buy, and eat; yea come buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isa. 55:1).

The words point forward to the copious river flowing from the everlasting source—the throne of God and of the Lamb as described in (Rev. 22:1).

vs. 7 "He that overcometh shall inherit all things: and I will be his God and he shall be my son."

This is the first time, after the second of the seven letters to the

seven churches, that we meet with the promise given to him who overcomes. This is the consummation of Paul's declaration:

All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world of life, or death, or things present, or things to come; All are yours; and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's. (I Cor. 3:21-23).

Now by way of contrast Christ presents the awful doom of the lost.

vs. 8 "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."

Since there is no resurrection from the second death, these described in verse eight can never enter nor disturb the peace of the New Jerusalem. As the blackness of the storm cloud brings out the rainbow in sharp contrast, so these of the second death furnish a sharp contrasting backdrop to the glory of the redeemed.

vs. 9 "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 show you the bride, the Lamb's wife."

These words are familiar to us. You will remember that one of the seven angels which had the seven last plagues called John's attention to Babylon, the harlot and Apostate Church which was also called a woman and a city and claimed to be no widow, but a bride.

"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." (Rev. 17:1).

This referred to the Roman Church, the apostate, Babylonish Church. The angel of Chapter Nineteen calls John's attention to the true church, the Lamb's bride. This vision is thus linked with the one in which John was carried away in the spirit into the wilderness that he might behold the judgment of Babylon. No one can fail to notice the parallelism of the two visions, each of a woman and a city.

vs. 10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, "and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

To behold this celestial city John was again carried away in the spirit. He was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day to behold the

vision of the seven churches. (Rev. 1:10.) He was in the spirit to behold the vision of the throne set in heaven. (Rev. 4:2). And here he is in the spirit to behold the Holy City.

What a vision burst upon his eyes! John could only get a clear view of it by being spiritually transported to the top of a great and high mountain. Rev. 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." It is perfectly transparent. This recalls the appearance of Him who sat upon the throne. Rev. 21:12 "And had a wall great and high.

Verse 18 informs us that these walls were made of Jasper. Since this is a book of symbols, this speaks of the utter security of the happy inhabitants who live therein!

Isaiah in his vision of this city said:

"But thou shall call *thy walls salvation*, and thy gates, praise." (Isaiah 60:18)

"And had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of Israel."

There were as many gates as there were tribes of Israel and had on the twelve gates the names of the twelve tribes. Doubtless, these were typical of the true Israel of God, according to the spirit and not the flesh. (Gal. 6:15, 16). And at the twelve gates were twelve angels as gate-keepers to guard the holy city.

Judging by Ezekiel's description of the new city, then the names on the gates were as follows:

On the three gates northward, Reuben, Judah and Levi; on the three gates eastward, Joseph, Benjamin and Dan; on the three gates southward, Simeon, Issachar and Zebulun; on the three gates westward, God, Asher and Napthali. (Ezekiel 48:31-34).

vs. 14 "And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

How fitting, since the twelve apostles are the foundations of the church with Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone!

vs. 15 "And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof and the wall thereof."

The reed is the divine standard of measurement and the city conforms to the divine standard. We found in the eleventh Chapter, the first verse, that the Church was also measured with a reed. It seems that both the earthly and heavenly institutions must conform to the divine standard.

vs. 16 "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." The city was a cube, picturing perfection.

The city is regular and symmetrical and its dimensions vast. He indicates the city is twelve thousand furlongs long, twelve thousand furlongs wide and twelve thousand furlongs high. A furlong is one-eighth of a mile, therefore, twelve thousand furlongs would be fifteen hundred miles. That would mean the city was fifteen hundred miles long, wide and high.

Whether these measurements are intended to reveal the exact size of the Holy City, or are but symbols in this Book of Symbolism, extreme vastness of the size of the New Jerusalem is portrayed.

.. vs. 17 "And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubets, according to the measure of a man, that is of the angel."

Again we meet with the number twelve, this time squared.

vs. 18 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 walls 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 topas; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst."

This city well may be made literally of such precious stones. Again this is a book of majestic symbols and these precious stones may be symbols used to convey to our finite minds the wondrous beauty of that City. The costliest gems known to man are named in order to give us, at least a dim idea and conception of the glory of the Eternal City.

One cannot read these preceding verses without being struck by the oftrecurrence of the favorite Hebrew number—*twelve*. By counting twelve occurrences of that number are discoverable.

In Verse 12, we have *twelve* gates, *twelve* angels and *twelve* tribes, making *three* occurrences of the number twelve.

In Verse 14, we find *twelve* foundations and *twelve* apostles, making *two* occurrences of this number *twelve*.

In Verse 16, the length, breadth and height of the city are

twelve thousand furlongs each, making *three* more occurrences of the number *twelve*.

