

THE BOOK OF  
**REVELATION**

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UNLOCKING THE PROPHECIES  
FOR THE LAST DAYS



VANCE FERRELL

# **THE BOOK OF REVELATION**

**VANCE FERRELL**

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by Vance Ferrell

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## *Introduction*

**“The whole Bible is a revelation; for all revelation to men comes through Christ, and all centers in Him.** God has spoken unto us by His Son, whose we are by creation and by redemption. Christ came to John exiled on the Isle of Patmos to give him the truth for these last days, to show him that which must shortly come to pass. Jesus Christ is the great trustee of divine revelation. **It is through Him that we have a knowledge of what we are to look for in the closing scenes of this earth’s history.** God gave this revelation to Christ, and Christ communicated the same to John.

“John, the beloved disciple, was the one chosen to receive this revelation. He was the last survivor of the first chosen disciples. **Under the New Testament dispensation he was honored as the prophet Daniel was honored under the Old Testament dispensation.**

“The instruction to be communicated to John was so important that Christ came from heaven to give it to His servant, telling him to send it to the churches. **This instruction is to be the object of our careful and prayerful study; for we are living in a time when men who are not under the teaching of the Holy Spirit will bring in false theories.** These men have been standing in high places, and they have ambitious projects to carry out. They seek to exalt themselves, and to revolutionize the whole showing of things. **God has given us special instruction to guard us against such ones. He bade John write in a book that which should take place in the closing scenes of this earth’s history.**”—*7 Bible Commentary, 953-954.*

**“In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end. Here is the complement of the book of Daniel.** One is a prophecy; the other a revelation . . . It was Christ who bade the apostle record that which was to be opened before him. ‘What thou seest, write in a book,’ He commanded, ‘and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia.’”—*Acts of the Apostles, 585.*

**“To John the Lord opened the subjects that He**

saw would be needed by His people in the last days. The instruction that He gave is found in the book of Revelation. **Those who would be co-workers with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will show a deep interest in the truths found in this book.** With pen and voice they will strive to make plain the wonderful things that Christ came from heaven to reveal.”—8 *Testimonies*, 301.

“He revealed to John **scenes of deep and thrilling interest in the history of the church of God** and brought before him **the perilous conflicts which Christ’s followers were to endure.** John saw them passing through fiery trials, made white and tried, **and, finally, victorious overcomers, gloriously saved in the kingdom of God.**”—*Early Writings*, 230.

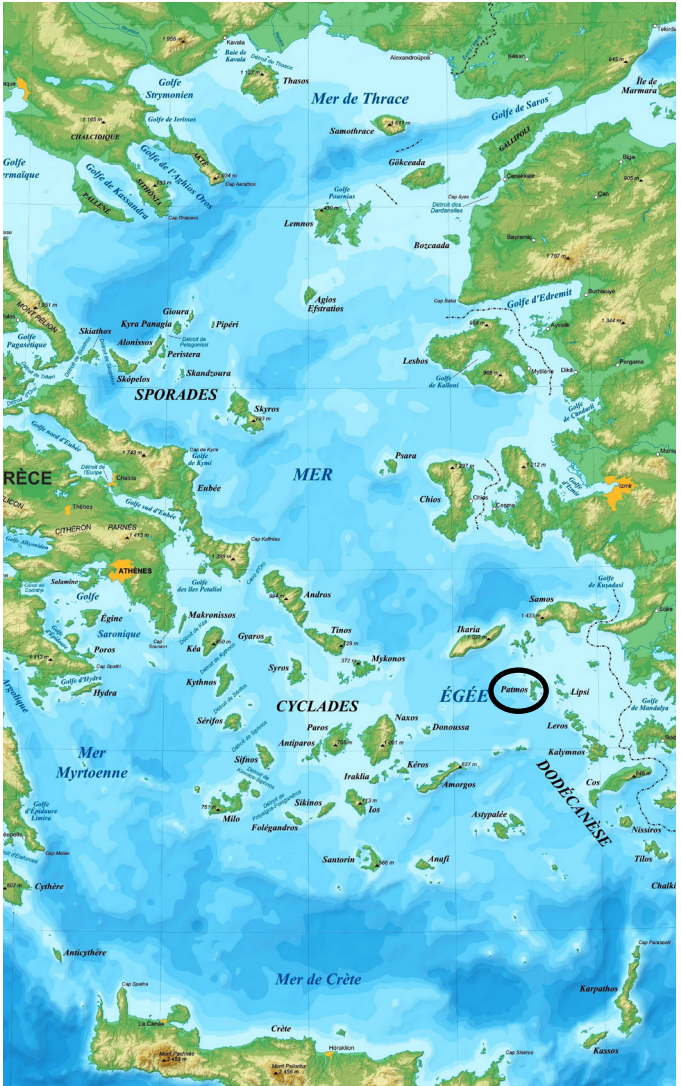
“**Before his wondering vision were opened the glories of heaven. He was permitted to see the throne of God and, looking beyond the conflicts of earth, to behold the white-robed throng of the redeemed . . . In the revelation given to him there was unfolded scene after scene of thrilling interest in the experience of the people of God, and the history of the church foretold to the very close of time.**”—*Acts of the Apostles*, 582-583.

“**Many have entertained the idea that the book of Revelation is a sealed book,** and they will not devote time and study to its mysteries. They say that they are to keep looking to the glories of salvation, and that the mysteries revealed to John on the Isle of Patmos are worthy of less consideration than these. **But God does not so regard this book.**

“**The book of Revelation opens to the world what has been, what is, and what is to come; it is for our instruction upon whom the ends of the world are come.** It should be studied with reverential awe . . .

“The Lord Himself revealed to His servant John the mysteries of the book of Revelation, and He designs that they shall be open to the study of all. **In this book are depicted scenes that are now in the past, and some of eternal interest that are taking place around us;** other of its prophecies will not receive their complete fulfillment until the close of time, when the last great conflict between the powers of darkness and the Prince of heaven will take place.”—7 *Bible Commentary*, 954.





THE ISLAND OF PATMOS (CIRCLED) IN THE AEGEAN SEA, BETWEEN GREECE (LEFT) AND TURKEY (RIGHT)

## Revelation 1

# *Christ Visits John on Patmos*

*Brief overview*—This chapter introduces the book of Revelation, telling us that the entire book is a vision that Christ gave to the Apostle John. There is much encouragement and important instruction all through this book!

*Title and Author:* The earliest Greek manuscripts call this book “The Revelation of John.” The word, “revelation,” means the revealing of something previously unknown. The author repeatedly identifies himself as “John” (Rev. 1:1, 4, 9; 21:2; 22:8). **John was one of the original twelve disciples.** One writer has said this about John:

“They [the disciples] were almost constantly with Him, witnessing His miracles, and hearing His words. **John pressed into still closer intimacy with Jesus**, so that he is distinguished as the one whom Jesus loved. The Saviour loved them all, but John’s was the most receptive spirit. He was younger than the others, and with more of the child’s confiding trust he opened his heart to Jesus. **Thus he came more into sympathy with Christ, and through him the Saviour’s deepest spiritual teaching was communicated to His people.**”—*Desire of Ages*, 292.

“**John, the beloved disciple, was the one chosen to receive this revelation.** He was the last survivor of the first chosen disciples. **Under the New Testament dispensation he was honored as the prophet Daniel was honored under the Old Testament dispensation.** The instruction to be communicated to John was so important that Christ came from heaven to give it to His servant.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 953.

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**“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John; who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.” Revelation 1:1-2.**

**“Revelation of Jesus Christ”:** There is a revelation that is given to us *by Jesus*; it is found all through the Bible,—but He has given us a special one in the book of Revelation.

**“The book of Revelation opens to the world what has been, what is, and what is to come; it is for our instruction upon whom the ends of the world are come. It should be studied with reverential awe.”—7 Bible Commentary, 954.**

**“Half a century had passed since Jesus ascended to present His church before God, and to prepare mansions for His faithful ones. He still loved His people; for He came to His aged servant to reveal to him God’s plans for the future.”—7 Bible Commentary, 955.**

Jesus Christ is fully divine; and in the incarnation, He became fully God and fully man.

***The Antichrist error*—We know that Jesus Christ is fully divine, fully God.** But part of the *Antichrist teaching* is the error that Jesus did not really become a human being like us; that is, He did not really take our nature, when He came to earth.

**“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”—1 John 4:1-3.**

**“As ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it [His commandments]. For many deceivers are entered**

into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an Antichrist.”—2 John 1:6-7.

**The Bible teaches that Christ fully took our human nature and was tempted just as we are, yet without yielding to sin.** He never once transgressed the law of God (John 8:46; 1 John 3:4; Rom. 6:23).

**The Antichrist error, which entered the Catholic Church, was that both Mary and Christ were born with “immaculate natures;” that is, without the possibility of ever sinning. From that error comes the modern error that “Christ inherited the nature of Adam before he fell into sin and therefore could not sin.”** This is that earlier error clothed in different words: that Christ had the same type of Catholic immaculateness that the Virgin Mary is said to have had, *an inability to sin!*

**If this were so, Christ could not have sinned if He had wanted to.** The theory goes on and says that, if He had inherited the same fallen nature which we inherit (a nature which can be tempted and can fall into sin), Christ could not have resisted temptation and would have become a sinner.

**The rest of this strange, new theology package theorizes that it is impossible for anyone living on earth to keep from sinning or stop doing it!** Frankly, it would seem that these theorists want to remain in their sins, and have an excuse for happily doing so!

**A related error teaches that Christ could resist sin much easier than we can.** But this is not true either. If He had any advantage that we cannot have, then He is not a perfect Saviour and we, day by day, cannot stop sinning now.

**Christ resisted sin in the same way by which we are enabled to resist it.** While on earth, Christ clung to His Father by faith and continual prayer, just as we may do.

(Notice a flaw in their reasoning: They recognize the truth that *unfallen* Adam was able to—and did—fall into sin. If so, how could it be that a theoretical “unfallen Christ” with “Adam’s unfallen nature” could not? The angels in heaven also had unfallen natures; yet a third of them fell!)

“It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. **Angelic perfection failed in heaven. Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss.** All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God.”—*5 Bible Commentary, 1132.*

“**His [Christ’s] human nature must pass through the same test and trial Adam and Eve passed through.** His human nature was created; it did not even possess the angelic powers. It was human, identical with our own. He was passing over the ground where Adam fell. He was now where, if He endured the test and trial in behalf of the fallen race, He would redeem Adam’s disgraceful failure and fall, in our own humanity.”—*3 Selected Messages, 129.*

**The Bible truth is that Christ took our exact nature—the one you and I have—which is able to sin. Then, in our nature, He never once yielded to sin in any way. He was totally sinless.** He relied on His Father for help, as we may rely on Christ. *Therefore, Christ is able to be our perfect Example,* and provide us with forgiving and enabling grace to resist sin as He did.

*Here, briefly, is what the Bible teaches about this:*

**Christ took the nature of Abraham’s descendants:**

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily **He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.** Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour [help] them that are tempted.”—*He-*

*brews 2:14-18.*

He was tempted in all points as we are:

**“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”—Hebrews 4:15-16.**

**On Mary’s side, Christ had the same kind of inheritance we have:**

**“The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”—Matthew 1:1.**

**“If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”—Galatians 3:29.**

**He was made like us:**

**“When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law . . . that we might receive the adoption of sons.”—Galatians 4:4-5.**

**He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh:**

**“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”—Romans 8:3-4.**

He really came in the flesh:

**“And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God.”—1 John 4:3.**

How thankful we can be that Christ not only died on Calvary, but today **He is in the Sanctuary above, ready and able to forgive our sins and give us enabling strength to overcome them!** —*It is Christ’s work, in the entire plan of redemption, to help us stop sinning!*

**“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.”—Matthew 1:21.**

**“Christ, who knew not the least taint of sin or defile-**

ment, **took our nature in its deteriorated condition.** This was humiliation greater than finite man can comprehend. God was manifest in the flesh. He humbled Himself. What a subject for thought, for deep, earnest contemplation! So infinitely great that He was the Majesty of heaven, and yet He stooped so low, without losing one atom of His dignity and glory! He stooped to poverty and to the deepest abasement among men.”—*I Selected Messages, 253.*

**“We need not place the obedience of Christ by itself, as something for which He was particularly adapted,** by His particular divine nature, for He stood before God as man’s representative and was tempted as man’s substitute and surety. **If Christ had a special power which it is not the privilege of man to have, Satan would have made capital of this matter.** The work of Christ was to take from the claims of Satan his control of man, and **He could do this only in the way that He came—a man, tempted as a man, rendering the obedience of a man.**”—*7 Bible Commentary, 930.*

“Satan had pointed to Adam’s sin as proof that God’s law was unjust, and could not be obeyed. In our humanity, Christ was to redeem Adam’s failure. But **when Adam was assailed by the tempter, none of the effects of sin were upon him.** He stood in the strength of perfect manhood, possessing the full vigor of mind and body. He was surrounded with the glories of Eden, and was in daily communion with heavenly beings. It was not thus with Jesus when He entered the wilderness to cope with Satan. **For four thousand years the race had been decreasing in physical strength, in mental power, and in moral worth; and Christ took upon Him the infirmities of degenerate humanity.** Only thus could He rescue man from the lowest depths of his degradation.

**“Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam’s position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain.** If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had

Christ, then He would not be able to succor us. But our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. **He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured.**—*Desire of Ages*, 117.

*We now turn our attention to the revelation by Jesus that was given to John.* —This is a revelation for all of God’s children, given to us by Jesus Himself! It contains important messages for us today.

**“The revelation which God gave unto him”**: According to this verse, **God the Father has sent us this message through His Son, Jesus Christ.** Jesus then sent it to the Apostle John through an angel.

John then wrote it down and affirmed that this is an accurate statement of all that he saw in vision.

We are also told that these things are to happen soon. **We know that the messages in Revelation began to be fulfilled even while John was still alive; but even more so, for us today, who live down near the end of time.**

**“Signified it by His angel”**: Both in Daniel and Revelation, **the message is generally given to the prophet by the angel. But there are times when Christ Himself speaks.** When that happens, it is noted in this commentary. **The angel mentioned here is Gabriel**, the highest angel in heaven. He is named in Daniel 8:16 and 9:21 (also in Luke 1:19, 26). He instructed both Daniel (DA 98, 233-234, GC 325-326) and John (DA 98-99, 234). He is the angel referred to in Revelation 1:1 (DA 98-99). He is “the mighty angel who stands in God’s presence, occupying the position from which Satan fell” (DA 693).

“It was Gabriel, the angel next in rank to the Son of God, who came with the divine message to Daniel. It was Gabriel, ‘His angel,’ whom Christ sent to open the future to the beloved John.”—*Desire of Ages*, 234.

**“Unto His servant”**: The word in the Greek is *douloi*, which means “servants.” But the word can also stand for



“slaves.” You may hear in pulpits sometimes that, according to the Bible, we are God’s slaves! *That is not true! Those who choose Satan’s side in the controversy between good and evil are, indeed, slaves. But God’s people are always free to leave Him. They always have free will. It would be a slur on God’s character to suggest that He has slaves!*

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; **but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.** The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that **we are the children of God:** And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.”—*Romans 8:14-17.*

For we have been “delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom. 8:21).

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**“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.” Revelation 1:3.**

*Three blessings:* There is another unique fact about the book of Revelation: *the three special blessings added to it.* We need these blessings as we study it, in order that we might better understand both Revelation’s messages and those in the book of Daniel. For each book helps explain the other.

**“He that readeth”:** *The first blessing* is for **those who read the book** of Revelation. Unfortunately, because they refuse to read it, some will not receive that blessing.