In Verse 17, the wall of the city is 144 furlongs, a multiple of *twelve*, making *one* occurrence.

In verses 19 and 20, there are *twelve* foundations described, making *one* occurrence.

In Verse 21, *twelve* gates and *twelve* pearls are mentioned, making *two* more occurrences of the number *twelve*.

This makes twelve occurrences in all. And the number "*twelve*" is closely associated with the Israel of God of both the Old and New Testaments. There were twelve tribes in the Old Testament Israel of God, and twelve apostles in the New Testament Israel of God.

The former twelve are associated with the gates of the Holy City and the latter twelve are associated with the foundations.

vs. 21 "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl."

How significant that the gates—the means of entrance into the Holy City—were all made of pearl!

One of the most precious and beautiful gems in all the world is the pearl. Other gems are produced by chemical action, heat and pressure in inanimate nature, but pearls come from animate life.

The finest specimens command almost fabulous prices. The origin of the pearl found within the shell of the pearl oyster was, to the ancients, a matter of deepest mystery, but today we understand it.

We have learned that the pearl comes from irritation caused by some foreign substance, like a piece of sand, getting within the shell of the oyster, and results from the wonderful and mysterious power of the mollusk to obtain relief from things that irritate it by covering them with a secretion of pearl, until there is no longer any irritation.

What a beautiful symbolism and lesson here for the annoyances, irritations, and things that hurt and disturb us—to make pearls out of them instead of allowing them to go on hurting and vixing us!

And what a revelation is here that the entrance into the Celestial City is by the way of gate of pearl! Only those who are "over-comers," who have transformed their irritations, vexations, and trials into a pearl are able to enter that fair city.

Christ is the pearl of great price because he conquered as none other overcame and declared Himself to be the door by which we must enter. He is the way the truth and the life and no man cometh

unto the Father but by Him. Therefore, we come into the Holy City, where God makes His dwelling place, by a gate of pearl.

While there is but one door of entrance, so there is but one foundation and Christ is both the door and the foundation.

But in this book which is written in divine sign-language the one door, or gate is represented as twelve gates, and the one foundation as twelve foundations. Earlier in this book of symbolism, and for the same reason, the one Spirit is represented as seven Spirits.

Completing the twenty-first verse, we read: "And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."

Now we know that gold is not transparent, but what is here stressed is the absolute purity of gold. Also transparency is a symbol of purity. Nothing could enter, nor walk upon the gold-paved streets of the Holy City that is impure.

...vs. 22 "And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."

John seemed deeply impressed by this fact.

He had been accustomed to considering the glory of the earthly City of Jerusalem to be its magnificent temple. But one of the sublimest peculiarities of the Holy City was its lack of a temple.

A great and precious thought is contained herein. God is here revealed as bringing His saints into a closer relationship to Him than that of dwelling in a temple, however glorious, to worship Him therein. In that eternal city we are to be brought into a perfect union with the Father Himself. This recalls the Lord's own prayer:

"That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." (John 17:22, 23).

When we remember that this city is the Bride, the Lamb's wife, a bride adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:1), then why there could be no distinct and separate temple. God and Christ and the saints *are one*. There is no need for an outward temple to commune with God, or to have fellowship with the Lamb. The worship there is immediate and direct. *Rev. 21:23*. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

As there was no need of a separate temple in which to worship, neither was there any need of some system of illumination. Evidently with the creating of a new heaven and a new earth, the

starry sky and its pale moon passed away. They were physical systems of ministering to material organs of perception.

How well did Isaiah write, "the moon shall be ashamed and confounded"—ashamed because of the infinitely more glorious sh'ning of the light of God and of the Lamb, in whom there is no darkness at all.

vs. 24 "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it."

The redeemed of all nations shall walk in the light of that brilliant city. For the first time in all ages there will be truly Christian nations living and walking in the ineffable light of God.

The kings of the earth are said to bring their glory and honor into it because the kings then will be Christ and his glorified saints, since we are to be Kings and Priests unto God.

We are not to understand by the word "Bring" that these nations mentioned are *without* the City, but rather within and are being illuminated by its light. At that time all nations are either in the New Jerusalem or in the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone. Symbolically, they *bring* their glory and honor into it, laying it at the feet of the Lamb.

vs. 25 "And the gates of the city shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there."

This is an emphatic way of saying that the gates will never be closed. Why should they be? Nothing that would defile can enter that Holy City.

vs. 26 "And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it."

All nations as one man, shall bring all their reverence and devotion. Since this verse is almost identical with the latter part of the twenty-fourth verse, it would seem this repetition is made in order to emphasize an experience never known before in all history of man, in that all men shall be fully and completely devoted to God and the Lamb.

vs. 27 "And there shall in no wise enter into anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of Life."

Since the devil, the Father of all lies, the originator of all that defiles and is abominable, has been cast into the lake of fire, there can be only holiness and righteousness within this Holy City.