**“That hear”:** *The second blessing* is for **those who thoughtfully consider the words of the prophecies in this book.** Some ignore them; they will have no blessing.

**“And keep”:** *The third abundant blessing* is for **those who will keep the things written in this book;** that is, obey them and make them part of their lives! Tragically, many

will not keep them; so that special blessing is not for them.

“How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! . . . **Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path** . . . Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart.”—*Psalms 119:103, 105, 111.*

I want those blessings. I believe you want them also. **We want to read the book and listen to it; and, in Christ’s enabling strength, we want to keep and share what we learn here.** We do not want to be like those people who turn away from the book and lose out on those blessings.

“The book of Revelation opens to the world what has been, what is, and what is to come; **it is for our instruction upon whom the ends of the world are come. It should be studied with reverential awe.** We are privileged in knowing what is for our learning.”—*7 Bible Commentary, 954.*

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**“John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne.” Revelation 1:4.**

“*Seven*”: This is the first of a series of sevens in this book—forty-eight in all! “Seven” denotes completeness.

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**“And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” Revelation 1:5-6.**

*Three promises:* There are three of them here: *First:* Christ loves us. *Second:* If we will let Him, He will wash away all our sins! The *third* promise is that He will let His faithful ones dwell with Him forever in heaven! What will be our response? —And the above verse provides our

joyful response: “To Him be glory and dominion forever!”

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**“Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen.” Revelation 1:7.**

Here we have another glorious promise: **Jesus is soon to return to take His children home. Oh, we must be among that group!**

**“They that pierced Him”**: But, sadly enough, we also learn of the many who will see Jesus return—and will not be happy. This will include those “which pierced Him.”

**“Pierced Him”**: This word, “pierced,” is the same word (*ekkenteo*) which John uses in his Gospel, in describing the piercing on the cross (John 19:34, 37). That event was predicted hundreds of years earlier by Zechariah: “And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced.” Zechariah 12:10. These are the only three places in the Bible where that piercing incident at Calvary is mentioned.

So, from this, we know that **many of the wicked men who tortured and killed Jesus will be raised from their graves to see Him return** in the clouds of heaven.

“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”—*Daniel 12:2.*

**“All the kindreds of the earth shall wail”**: At Christ’s return for His beloved children, all the wicked living on earth at that time will be filled with terror. During their life they had not given their hearts to Jesus. Instead, they occupied themselves with sinful pleasures. As we have learned at the end of the book of Daniel (11:45-12:1), Jesus returns to deliver His faithful ones.

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

**“Alpha and Omega”**: We have here the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet. There is another promise here for us! **Jesus is assuring us that He will be with us at the beginning, at the end, and all the time in between!** We today could say that He is the A and the Z, the first and the last. Wherever we are located down through the centuries, **Jesus will always be close by our side; that is, if we will choose to remain close by His side.**

**Eternity and self-existence**—God the Father, God the Son (Christ), and the Holy Spirit are eternal and self-existent. They have existed throughout all eternity—past, present, and future.

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for **He that cometh to God must believe that He is [that He exists], and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.**”—*Hebrews 11:6*.

“And God said unto Moses, **I AM THAT I AM.**”—*Exodus 3:14*. (“I AM” means an eternal self-existence.)

“**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.”—*John 1:1-3, 14*.

“**And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.** And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning.”—*Colossians 1:17-18*.

“Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus **throughout all ages, world without end.**”—*Ephesians 3:21*.

“**I am the first, I also am the last.** Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and My right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together.”—*Isaiah 48:12-13*.

“**Art Thou not from everlasting,** O Lord my God, mine Holy One?”—*Habakkuk 1:12*.

“**From everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.**”—*Psalms 90:2*.

“My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass. **But Thou, O Lord, shalt endure forever.**”—*Psalm 102:11-12.*

“They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed. But **Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end.**”—*Psalm 102:26-27.*

“**Almighty**”: This word, *pantokrator*, means “ruler of all.” This title occurs eight times in Revelation. Each passage declares His power and majesty (Rev. 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:15; 21:22).

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

“**Companion**”: Fellow partaker in tribulation, as in Romans 11:17.

“**Patience**”: The word is literally “remaining under.” Those who carefully exercise self-control, when in a difficult situation, will remain with Jesus in this life. In Christ, His followers have the strength to remain close by His side. It is an interesting fact that those who have yielded to satanic control are in bondage to the devil. Yet there is hope even for them, if they will plead with Christ. He is able to break those chains, so they can return to Him. In contrast, those who choose to live in Christ—are always free to leave Him; for He enslaves no one.

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”—*Revelation 14:12.*

“**In the isle that is called Patmos**”: How did John, an elderly man by this time, who loved Jesus so much, and had spent his life telling others about Him—**how did he end up**

on that rocky island of Patmos, where the Romans sent criminals? *Well, it is an interesting story:*

*Why John was sent to Patmos*—It was the year A.D. 94. Domitian, who became the Roman emperor more than ten years earlier in A.D. 81, was persecuting Christians; and he hated John for reproving his sins.

So, in a fury of anger, **the emperor had his soldiers heat a pot of oil to a slow boil—and then, as he watched, he told them to lower John into it!** (They did this very carefully; for splashing oil would terribly burn their hands.)

**There John stood in the boiling oil, as cheerful and peaceful as ever;** for it may only have felt warm to him. History reveals that Domitian immediately had the soldiers carefully remove him; and they probably severely burned their hands as they did.

The emperor and his soldiers were extremely frightened when this happened. No one dared to injure John again, much less attempt to slay him.

**So the emperor ordered the apostle to be sent on a ship to the faraway, isolated island of Patmos.** He thought that this would forever silence the faithful John.

Patmos is a small island in the Aegean Sea, about 50 miles southwest of Ephesus. At its widest points, the island is about 10 miles north and south, by about 6 miles east and west. Rocky and rather barren, its irregular coastline has many inlets. It is of volcanic origin; and many large, black boulders can still be seen on portions of the hillsides.

**Yet, on that rocky and barren island, Jesus came to visit him; and He gave him all of the information found in the book of Revelation.** Oh, how thankful we are that He did! John had probably felt his work was nearly ended when he arrived at Patmos.

**John then wrote down what he saw in this glorious vision.** Later, when he was set free, John returned to his friends in Ephesus. Probably many on that island were converted to Christ while he was there.

(For your information: The year after the boiling oil

incident, Domitian was murdered by his courtiers on September 18, A.D. 96; and Nerva became emperor. Domitian had been deeply convicted when he saw how God protected John; yet he refused to relent. His probation had ended.)

*But now, we begin the messages of this special book:*

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

**“In the Spirit”:** This is literally “in vision.” It is obvious, as we shall see from a comparison of Scripture just below, that this “Lord’s day” was the Bible Sabbath. **John was probably worshiping his Lord outdoors in nature, perhaps down by the sea.** As he sat there, thinking on spiritual things and praying, he was given a vision. That is what he means by saying, “I was in the Spirit.”

**“The Sabbath, which God had instituted in Eden, was as precious to John on the lonely isle as when he was with his companions in the cities and towns. The precious promises that Christ had given regarding this day he repeated and claimed as his own. It was the sign to him that God was his . . . On the Sabbath day the risen Saviour made His presence known to John.”—7 Bible Commentary, 955.**

**“On the Lord’s Day”:** What is the meaning of this phrase, “Lord’s day”? Some people think that John means Sunday. But there is not one place in the entire Bible that Sunday is called “the Lord’s Day.” In fact, throughout the entire Bible, Sunday is never called anything except the “first day” of the week. **The word, “Sunday,” is not in the Bible; and the phrase, “first day of the week,” is found only eight times (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2, 9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1, 19; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2).** People have

offered thousands of dollars for one Bible verse which says that the Sabbath has been changed to Sunday, but no one ever won the money. In marked contrast, the Sabbath is mentioned at least 170 times in the Scriptures.

**Sunday is never called sacred or holy. There is not one place in the Bible where we are told that the sacredness of the seventh-day Bible Sabbath was transferred to Sunday, the first day of the week,—not one place!**

*The true Lord's Day*—What then is the “Lord’s day”? **The Bible does have a day which it calls the Lord’s day. Scripture clearly shows that it is the seventh day of the week, the Sabbath on which Christ appeared to John on Patmos. John had personally heard Christ declare, “Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:28; Matt. 12:8). John well knew that God, in the Old Testament, repeatedly said that the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord. It would therefore be inconceivable that this loyal disciple should regard another day as the day of his Lord and Master.**

*Let us consider several Bible passages which explain this:*

“If thou turn away thy foot **from the Sabbath**, from doing thy pleasure **on My holy day.**”—*Isaiah 58:13.*

So what day is the “Lord’s day”—this “holy day”—in the Bible? **It is the seventh-day Sabbath which our Creator gave us at Creation (Gen. 2:1-3);** and it was kept by the faithful down through the centuries. Moses was a Sabbathkeeper. **When God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, He wrote the law down and commanded that the Sabbath be kept holy (Ex. 20:8-11).** But, of course, an entire chapter explains that **they knew the Sabbath commandment before they arrived at Sinai (Ex. 16).**

**The “Lord’s day” is the special day of the Lord; and we must observe it in honor of Him as our Creator who made this world in six days and rested on the seventh (Gen. 2:1-3).**



*This is the “Lord’s day”:* The Bible Sabbath is **“the day unto the Lord”** (Ex. 16:23, 25; 31:15; 35:2). It is **“the day of the Lord”** (Ex. 20:10; Lev. 23:3; Deut. 5:12-15). It is God’s own day; **His “holy day”** (Isa. 58:13). It is **the day that Jesus called Himself “Lord of”** (Matt. 12:8; Deut. 5:14-15).

—**Thus we see that, in the Bible, God’s seventh-day Sabbath is repeatedly called “the Lord’s day.”**

*Yes, John knew what day was the Lord’s day. It is the seventh-day Sabbath.* This is the only day in the week that is **the Memorial Day of the Creator** (Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 31:17). It is the only day in the week that is **the Memorial Day of our Redeemer and the plan of redemption** (Eze. 20:12, 20).

*This is the Lord’s Day—God’s own day, a day He wants to share with you.*

**“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.”—Genesis 2:1-3.**

**“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work . . . For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”—Exodus 20:8-11.**

**“It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.”—Exodus 31:17.**

**“And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.”—Ezekiel 20:20.**

**“Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a**

sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.”—*Ezekiel 20:12*.

It is because God is our Creator that we are to worship Him and keep His Sabbath, the memorial of His creative work.

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things.”—*Revelation 4:11*.

“Turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein.”—*Acts 14:15*.

*The weekly cycle*—By the way, some people will say that “the weekly cycle has probably been changed; so it does not matter what day we keep.” First: **it matters to God; for He gave us the Bible Sabbath at the end of Creation Week (Gen. 2:1-3), and then placed it in the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:8-11).** —*But there is more: The weekly cycle has never changed!* The seventh day of the week is now the same as it was when Christ was on earth, and all through the Old Testament!

**The writings of historians, the records of chronographers, the languages of earth, the calendars of time, and the existence of the Jewish race—all testify to the fact that the weekly cycle on our calendars today is the same as in earlier centuries—going back to the time of Christ, to Moses, and beyond.**

In the beginning, God gave us the weekly seven-day cycle, with the Sabbath as the last day. That pattern has never changed. **The seventh day of the week today is the true Bible Sabbath.** Our seventh day is the Sabbath which Jesus kept; it was the Sabbath in the time of Moses, when the Ten Commandments were written down. **Historians and scientists all agree that this is true.**

If there had been any change in the weekly cycle, between the time of Creation and the time of Moses, a correction would have been made when the Ten Commandments were given to the Hebrews. From that time, on down to the

present, there have always been Jews to testify as to the true Sabbath. It was the same seventh day of the week which is on our calendars. **While all the other ancient races are now intermingled, the Jews have been kept separate; so they can testify to the fact that our seventh day is the Bible Sabbath!**

The yearly cycle has been changed: In 1582, the length of the year was changed to include the leap year. This changeover resulted in October 1582 having only 21 days! But each week remained the same seven days in length. Thursday, October 4, 1582, was followed by Friday, October 15, 1582. **God has divinely protected the weekly cycle down through the ages.** If He had not done this, it would be impossible to keep the Sabbath holy, as He has commanded. But, because He has, we have no excuse not to sacredly worship Him on that day today. **The seventh day is a holy day, made holy by the command of God.** All calendars agree: The seventh day is the Sabbath. Sunday is the first day; the day called "Saturday" in the English language is the Sabbath.

Did you know that, in 108 of the 160 languages of mankind, the seventh day is called "the Sabbath"? Dr. William Mead Jones, of London, prepared a chart proving this. (A copy of this chart can be obtained free of charge from the publisher of this book: Ask for The Chart of the Week.) English is one of the few major languages in which the seventh day is not called "the Sabbath."

**"A great voice":** But, just now, continuing with our study of the book of Revelation, we find that **John suddenly heard a most beautiful Voice, filled with love and power. Turning quickly, he saw Jesus, his precious Saviour!** Not now toilworn and poor as He once had been while on earth, Christ appears in heavenly glory. He is now the majesty of heaven! —*And He has come down to talk to John and tell him things that you and I need to know!*

**"The seven churches":** John was first told to send seven letters to Asia, one letter to each of the seven

**Christian churches** which were in “Asia.” Asia was the name of a Roman province at that time. Later in history it became known as Asia Minor (today called Turkey), when the word, “Asia,” was applied to everything east of there—throughout the entire Orient, reaching to the Pacific Ocean.

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**“And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks. And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.” Revelation 1:12-13.**

**“Spake”**: “Was speaking.”

**“Like unto the Son of man”**: What a comfort it is to know that our ascended, glorified Lord is still our brother in humanity,—yet at the same time He is our God! The glorified Christ appeared to John in celestial splendor, yet still in the likeness of a human being. Christ, as the second person of the Godhead, is eternally pre-existent; yet He has forever taken humanity upon Himself. He is not only our God, but also our Elder Brother.

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**“His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shineth in His strength.” Revelation 1:14-16.**

**“Burned in a furnace”**: Glowed hot in a furnace.

**“Two-edged sword”**: Revelation is filled with important symbols. What is the meaning of that **“two-edged sword”** which John saw proceeding out of Christ’s mouth? It is the Word of God; *the Bible!* With the Bible, as we rely on Jesus for strength, we are able to defeat the plans of Satan to overcome us.

“And take the helmet of salvation, and **the sword**

of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.”—*Ephesians 6:17*.

This “two-edged sword” is *rhomphaia distomos*, in Greek. The *rhomphaia* was a large, heavy, two-handed sword. This was the kind of massive sword that Goliath brought to the battle with David.

It is of interest that, whereas we would say “two-edged,” in Bible times it was called “two-mouthed” (*distomos*). While we consider such a sword as cutting with both sides, they thought of it as biting on both sides. **For Christians, this sword symbolizes the power of the Old and New Testaments as they give their witness to the world.**

**“And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last.” Revelation 1:17.**

**“When I saw Him”:** Although glorified, this was the same Jesus whom John had so greatly loved while He was on earth. **The Saviour’s hand was gently laid on John, to strengthen him.**

**“Fell at His feet”:** The first effect on many who beheld a being from heaven was to lose strength temporarily (Eze. 1:28; 3:23; Dan. 8:17; 10:7-10; Acts 9:4; cf. Isa. 1:4-5). The person so honored was completely overcome by a sense of his own weakness and unworthiness. John also experienced this (Rev. 1:17). **It is astounding that so many today dare to ignore God and Christ, and even use their names in swear words! This is blasphemy. If they do not repent, they will be lost.**

**“As dead”:** As though he were dead.

**“The first and the last”:** For more on “the first and the last,” see Isaiah 41:4; 43:10. Jesus spoke the same words to Isaiah.

“Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and His redeemer the Lord of hosts; **I am the first, and I am the last.**”—*Isaiah 44:6*.

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**“I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.”**  
**Revelation 1:18-19.**

**“*He that liveth*”:** This Greek phrase emphasizes the fact that Christ is alive! How thankful we can be for this! Jesus lives. He is alive today! He died for us, and He rose again. In fact, He who has the keys of death will, at His Second Advent, unlock the prison house of the grave and take His children home to heaven.

**“*The keys*”:** This verse tells us who has the power of the keys,—the keys which are able to open heaven to mankind. It is by virtue of His death on Calvary and mediation in the Sanctuary above that Christ is able to empower His faithful, obedient children so He can take them to heaven.

**Did you know there is someone on earth today that claims to be the only one with those keys?** For over two thousand years, the pope has declared that he is the one who has the keys of heaven and hell; and many have looked to him, instead of to Christ, as the way to heaven.

***Who has the Keys?***—A picture of two large keys are on every Vatican flag, symbolizing the pope’s power to admit faithful Catholics to heaven.

“According to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, a doctrine firmly to be believed and constantly professed by all, if the sinner have a sincere sorrow for his sins . . . although he bring not with him that contrition which may be sufficient of itself to obtain pardon, **all his sins are forgiven and remitted through the power of the keys, when he confesses them properly to the priest.**”—*Catechism of the Council of Trent for Parish Priests, trans. by J.A. McHugh and C.J. Callan, pp. 282.*

“The decision of the pope and the decision of God constitute one decision . . . Since, therefore, an appeal is

always made from an inferior judge to a superior, just as no one is greater than himself, so **no appeal holds when made from the pope to God, because there is one consistory of the pope himself and of God Himself, of which consistory the pope himself is the key-bearer and the doorkeeper.**

“Therefore no one can appeal from the pope to God, as no one can enter into the consistory of God without the mediation of the pope, who is the key-bearer and the doorkeeper of the consistory of eternal life; and as no one can appeal to himself because there is one decision and one court [papal *curia*] of God and of the pope.”—*Augustinus Triumphus, Summa de Potestate Ecclesiastica* (“Summary Concerning Ecclesiastical Power”), *questio 6, “De Papalis Sentencie Apellatione,” fol. 61.*

This is an unfortunate situation; for so many, down through the centuries, have trusted in the pope for salvation—instead of praying to God. **Yet not only does Jesus alone have the keys to unlock the grave (Rev. 1:18), He also has the keys to salvation and eternal life!** We dare not separate from Him! Only He alone can get us to heaven!

**There is also a second verse in Revelation which tells us who has the power of the keys:**

“These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, **He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;** I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name.”—*Revelation 3:7-8.*

“**Write the things**”: Jesus tells John to write down everything that he is about to see in vision. **He wants us to know these things!** Many, many future events were revealed to John that day. Only God knows the future and is able to reveal it.

At the present time, as we study the book of Revelation, we find that **most of these prophecies have already**

come to pass; and this fact strengthens our confidence in this book. But there are predictions which have not yet been fulfilled.

The books of Daniel and Revelation should be studied together; for they explain one another. Many prophecies found elsewhere in the Bible also dovetail with these two books. But this is understandable; for the whole Bible comes to us from God, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

Always pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you as you study God's Inspired Writings. We must always have a prayerful, humble, teachable attitude when we study God's holy Word.

“If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine.”—*John 7:17*.

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**“The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in My right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.” Revelation 1:20.**

**“Seven churches”:** In this first chapter, Jesus has told John that there are important messages which need to be sent to each of the seven churches. By the time John wrote, there were already dozens of local Christian congregations all over the Roman Empire. So it is obvious that **the number and the names of these particular seven churches have a prophetic meaning.** “Seven,” in the Bible symbolizes a perfect whole. **These messages are for the people of God in every age; yet each of the churches has specific problems and solutions for a specific period of time in history.**

Jesus “walks among the seven candlesticks.” What an encouraging promise! **Christ is always by the side of His faithful ones, guiding and instructing them as they study His Inspired Writings and share those truths.**





**THE SEVEN CITIES ARE IN WESTERN TURKEY, AND CAN BE VISITED ONE AFTER THE OTHER AFTER FIRST STOPPING AT PATMOS.**

## *Letters to the Churches - 1*

*Brief overview*—This chapter covers the history of God’s people in four periods, from A.D. 31 to 1517.

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### 1 - EPHESUS A.D. 31 - 100

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

**“Of Ephesus”**: “In Ephesus” (Greek). Ephesus is the first of the seven churches described by Jesus in Revelation 2 and 3. It covers a period of time from Jesus’ resurrection to around the death of the last of the Apostles. **This church eagerly shared the truth about Jesus to everyone they met. They carefully instructed the true believers and reproved sin.**

This important city, located at the eastern end of a major highway that crossed Asia Minor from Syria, was a major seaport on the Aegean Sea. Paul first preached there about A.D. 52. He had worked in Ephesus for three years; in fact, longer than in any other city. By the time that John wrote, about 40 years later, Ephesus was one of the leading cities of Christianity.

**Missionaries sent out by the early apostolic church carried the Gospel to all the then known world before the last of the apostles died.** They suffered persecution and many died for their faith. Their eagerness to obey Jesus’ command, to “teach all nations,” carried them to distant places.

**“Candlesticks”**: The Greek word, here translated “candlesticks,” actually means “lampstands” in which

oil was placed and burned for light. (Candlesticks did not exist in the Near East or Europe until several centuries later.)

“Candles originated in China around 200 B.C., and were made from whale fat. There were none in Europe until sometime after A.D. 400, due largely to the availability of olive oil for burning in lamps.”—*Ray Malbrough, Candle Rituals*.

**“Walk among”**: This is another precious promise:

**“And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be My people.”**—*Leviticus 26:12*.

“For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee.”—*Deuteronomy 23:14*.

**“God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”**—*2 Corinthians 6:16*.

**“I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for My name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.”** Revelation 2:2-3.

**“Patience”**: *Hupomone* is “perseverance, endurance.”

**“To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life.”**—*Romans 2:7*.

**“We want, every one of us, to be prepared for that which is coming upon our world. You cannot, any one of you, at once jump into the position to stand the test of God. It is by patient continuance in well-doing that you gain the element of character that will enable you to stand the test at last. It is by persevering integrity of soul day by day, and by calling upon God, that we get strength to stand the test.”**—*Christ Triumphant, 60*.

**“Tried”**: Literally “to test.” Ignatius, writing early in the second century, mentions the diligence of the Ephesian Christians in shunning heresy.

“God would have His people prepared for the soon-coming crisis. *Prepared or unprepared, we must all meet it.* Only those whose characters are thoroughly disciplined to meet the divine standard will be able to stand firm in that testing time. But when enemies shall be on every side, watching them for evil, the God of Heaven will be watching His precious jewels for good.”—*Sketches from the Life of Paul, 252.*

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

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

**“Left thy first love”:** Unfortunately, problems had already developed in the first church of the seven time periods of Christian church history. Jesus said that “thou hast left thy first love.” The Bible clearly and repeatedly teaches that **our love for God is shown by obeying His commandments.** *Here is the first love that they had left:*

“As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love. **If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love;** even as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.”—*John 15:9-10.* “If ye love Me, keep My commandments.”—*John 14:15.*

“The Lord thy God, **He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments** to a thousand generations.”—*Deuteronomy 7:9.*

“Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments . . . **But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected:** hereby know we that we are in Him. He that saith He abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He

walked.”—*1 John 2:3, 5-6.*

“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. **For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments:** and His commandments are not grievous.”—*1 John 5:2-3.*

“And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because **we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.**”—*1 John 3:22.*

In spite of warnings by Jesus while He was on earth and repeated efforts and letters by Paul, James, and John—already, by the end of the first century, **God’s people were beginning to leave the basic principles of morality!** Their love was growing cold, **their connection with Jesus was gradually being broken, and worldliness was increasing** among them. (Read the Apostle John’s other final books before the Bible ended—1, 2, and 3 John. *The word, “love,” is defined and explained 38 times in those few pages!*)

**They had lost a correct understanding of the true meaning of** what it means to be saved and the importance of **the forgiving and enabling grace** that had been abundantly provided by Christ’s death on the cross,—**so they could live good, clean, godly lives,** in full obedience to God’s moral law of Ten Commandments.