Did Jeremiah have such a thought in mind when he, describing

the City beautiful, said, "And the name of the city from that day shall be, THE LORD IS THERE"?

God is righteousness and where God is there can be nothing that is unclean.

Only those may enter this city whose names are "written in the Lamb's book of life." This is the seventh time this book has been mentioned in the scriptures. The other references are: Psalms 69:29; Daniel 12:1; Philippians 4:3; Revelations 3:5; 13:8; 20:12.

Not to be enrolled in the Lamb's book of life means utter loss; to have our name written therein bestows upon us all that the infinite wealth of God can give.

CHAPTER XXII

THE NEW JERUSALEM AND ITS LIFE

Text (22:1-21)

1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, 2 in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him; 4 and they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads. 5 And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

6 And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true: and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. 7 And behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book.

8 And I John am he that heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel that showed me these things. 9 And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren the prophets, and with them that keep the words of this book: worship God.

10 And he saith unto me, Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand. 11 He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still. 12 Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man accord-

ing as his work is. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. 14 Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city. 15 Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely.

18 I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: 19 and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.

20 He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus.

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen.

INTRODUCTION

The symbolic description of the City Celestial, as given in the preceeding chapter has prepared us for the bringing down of the prophetic curtain of Revelation.

In the chapter before us our attention is drawn from the description of Jerusalem's glorious structure and dimensions to the blessedness of the life that shall be lived in that radiant city.

Not only have we given us the unfolding of the manner of life lived there but the glory of that life is accentuated by reference to the class of people without that city.

Also the closing epilogue is given providing us with warnings, admonitions and gracious invitations. Reverently, now we turn to the "uncovering" of the closing words of the apokalypse.

vs. 1 "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

Water has even been a symbol of eternal life. And this pure river of water of life flows from the source of all purity—the throne of God and of the Lamb. In this great book of Revelation, ever since John saw the vision of the open door in heaven, as described in the fourth chapter, God and the Lamb have been closely associated with reference to the throne.

Man in his innocence began his existance in a garden, eastward in Eden. There by pelucid ponds and translucent streams, he walked in intimate companionship with his God. Here at the close

of the apocalypse, which brings down the curtain on all inspired revelation, redeemed man is again found in a new garden within the Holy city.

If the former banishment from the Garden of Eden was paradise lost, this living in the new Jerusalem, on a new earth, is paradise regained.

Here in this city celestial the pure river of life pours its crystal waters through the very middle of the street of gold, o'ershaded by the Tree of Life, for we read:

vs. 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."

In the first paradise man, after eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and of Evil, was banished from the garden lest he eat of the Tree of Life and live forever in sin.

"So the Lord God drove out the man, and he placed at the east of the Garden of Eden Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life." (Genesis 3:24)

The cherubim there guarded the entrance of the garden to keep the man from reentering; the angels here stand guard at the gates to keep the redeemed *in* the Garden of God.

Truly the divinely inspired book, the Bible, is a perfect heavenly symphony. Just as a musical symphony begins and ends in the same key, so God's symphony of revelation begins and ends in the same key. Man was sinless in the first garden, and again in the second and last garden he is likewise sinless. The heavenly symphony begins with sinlessness and closes with sinlessness.

Which brings us to the central theme of this closing chapter. The theme is *Life*.

All the sin which resulted from the fall of man is swallowed up in the second death, when the devil, the dragon, the false prophet and all who were not found written in the Book of Life were cast into the Lake of fire.

The dominion of sin and death is gone forever. Now Life—abundant life—reigns everywhere.

Life here is presented as a glorious Triad. We have set before us:

1. The Book of Life.
2. The River of the Water of Life, and,
3. The Tree of Life.

And as if to place special emphasis upon this life-giving triad, each is mentioned twice. The Book of Life is mentioned in (Rev. 21:27) and (Rev. 22:19), the Water of Life is mentioned in (Rev. 22:1) and (Rev. 22:17), and the Tree of Life in (Rev. 22:2) and (Rev. 22:14).

Then as if wishing to again emphasize the theme of *Life*, there is an introversion to be found in these six mentionings. This will be readily seen by listing these references in the order in which they appear.

Rev. 21:27 Book
 Rev. 22:1 Water
 Rev. 22:2 Tree
 Rev. 22:14 Tree
 Rev. 22:17 Water
 Rev. 22:19 Book

Again there is a divine pronouncement of the Glorious Trinity. The Book of that of the Lamb, or Christ; the water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit—so declared by Christ in John 7:38, 39, and the Tree is logically a symbol of God, the source of all life.

And inseparable associated with both triads is the thought of life—abundant life.

The tree bore twelve manner of fruits and yielded its fruit every month. Of course the primary thought is that the tree is ever fruitful, but we cannot escape the force of the divine declaration that God's year has always been and always will be divided into twelve months, the modern proponents of a revised calendar of thirteen months, notwithstanding.