“**And repent**”: Only through deepest repentance would they be able to return to Him (Lev. 26:40-42; Deut. 30:1-3; Dan. 9:3-4; Matt. 4:17; Acts 2:38).

“ ‘And repent.’ **The life we live is to be one of continual repentance and humility. We need to repent constantly, that we may be constantly victorious. When we have true humility, we have victory.** The enemy never can take out of the hand of Christ the one who is simply trusting in His promises. If the soul is trusting and working obediently, the mind is susceptible to divine impressions, and the light of God shines in, enlightening the understanding. **What privileges we have in Christ Jesus!**”—*7 Bible Commentary, 959.*

**“Do the first works”**: After telling them, in verse 4, that they have left their “first love,” **Christ warns them, in verse 5, to recall to mind what they have abandoned—**and “do the first works.”

**By John’s day, those who wanted to bring in false teachings had already entered in** among God’s people. It is for this reason that Paul wrote that, in his day, “The mystery of iniquity doth already work” (2 Thess. 2:7). **It is a dangerous thing to turn from the Bible to other sources of guidance.** Jesus warned them to return to their first love and “do the first works,”—or He would “remove their candlestick.”

With all this in mind, it is urgent that we, today, return to those fundamental beliefs and practices that Christ and the Apostles gave to the church back then.

**It is only through repentance, an understanding of basic Bible beliefs, and obedience to them, that we can return to our deep love for God—**and then, walking closely by Christ’s side, grow steadily in character and likeness to Him.

**Salvation from sin**—Everyone agrees that “salvation” is about how to go to heaven. But the question is what does Scripture teach about how it is accomplished.

**When sin is not gotten rid of,—it gains control of people, keeps taking them deeper into evil, and ultimately ruins their lives. There is not one passage of Scripture which says it is safe to keep sinning!** Instead, we are continually told to put it away, or we will be lost.

“Salvation” means to be saved from something! **Contrary to what many teach today, it is not godly obedience to God’s law that we are saved from! It is sin that is the problem. It is sin from which we must be delivered!** The entire plan of salvation is focused on this one point: to get us out of, and away from, a life of sin and, by living a godly life, prepare us for heaven.

This is what the Bible teaches about “salvation” and being “saved”:

*Christ is the Saviour*—“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a **Saviour, which is Christ** the Lord.”—*Luke 2:11*.

*Only in Christ can we be saved*—“**Neither is there salvation in any other**: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”—*Acts 4:12*.

*We have a part to do*—“**Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling**. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”—*Philippians 2:12-13*.

*He saves us, not in, but from our sins*—“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for **He shall save His people from their sins**.”—*Matthew 1:21*.

*We must, in the strength of Christ, enter upon a new life if we would be saved*—“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God**.”—*John 3:3*.

*We must separate from sin and be filled with the Word of God*—“**Wherefore lay apart all filthiness** and superfluity of naughtiness, **and receive with meekness the engrafted Word**, which is able to save your souls.”—*James 1:21*.

*Only those who obey Christ's commands will be saved*—“And being made perfect, **He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him**.”—*Hebrews 5:9*.

*We must also tell others about Him*—“**If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart** that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”—*Romans 10:9*.

*Only those whom God, by His grace, have been made godly will be saved*—“**Blessed are they that do His commandments**, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and

maketh a lie.”—*Revelation 22:14-15*.

*In spite of the iniquity about us, we must cling to Christ if, in the end, we would be saved*—“Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. **But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.**”—*Matthew 24:12-13*.

The above quoted passages are quite clear. ***It is sin that we are to be saved from, not godly living!*** Let no one tell you that you can stop keeping the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:3-20)! According to the above passages, salvation is provided to those who genuinely believe in Christ, obey Him, and confess Him so others might learn the path to salvation.

***The truth about the grace of Christ***—Everyone is agreed that grace is “unmerited favor”; that is, something God gives us which we do not deserve and cannot supply by ourselves. We are sinners, hopelessly locked into sin. Yet He offers to give us grace!

What is the purpose of this grace? **First: *It is forgiving grace.*** If we will come to Him, confessing our sins and being willing to separate from them, He forgives our past sins. **There is no way we can obtain this forgiveness, except by His grace.**

**Second: *It is enabling grace.*** God’s grace empowers us to live clean, honest lives. **It strengthens us to resist temptation, put away sin, and obey God’s holy law.** It strengthens us to do all that He asks of us in Scripture. There is no way we can obey His Ten Commandment law, except by His enabling grace.

Strengthened by the grace of Christ, no longer do we lie, steal, cheat, and do various types of wrongdoing. Grace enables us to become God’s adopted children.

**But we must continually do our part, or we fall from grace.** That can easily be done! Yet, **if we will keep looking to Christ, He will be there, constantly helping us,** continually providing the needed overcoming grace. He knows that, in our own strength, we are helpless to do any



right thing. He has clearly told us, “Without Me, ye can do nothing” (John 15:5).

**In contrast, today, it is often taught that grace only provides forgiveness of sin,—but not enabling strength to resist it or put it away.** It is even said that God is not able to keep us from sinning, and that there is no provision in the entire plan of salvation for that to be done in this present life. Obviously, this theory is a slur on both God’s character and His omnipotent power.

**If that error were true, then all sinners would go to heaven.** It is a fact that, if God has not the power to change our hearts and characters down here, He could not do it at death or translation, without turning people into puppets! **Would you want to live in heaven with such people?** Life down here with mean, hateful individuals is difficult enough—without having to put up with them throughout all eternity!

The truth is that **Christ’s grace not only justifies (forgives) us, but also enables (strengthens) us to obey Him.**

Here is what the Scriptures teach us about grace:

*We can only be saved through the grace of Christ—*“Through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved.”—*Acts 15:11.*

*We are to become strong in this grace—*“**Be strong in the grace** that is in Christ Jesus.”—*2 Timothy 2:1.*

*We must strengthen ourselves in grace, so we can resist sin—*“Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. **But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.**”—*2 Peter 3:17-18.*

*It is Christ’s grace which strengthens His weak children to do what is right—*“And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for **My strength is made perfect in weakness.**”—*2 Corinthians 12:9.*

*Grace is our source of strength, whereby we can stand bravely for the right—*“Thou therefore, my son, **be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.** . . Endure

hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”—2 Timothy 2:1, 3-4.

*God will provide us with all the help we need*—“**But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.**”—Philippians 4:19.

*It is the grace of Christ which strengthened Paul to earnestly work for Him*—“**But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain;** but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”—1 Corinthians 15:10.

*It is the grace of Christ which enables us to maintain good conversation (Greek: “conduct”)*—“In simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but **by the grace of God, we have had our conversation [conduct] in the world,** and more abundantly to you-ward.”—2 Corinthians 1:12.

*We must make use of His might (His grace) in order to resist sin*—“Finally, my brethren, **be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.** Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”—Ephesians 6:10-11.

*Steadfastly relying on His grace, we can resist sin and be perfected*—“**Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you.** Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom **resist steadfast in the faith,** knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, **after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect,** stablish, strengthen, settle you.”—1 Peter 5:7-10.