The twelve manner of fruits will guarantee a complete, balanced and life-sustaining diet for the redeemed, in the city of Abundant Life.

Christ, after his resurrection ate, the psalmist said that man ate angel's food. (Psa. 78, 25). The angels ate of Sarah's cakes and Abraham's dressed calf (Gen. 18:6-8). Jesus said He, at His return would serve his saints when they sit down to meat, and here we are lead to believe that eating will be one of the joys of our life in that great City of Abundance.

Both river and tree supply all wants. The water quenches the thirst, namely, satisfies the desires of the ransomed. And what the river of water of life does for the thirsty, the tree does for the hungry. The one flows perennially, the other bears perennially.

But more than food is supplied by the Tree of Life; "the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

It hardly seems these were diseases to be healed, but rather the leaves were the means of the banishment of disease and death. The meaning seems to be not that there are maladies then existing needing to be removed, but rather the leaves were for the preservation of abundant health.

vs. 3 "And there shall be no more curse."

There shall be no more curse because no sin shall ever enter there. Truly, God has fulfilled His promise "to make all things new."

"And the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him."

It is because of the eternal permanency of the throne of God and of the Lamb and the absolute, yet benign reign of God and Christ over the redeemed, that there will never be any more curse. This is a picture of perfect rule and the state of perfection which follows as the natural covallary.

vs. 4 "And they shall see his face; and His name shall be on their foreheads."

This will be the fulfillment of Christ's predictive beattitude: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8)

What a blessedness is this to enjoy the visible presence of the Lamb and to look upon the face of Him, which is as glorious that heaven and earth fled away from it.

"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." (Rev. 20:11)

Truly to see His face is to enjoy his favor. We "now see through a glass darkly, but then face to face."

But not only will the face of Him who is altogether lonely, be seen but "His name shall be on our foreheads."

"The Aaronic High Priest wore a plate of burnished gold upon his brow, on which was engraved the name of God Almighty. Likewise, the redeemed, as priests and Kings will wear the name of the Lamb of God in their foreheads forever witnessing that they are His.

vs. 5 "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."

Thus again it is said (this truth was first declared in Rev. 21:25) there shall be no night. In Rev. 21:25, the absence of night indicated why the gates were never closed, because it will be one grand eternal day. In the present verse since His servants are serving Him, there will never be any interruption to that service, since there will be no night there.

How could night exist there when God and the Lamb, in whom is no darkness at all, shall be the eternal light.

The succession of day and night was necessary for sinful man, yes, even Adam in his innocence needed it for rest and sleep, but such a need will never arise in this glorious home of the redeemed.

Again the saints could not experience darkness of any sort because Daniel said:

"They shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars forever and ever" (Daniel 12:3).

"And they shall reign forever and ever."

Not for a thousand years only. No such limitation could be compatible with things eternal. Literally, it reads: "reign to the ages of the ages." Christ said: "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."

There will be no such thing as celestial marriages there, nor are men sealed to wives for time and eternity but in the glorified form, as angels, with marriage bond, shall reign forever and ever.

Such is the final and concluding picture presented to us in the "uncoverings" of the apocalypse. This closes the transcendently glorious description of redeemed man's eternal destiny and home.

Thus ends the third division of the Apocalypse. Thus ends all the succession of prophecies. This book of Revelation began with a prologue. (Rev. 1:1-8), followed by Part I, extending from Rev. 1:9 to Rev. 3:22; then followed Part II, from Rev. 4:1 to Rev. 11:18; with Part III reaching through Rev. 22:5; and finally concluding with the epilogue beginning at Rev. 22:6.

The Apocalypse proper began at Rev. 1:9 and ended at Rev. 22:5. We are now to proceed with the study of the epilogue.

EPILOGUE

vs. 6 "And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true. The several visions of the apocalypse are now completed and the epilogue which follows is written to emphasize the great importance

of the "sayings" of the Chapters that precede these closing words of the book.

Perhaps the stress that is here laid upon the importance of the "sayings" of this book is because there has been such a universal tendency to neglect this book due to its symbolic profundity.

How significant that immediately following the description of the Holy City these admonitions are given, and particularly the assurance that "these sayings are faithful and true." A similar assurance was given in Rev. 21:5 which had reference to the creation of the new heaven and the new earth. And again a somewhat similar expression was found in Rev. 19:9 which referred to the destruction of Babylon and the marriage of the Lamb. The third use of this assurance is in the verse before us (Rev. 22:6) and has reference to the blessings promised to the dwellers in the New Jerusalem.

"And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done."

This is a repetition, almost word-for-word of Rev. 1:1 where He "sent His angel to his servant John" for the purpose of giving him these revelations, and here at the conclusion of the book, we have it repeated that "the Lord God of the Holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done."

A third similar repetition is found in (Rev. 22:16) when Christ himself adds special personal testimony, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches."

Why this triple declaration? Undoubtedly it is to assure us that this book is divinely inspired and has the authority of the God of all inspiration.

Christ, looking down through the corridors of time, saw men either denying the inspiration of this book, or neglecting it because of its profound symbolism, thus this threefold declaration of its authoritative and inspired nature.

There is no other book in the entire Bible which Christ so personally and pointedly affirms as inspired, or more urgently presses upon us for our prayerful and devout study.

Then comes a repetition of the blessing promised in the prologue of the Book (Rev. 1:3). There it reads:

"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."

Here in *vs. 7. 22:7* it reads: "Behold I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."

When we recall that all this is in addition to the seven-fold repetition of the admonition, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," then we must conclude that there is no other book in the Sacred Canon which guarantees such blessings for reading and keeping of its words.

And how many folk become offended at the teaching of the prophecies of Revelation! How many otherwise earnest ministers and teachers ignore the book, or even ridicule and make light of its sayings! Oh that Christians might not despise or neglect this crowning book of God's Divine revelation! Surely, no other book is so difficult of understanding, nor so fruitful of its blessings.

Then John adds his own personal testimony that he saw and heard these things.

vs. 8 "And I John saw these things, and heard them."

The very directness and simplicity of this affirmation should convince any hesitant doubter that the sayings of this wonder book of the Bible are true and should be studiously heeded.

And to add to it all, John was so overwhelmed and overpowered by the wonder and sublimity of the things that he had seen and heard, that we read:

"And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel which showed me these things."

Once before in (*Rev. 19:10*) John had fallen at the feet of an angel to worship him, but was expressly forbidden to do so, but was commanded by the angel "to worship God."

Here in very similar words the angel declares:

vs. 9 "Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God."

Had not Paul, long before the time of the writing of the apocalypse, warned, "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen?" (*Colossians 2:18*).

If man is not to worship an angel, a higher rank of created being than man, how utterly unscriptural and sinful it is for man to worship Mary, who gave birth to Jesus, and who had to look to Jesus for salvation the same as all other women have had to so look!

Jesus made this fact crystal clear in His third word from the

cross. He said to her, "Woman, Behold thy son." (John 19:26)

Jesus was actually breaking the relationship of mother and son. He is saying, "From now on, not I, but John is your son!"

From that second on, Mary was no more to Jesus than any other woman. He is no longer any woman's son. From now on he is solely the only begotten Son of God.

By this third saying from the cross, Jesus was denying Mary any special position or privilege. He was deliberately placing her on the same plane of humanity with the rest of all those He loved.

Since she was the one person at the cross who might unwittingly steal the attention from the only Savior of the world, He took this drastic step to guard against the worship of Mary. She must not become His rival in His mediatorial reign. How ill-becoming for those of spiritual Babylon, the Roman church, not only to make Mary a rival of Christ, but actually to teach that God can more easily be approached through the heart of Mary than that of Christ. It is nothing short of blasphemy.

But it was not for Mary's benefit that Jesus uttered this third word. She already did, and had always, understood her relationship to Him. In her Magnificat, she declared:

"And Mary said, my soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God *my savior*." (Luke 1:46, 47)

By her statement she gladly took her place among His devout worshippers.

By Jesus' declaration, she learned it was better to have Christ as her Savior and Lord than to be His mother. She, henceforth must look to Him for salvation, the same as all other human beings.

But as we have stated above, Jesus did not make this pronouncement for Mary's benefit; she needed no such word, for she already understood her relationship to Him. He said this for the benefit of those men who would unscripturally, even though done sincerely, make Mary a comediatix with Christ.

If John was forbidden of the angel to worship him, but was enjoined emphatically to worship God only, then certainly there is no place for mariolatry, or the worship of Mary.

Furthermore, because the coming of Christ was regarded as near, the angel added:

vs. 10 "And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand."

To seal up the sayings would conceal them. But they are to be revealed and not hidden. These visions did not refer to some

distant time and therefore to be kept secret for the present but belong to the present and must be given out, or unsealed, because the end of the age is not far distant.

Another reason for the urgent necessity of "uncovering" the sayings of this book is that there was such little time for obedience to the gospel of salvation which would enroll the obedient in the Lamb's book of Life.

The acceptance of the scriptural conditions of salvation would insure enrollment in the book of life; rejection would forever determine the unalterable fate of the disobedient. Hear the angel further:

vs. 11 "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he that 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."

What a warning. This is not to be construed as belonging to the category of a command; it is a dire warning that there comes a time when the course of free choice can not be altered. He that set his life in injustice and unrighteous will go on that way.