*His merciful grace is able to keep you from falling back into sin*—“**Keep yourselves in the love of God,** looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life . . . **Now unto Him that is able to keep you**

from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.”—*Jude 21, 24.*

*God is able to preserve you in the midst of temptation*—“I know thy works: behold, **I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word,** and hast not denied My name . . . Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: **hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.**”—*Revelation 3:8, 10-11.*

*The importance of obeying God’s law*—The law of God describes what He is like, and thus what we should be like. How thankful we are that our God is clean, truthful, and unselfish! He wants us to be that way also. He devised the plan of salvation, so we could become like Him! Is not this something we should want? Do we dare want anything else?

**It takes a bravely naive man to enter the final Judgment with a paper in his hand, signed by his modernist pastor, that Christ never wanted him to stop sinning!**

Christ died because the law could not be abolished. If God’s law and order could be eliminated, the peace and happiness of the entire universe would totally end. Try abolishing all the laws in your nation—and see what happens!

**The stability of God’s government is founded on the twin facts, that His moral law never changes and all of His obedient creatures are like Him in character.** There are only two ways this can happen: either He has to make them automatons—without will power to do differently—or they have to choose to obey His law. **Those who refuse obedience cannot live in His universe;** and, for the safety of the universe, they will ultimately have to be blotted out of existence.

*Does the New Testament teach that we should obey the law of God?*

*It is God who gave us His law, and He does not*

*change*—“**There is one Lawgiver**, who is able to save and to destroy.”—*James 4:12*. “**For I am the Lord, I change not.**”—*Malachi 3:6*.

“*Having faith*” does not mean we can disobey God’s law—“**Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.**”—*Romans 3:31*. “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.”—*Romans 7:22*.

God’s law is good, not bad. It is sin which is the problem, not the law—“**Wherefore the law is holy**, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.”—*Romans 7:12* (*Ps. 19:7-8*). “**All Thy commandments are righteousness.**”—*Psalms 119:172*. “And I know that **His commandment is life everlasting.**”—*John 12:50*.

God’s will for us is revealed in His law—“**And knowest His will . . . being instructed out of the law.**”—*Romans 2:18*.

It is the law which points out our sins—“What shall we say then? is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, **I had not known sin, but by the law:** for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.”—*Romans 7:7*.

Christ did not set aside obedience to God’s law—“**Think not that I am come to destroy the law** or the prophets: **I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.** For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”—*Matthew 5:17-18*.

The word, “*fulfill*,” in the above passage is not *kataluso* (“to destroy, abolish”; Matt. 26:61), but *pleroo* (“to fill up to even fuller measure”). Here are three other examples where *pleroo* is used. Each one is obviously not about “destroy,” but “make more full.”

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so **fulfill** the law of Christ.”—*Galatians 6:2*.

“These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be **full.**”—*John 15:11* (*1 John 1:4; 2 John 12*).

“Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”—*John 16:24 (Phil. 2:2; Col. 1:25).*

*God does not want Christians to break His law—***“Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.”**—*Matthew 5:19.*

*Christ obeyed God’s law, and we should also—***“I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.”**—*John 15:10.*

**“He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.”**—*1 John 2:6.*

*God’s blessing rests on those who obey His law—***“But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”**—*James 1:25.*

*We should not obey man-made theories, in place of God’s law—***“But He answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?”**—*Matthew 15:3.* “For God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and mother . . . but ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift . . . and honor not his father or his mother, he shall be free. **Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.**”—*Matthew 15:4-6.* **“But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”**—*Matthew 15:9.*

*Christians are required to obey the law of God—***“Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.** For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. **So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty** [the law which liberates from sin].”—*James 2:10-12.*

*Professed Christians who refuse to keep God’s commandments are not really followers of Christ—***“He**

that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”—*1 John 2:4*.

*We must obey His law; for it is the basis of the Judgment*—“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: **Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.** For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”—*Ecclesiastes 12:13-14*.

*Obedience to the law of God will be the test in the Judgment*—“**For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ;** that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”—*2 Corinthians 5:10*. “So speak ye, and so do, as they that **shall be judged by the law of liberty.**”—*James 2:12 (Rom. 3:19)*.

*Disobeying a command of God is sin and leads to death*—“In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”—*Genesis 2:17*. “**The wages of sin is death.**”—*Romans 6:23*. “**The soul that sinneth, it shall die.**”—*Ezekiel 18:4*.

*Christ died so that, by His grace, we could overcome sin. It is dangerous to not do this*—“**If we sin willfully** after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”—*Hebrews 10:26-27*. “**Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.**”—*Ecclesiastes 8:11*.

*If we really love God, we will obey His commandments*—“**For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.**”—*1 John 5:3*. “By this we know that we love the children of God, when **we love God, and keep His commandments.**”—*1 John 5:2*.

*According to the Bible, it is those who keep the commandments of God who will be part of the remnant*—“**And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed,**

which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”—*Revelation 12:17*.

*Here is a blessing that each one of us should want to receive*—“**Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.**”—*Revelation 22:14* (*Ps. 119:1, 11, 165; Isa. 48:18; Ps. 1:1-2; III:10*).

There are massive numbers of Bible passages about the rightness of obedience to God and the wrongness of disobedience to Him!

**Law and Grace**—Three questions are often asked: What does the law do for the sinner? What is the law unable to do for him? What does grace do for him? Here are the answers from God’s Word:

—**First: What does the law do for the sinner?**

*God’s moral law gives a knowledge of sin*—“By the law is **the knowledge of sin.**”—*Romans 3:20*. “**I had not known sin, but by the law.**”—*Romans 7:7*.

*It brings guilt and condemnation*—“Now we know that **what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law:** that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”—*Romans 3:19*.

*It acts as a spiritual mirror*—“If any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for **he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth** what manner of man he was. **But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein,** he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”—*James 1:23-25* (*James 2:9-12*).

—**Second: What is the law unable to do for the sinner?**

*The law cannot forgive or justify*—“**By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified** in His sight.”—*Romans 3:20*.

*It cannot keep from sin or sanctify*—“Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for **if**

there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.”—*Galatians 3:21*.

—*Third: What does the grace of Christ do for the sinner?*

*Christ’s grace forgives and justifies*—“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and **by Him all that believe are justified from all things**, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”—*Acts 13:38-39 (Luke 18:13-14)*.

*It saves from sin and sanctifies*—“She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for **He shall save His people from their sins.**”—*Matthew 1:21*. “But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”—*1 Corinthians 1:30*.

*It inspires faith*—“**By grace are ye saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”—*Ephesians 2:8-10*.

*It brings God’s power*—“I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for **it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth**; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”—*Romans 1:16*.

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

*“The Nicolaitans”*: This was one of the heretical sects that plagued the churches at Ephesus (2:6) and at Pergamos (2:15). They called themselves Gnostics, who, **pretending to teach “secret knowledge,” interpreted Scripture in strange ways and spiritualized away its teachings. They taught that it is not necessary to put away their sins.** They also taught that the death of Christ on Calvary had done away with God’s Ten Commandment law, so that



it was no longer necessary to keep the moral law of God.

Unfortunately, the error of the Nicolaitans is also being taught today! **It is the teaching that “only believe and you will be saved.” But this is not what the Bible teaches!** All through its sacred pages, we find, time after time, urgent calls to return to God and obey Him.

It is said that **the Nicolaitans also taught the error that only the religious leaders are able to explain the Bible; and their teachings should be obeyed, even when their theories do not agree with Scripture!** Yet Jesus clearly stated that none of His followers should think that they are superior to any of the others. And the words of no one should be accepted above that of the Inspired Writings.

“The sin of the Nicolaitans [is] **turning the grace of God into lasciviousness.**”—7 *Bible Commentary*, 957.

“**The doctrine is now largely taught that the gospel of Christ has made the law of God of no effect; that by ‘believing’ we are released from the necessity of being doers of the Word. But this is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Christ so unsparingly condemned.**”—7 *Bible Commentary*, 957.