Well did Paul write to the Thessalonians:

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

(II Thess. 2:10-12)

When, we by free choice pursue an unscriptural—and therefore an unrighteous course—God lets us, after due warning, to go our willful way. When we persist in following the way of delusion, though thinking our worship and actions right, He permits us to continue to believe a lie and support an untruth. There is nothing else He can do without interfering with our free-moral agency.

Men must be forewarned and forearmed, lest they be deceived and perish. Hence the absolute necessity of not sealing up "the sayings of the prophecy of this book."

However, there is joy unspeakable for those who have chosen to be righteous and holy by their obedience to the commandments of God.

vs. 12 "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be."

This is another compelling reason why the sayings of the prophecy of this book shall not be sealed. Its message is one of great urgency. The unrighteous and the filthy, if they neglect its warnings, will just as surely suffer the judgments here foretold, as the righteous and the holy will luxurate in its promised reward. Because Christ is coming quickly to give to every man, in whichever class he may fall, according to his work.

This solemn pronouncement is made by none other than the Christ, who here announces Himself as:

vs. 13 "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

Here Christ in this epilogue employs the same terms as he used in the prologue. (Rev. 1:8)

In the prologue reference He adds, "the Almighty," thus claiming to be one with the Father. All begins with God and so here, since all ends with God, He rolls down the curtain on the drama of human history.

He now adds the seventh and final beatitude of the Book of Revelation.

vs. 14 "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates of the city."

Man lost his access to the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden by his disobedience. By his obedience to God's commandments he will have access to the Tree of Life in the Garden within the Holy City.

No wonder Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15) and again, "And why call me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). And yet again:

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:48)

Over against this Christ declares of those who follow human creeds, confessions of faith, decrees of councils and doctrines of men:

"But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. 15:9)

An interesting added light shed on this passage is the literal translation as rendered by such authorities as the Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Alexandrinus the Vulgate and some Armenian copies:

"Blessed they that wash their robes, that they may have

power over the tree of life, and enter into the gates into the city."

Rotherham translates it:

"Happy they who are washing their robes that their right (authority, license or permission) may be unto the tree of life and by the gates they enter into the city."

Thus we see the literal translation defines to "do His commandments" as equivalent to "they that wash their robes."

By this we see that washing or cleansing is a primary qualification to entering into the gates of the Holy City and to having access to the Tree of Life.

And how are we washed or cleansed? said Ananias to Saul, who became the apostle Paul: "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and *wash* away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16)

Paul in turn after he became a Christian and an inspired teacher of the commandments of Christ said: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the *washing of water* by the word. (Eph. 5:25,26)

Again Paul declared: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the *washing of regeneration* and renewing of the Holy Spirit." (Titus 3:5)

Paul said: "Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death." (Rom. 6:4) This was predicated on his preceeding question, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were *baptized into His death*." (Rom. 6:3)

In Christ's death He shed His blood that remits sin, washing it away. That is why Peter on Pentecost said: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ *for the remission of your sins*." (Acts 2:38)

Blessed, then are those who through being buried with Him in baptism have access to the cleansing of Christ's blood, thus washing their robes that they may have their right to the Tree of Life and enter by the gates into the city.

Ones clothers are reckoned with himself; hence the scriptural figure of keeping one's garments and washing one's robes. And so he that hath not on the wedding garment is to be cast out and debarred from sitting at the table of the Lamb. Thus in Rev. 16:15 we read, "Blessed is he that watcheth and *keepeth his garments*, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."

Nevertheless, this last beatitude of promise is followed by a forceable reminder of the status of those who by disobedience did not wash their garments and remain under the curse.

vs. 15 "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

So not all may enter the Holy city. All can see and understand why the sorcerers and whoremongers and murderers and idolaters may not enter therein, but not many can see with equal clarity that those who make a lie may not enter there.

They are unable to see that to teach false doctrine contrary to the Scriptures, even though done in all sincerity, damns just as completely.

All such are *without*, even as those who have washed their garments by complying with Christ's commandments, are *within* the Holy city.

The completeness of this list of those without is revealed by the fact that seven classes of persons are listed, namely, dogs, representative of unclean animals, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, whosoever loveth a lie and whosoever maketh a lie.

Now Christ now adds his further and emphatic attestation to the inspiration and authoritativeness of the book.

vs. 16 "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches."

This "I Jesus" stands in contradistinction the "I John" of Rev. 22:8. Christ declares He sent His angel to testify unto the churches the things that John affirms he had seen. Christ makes it forever clear that it is He who has given us these revelations.

John begins the book with "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" and here near its close Christ affirms that this is His revelation of things to the churches.

All the things contained in this book, its prophecies, revelations, promises, judgments, rest for their acceptance, not upon the word of a mere man, however honest and truthful, but upon Christ's own authoritative word.

Christ backs up this declaration by a glorious revelation of Himself in the last of His "*I am's*."

vs. 16b "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."

Here Christ declares His diety and humanity, that He is both God and man." First, He is the *root*, or origination of David.

Second, He is the offspring of David, or David's son because He was, in His incarnation, born of the house and lineage of David.

By this surprisingly wonderful revelation of His dual nature, since His ascension and enthronement at the right hand of God, He makes known to us that He still retains the humanity, though now in a glorified form, which He assumed in His incarnation.

Since we are to be like Him, this is an earnest of our redemption that our humanity shall also be glorified, in our house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Then follows an additional affirmation: "I am the bright and morning star."

Speaking of the "more sure word of prophecy," Peter said, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the *day dawn*, and the *day star* arise in your hearts." (II Pet. 1:19)

Thus Christ promises to appear as the bright and morning star to those who accept the sayings of the prophecy of this book and look for His coming.

As the morning star shines more brightly just before the break of day, so He will shine all the brighter to His true followers before His return and the dawning of the radiant morn of eternity.

Stirred by the prospect of His return, the Spirit and the bride of the Lamb, the church extends the most gracious of all gracious invitations. Since Christ has sent His angel to testify these things in the churches, it now becomes the urgent responsibility of the churches to testify these things to others.

vs. 17 "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." In verses 7 and 12 Christ has said He will come quickly, and here the Spirit and the bride respond to His promise by inviting Him to come. Their invitation is pressed into a single, but fervently potent word, "Come."

When Christ, before His departure, promised the coming of the Holy Spirit to comfort His apostles, He said, "He will guide you into all truth: and He will show you things to come." (John 16:13)

So throughout the existence of the church, the Holy Spirit has not only been teaching, comforting and energizing the church, but He has been showing the things to come. In all the operations of the Spirit there has been a constant looking for the consummation of all things in the coming of Christ, of whom He witnessed.

Therefore the Holy Spirit not only extends this invitation, but has inspired the church to join His importunings.

While the close association of the Spirit and the bride, the church is portrayed throughout the other New Testament books, this is the first instance in the book of Revelation that the joining together of the Spirit and the bride is mentioned.

After inviting Christ to come, the Spirit and the bride extend a second gracious invitation to all who have heard the gracious promise to join in the invitation and 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."

At the beginning of the apocalypse the church was portrayed as seven candelsticks, and the purpose of a candlestick is to give light, to shine as lights in the world, holding forth the world of life.

Christ, in the preceeding verse, had just said that he had sent His angel to testify these things in the churches. Now it becomes the responsibility of the churches to testify these things to others.

And if any one is athirst for the waters proffered, let him come—that is come into the fellowship of Christ, the Holy Spirit and the church.

"And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

The *will* to come is the first essential in coming; the will not to come is the first step in the rejection of this gracious invitation. It has been well said, if said in a homely way, "In the end there will be only two classes of people, the whosoever wills and the whosoever won'ts."

That the accurate preservation of this book—the Wonder Book of the Bible—may be accomplished there follows a solemn warning is pronounced, the like of which is not associated with any other book of the sacred canon. A stern warning is issued against tampering with this last book either by adding to it or taking away from it.

vs. 18, 19 "For I testify unto every man that heareth 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 that are written in this book."

What a fearful thing it is to add to the living word! What a terrible thing it is to take from or stultify the word of God, and especially the words of the prophecy of this book.

For these reasons the author has prayed constantly that he might have the divine guidance of the Teacher of the church, the Holy Spirit, since He was to guide into all truth. Endeavoring to read nothing into this book, not contained therein, nor to delete from it anything it presents, these lines have been written. According to the grace and light given unto me I have written.

While there has been this solemn consciousness of condemnation for adding to or taking from the words of the prophecy of this book, there has been also an ever increasing realization of the seriousness of another injunction concerning this book. That sacred injunction reads:

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein." (Rev. 1:3)

If I have been in error I plead God's mercy and forgiveness; if I have spoken the truth in Christ—"I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit"—may God give his added blessing to my humble testimony.

In either eventuality may God further and hasten His eternal truth until it shall cover the earth as the waters cover the seas.

Weighing God's warnings at the end of this book, with the blessings promised at its beginning, deep conviction has moved the writing. Coupled with this consideration has been the deep and moving conviction that these things to be testified by the church are of extreme importance in the closing days of the present age.

In this stern pronouncement of the penalty for taking away from the words of the book of this prophecy, that "God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy City" there is also a grim warning on the danger of falling from grace.

Only those who were once in grace would have any part in the book of life or a portion in the Holy City. Such blessings could not apply to those who had never accepted God's mercy and washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. For "whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:15)

The warning is, that those who otherwise are enrolled in the book of life and are thus prospectively entitled to a part in the Holy City, may fall and forfeit such reward, by taking away from

the words of the book of this prophecy. Such action could come about either by a deliberate taking away, or by thoughtless neglect.

As the book begins with the declaration "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," it closes with a parting pronouncement from the One who is herein revealed.

vs. 20 "He which testifieth these things saith, surely I come quickly."

We cannot fail to note the prominence of the word "Come" in the closing verses of this great book. Three times it occurs in verse 17. The Spirit and the bride say "come." He that hears, says, "come." He that is athirst, also, says, "come."

Now in this verse before us, Christ says, "Surely, I *come* quickly."

Finally, the apostle John here at the end of the book, bows his head and writes:

"Amen. Even so *come*, Lord Jesus."

And the word "come" is used so frequently in these closing words, because the coming of Christ runs like a scarlet thread throughout the New Testament scriptures. It is estimated that one out of every twenty-five words of the New Testament pertains to His coming. It is ever the abiding hope of the church.

But those under grace are not alone in holding this hope. Nature groans waiting His coming to rectify her grave disorders occasioned by the fall and its consequent curse visited upon the ground.

But grace, being more articulate, joins John in his supplication. "Amen," so be it. "Even so *come*, Lord Jesus."

Thus this book-the "Wonder Book of the Bible" comes to a close. We join in the apostolic benediction:

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

THE SEVENS OF REVELATION

1. *The Seven Churches* Rev. 1:4

2. *The Seven Eternalities*

1. "Which is and which was and which is to come." Rev. 1:4

2. "Which is and which was and is to come" Rev. 1:8

3. 'I am He that liveth, and was dead, and I am alive'
Rev. 1:18

4. "The first and the last, which was dead and is alive"
Rev. 2:8

5. "Which was and is, and is to come" Rev. 4:8

6. "Which art, and wast, and art to come" Rev. 11:17
7. "Which art, and wast, and shalt be" Rev. 16:5
3. *The Seven Golden Candlesticks* Rev. 1:12
4. *The Seven Beatitudes*
 1. "Blessed is he that readeth" Rev. 1:3
 2. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth" Rev. 14:13
 3. "Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments" Rev. 16:15
 4. "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" Rev. 19:9
 5. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection" Rev. 20:6
 6. "Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book" Rev. 22:7
 7. "Blessed are they that do His commandments" Rev. 22:15
5. *The Seven-fold description of Christ* Rev. 1:14-16
6. *The Seven Stars* Rev. 1:20
7. *The Seven Angels of the Churches* Rev. 1:20
8. *The Seven Letters to the Churches* Rev. 2:1-3:22
9. *The Seven-fold Arrangement of the Seven Letters* Rev. 2:1-3:22
 1. Salutation
 2. Declaration of works
 3. Commendation, or censure
 4. Reproof
 5. Exhortation
 6. Admonition
 7. Promise
10. *The Seven Declarations "I know thy works"* Rev. 2:1-3:22
11. *The Seven Admonitions "He that hath an ear, let him hear"* Rev. 2:1-3:22
12. *The Seven Lamps of fire* Rev. 4:5
13. *The Seven Seals of the Book* Rev. 5:1
14. *The Seven Horns of the Lamb* Rev. 5:6
15. *The Seven Eyes of Christ* Rev. 5:6
16. *The Seven things which Christ is worthy to receive* Rev. 5:12
17. *The Seven Seals* Rev. 6:1 to 8:1
18. *The Seven-fold Doxology* Rev. 7:2
19. *The Seven Trumpets* Rev. 8:2-11:19
20. *The Seven Angels which stand before God* Rev. 8:2

21. *The Seven Thunders* Rev. 10:3
22. *The Seven Heads of the Dragon* Rev. 12:3
23. *The Seven Crowns on the Seven Heads of the Dragon* Rev. 12:3
24. *The Seven Personages* Rev. 12:1-13:11
 1. Woman
 2. Satan
 3. Man-child
 4. Archangel
 5. Remnant of woman's seed
 6. The beast coming up out of the sea
 7. The beast coming up out of the earth.
25. *The Seven Angels having the Seven Last Plagues* Rev. 15:6
26. *The Seven Plagues* Rev. 15:6
27. *The Seven Golden Vials* Rev. 15:7
28. *The Seven Heads of the Scarlet Colored Beast* Rev. 17:3
29. *The Seven Mountains* Rev. 17:9
30. *The Seven Kings* Rev. 17:10
31. *The Seven Dooms*—The Doom of:
 1. Babylon
 2. The beast
 3. The false prophet
 4. The kings
 5. Gog and Magog
 6. Satan
 7. The unbelieving dead.
32. *The twenty-eight items of merchandise of Babylon*, or seven multiplied by four Rev. 18:12, 13
33. *The Seven New things* Rev. 21:1-22:1
 1. New Heaven
 2. New earth
 3. New creation
 4. New Jerusalem
 5. New temple
 6. New light
 7. New garden
34. *The Seven Visions of Revelation*
35. *The Seven calls to come out of Babylon*
36. *Seven mentions of the Book of Life*