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

**“Overcometh”:** This is the first of the eight “overcomer” passages in the book of Revelation. The form of the verb implies that **the person “continues to overcome.”** That is encouraging! Jesus will help us, moment by moment, to overcome! None of us will reach heaven just because, on one occasion, we refused to do what was wrong. **It is the day by day conquest, through the power of Christ, that counts.**

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**2 - SMYRNA A.D. 100 - 313**

**“And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write;**

**These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.” Revelation 2:8-9.**

**“Smyrna”**: The word, “Smyrna,” means the sweet odor of a special perfume. **Their faithfulness, as they stood for His truth—in spite of heavy persecution,—was deeply encouraging to God.** It was like a sweet perfume. So many in this church stood bravely for the truth, that **it is one of only two churches among the seven of which Jesus had nothing negative to say.** (The other was Philadelphia, Revelation 3:7-13.)

“The progress of Christianity was not confined to the Roman Empire, but **the new religion, within a century after the death of its divine Author, had already visited every part of the globe.**”—*Edward Gibbon, History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Chap. 15, para. 54.*

**There were some, at the beginning of this church period, who pretended to be Christians but were not. They had been planted there by Satan in order to harm the church.** Because this is a prophecy, “Jews” here symbolize professed Christians. After the death of Jesus, the literal descendants of Abraham were no longer God’s special people, any more than the rest of us. The “ten day” persecution, mentioned in verse 10, not only martyred some of God’s faithful children, but eliminated many of these false professors.

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**“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” Revelation 2:10.**

**“Unto death”**: Literally “up to and including death.”

**“Crown”**: *Stephanos*, a “chaplet” or “garland of vic-

tory,” not a diadem of rulership. This word was used for the wreaths given to victors in Greek games.

**“Ten days”:** It was at this time that the people of God experienced a terrible ten year persecution by Emperor Diocletian. In prophecy, a “day” represents a literal year; and this refers to a ten year persecution of Christians by Emperor Diocletian (A.D. 303-313). At this time thousands of God’s people were persecuted and many were slain.

**Persecution has a way of purifying the church.** The selfish and ease-loving are afraid to join it; and those who do are strengthened by God to lay down their lives for the faith. There were many martyrs during those ten years; and, if we are faithful, we will meet them when Jesus comes, raises them from the grave, and takes them home with all of His people.

“He [Diocletian], like Decius and Aurelius before him, felt that Christianity was a menace and that the State must either destroy or yield to it, and in consequence instituted the most ruthless persecution which lasted long after his abdication from the throne in 305.

“By this time, **Christianity was the strongest organized group in the State [Empire], numbering perhaps a tenth of the population and as much as one-half of that in Asia Minor** [modern Turkey]. For, as Harnack has said, it was ‘a religion of towns and cities.’ Its numbers, therefore, even if in a minority, exerted a disproportionate influence. The new despot, although naturally tolerant and, in addition, married to a Christian wife and having a Christian daughter, was aroused against the Christians by his brutal assistant, Galerius, who had advanced [upward] through the army and was instigated by the Neo-Platonists. He [General Galerius] succeeded Diocletian after the latter’s abdication.”—*Walter Woodburn Hyde, Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire, p. 180.*

**This ten year persecution, under Diocletian (emperor from 284-305) and Galerius (305-313), was the worst of the major persecutions of Christians during this Smyrna**

period of the seven churches (A.D. 100-313). Here, following the persecutions by Nero (A.D. 64-68), are all of them:

Trajan, 98-117 / Hadrian, 117-138 / Marcus Aurelius, 161-180 / Valerian, 253-259. This was followed by the most severe persecution of them all, under Diocletian (284-305) and his associate and successor, Galerius (305 to 313).

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

*“The second death”*: This will be more fully explained when we study Revelation 20. The **“second death”** (Rev. 2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8) is the final death—a death into eternal oblivion, which only the wicked who have refused to repent will experience.

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### 3 - PERGAMOS A.D. 313- 538

**“And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith He which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is: and thou holdest fast My name, and hast not denied My faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.” Revelation 2:12-13.**

**“Pergamos”**: The Pergamos period was a time of compromise, apostasy, and popularity, the time during which the church of Rome was consolidating its power and authority.

Pergamum had been the capital of the Roman province of Asia for two centuries after its last king, Attalus III, bequeathed it, together with the kingdom of Pergamum, to Rome in 133 B.C. It was an important center in Asia Minor. At the time that John wrote, it was the religious capital of the province, and emphasized emperor worship.

**The characteristic experience of the church during this period was one of self-exaltation.** From the status of

a hated sect, Christianity rose at this time to a position of unchallenged popularity and power.

The word, Pergamos, means “lifted up.” **This was the period in church history when Constantine (272-337; reigned 306-337) pretended to be a Christian, and it was popular to be a nominal Christian.** This church covers the period of A.D. 313-538. During this time we see the rise of the papal power.

**“Holdest fast”:** This letter is addressed to the faithful who still clung to Bible truth, and refused to yield to the deadly pagan errors which were entering Christendom.

Jesus was here pointing out the errors which the faithful should avoid; and He commended them for refusing to let those half-converted pagans rule their lives and dictate how they were to worship God.

**The Edict of Toleration—It was in A.D. 313, at the end of the Diocletian persecution, that Constantine issued an edict of toleration toward the Christians.** This was the first time since the Bible ended that this had occurred. Of course, this made Constantine very popular with the Christian churches; significantly, the bishop of the Christian church in the city of Rome at that time, Sylvester (314-335), became Constantine’s close friend and adviser. (The first bishop of Rome to call himself “pope” was John I, who reigned during A.D. 523-526.)

**“Where Satan is”:** Twice in this verse, Christ mentions that Satan has entered the professed Christian church! It was during the time of Constantine that the bishop of Rome began attaining to power over the other Christian churches in the Empire. **At his urging, Constantine enacted the first National Sunday Law in A.D. 321.** As anticipated, this law immeasurably strengthened the power of the Roman bishop—for it brought hundreds of thousands of Mithrites into the church which he governed. **The worshipers of Mithra (also called Mithras) worshiped their Sun god on the day of the sun, which they called the “Sun day.”** This attempted change of the

Sabbath to Sunday was the pope's basis of power and control over the people. He had effectually replaced the law of God with his own laws, which included the worship of images (statues) and dead people ("saints").

**"Antipas":** Now began the persecution of faithful Christians—not by a pagan Roman emperor, but by the corrupt church headquartered at Rome. This ongoing persecution is symbolically represented as the slaying of a "faithful martyr" named "Antipas." **Antipas means "against the papa, or pope."** He symbolized the millions who, for over a thousand years, were persecuted and slain for refusing to bow down to the person and teachings of the pope of Rome.

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**"But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate."** Revelation 2:14-15.

**"Balaam":** The teaching of Balaam was that idolatry and sexual immorality would not keep a person from heaven (Num. 25; cf. PP 451, 453-461). You may recall that, at the time of Moses, Balaam was the one who led Israel into joining with pagan idol worshippers, to celebrate their feasts and holidays. **"Committing fornication" in the above verse symbolically means that the church had abandoned Christ and was wedded to pagan errors and practices,** while seeking power from the government to enforce its decrees. In contrast, the true church humbly and obediently followed the teachings of Christ, as given through Scripture, and did not try to force obedience from anyone.

**"Nicolaitans":** As discussed previously (Rev. 2:6), **"the doctrine of the Nicolaitans" was the teaching that the death of Jesus on the cross did away with the law**

**of God.** Therefore, according to this apostasy, it does not matter whether or not we obey what God commands in Holy Scripture.

“The doctrine is now largely taught that the gospel of Christ has made the law of God of no effect; that by ‘believing’ we are released from the necessity of being doers of the Word. But this is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Christ so unsparingly condemned.”—7 *Bible Commentary*, 957.

**Salvation in sin**—It is significant that **both errors** (that of Balaam and the Nicolaitans) **teach that morality is no longer important! The concept that our words and conduct have nothing to do with our salvation is widely taught in the pulpits today.** But the theory that God does not require obedience and does not punish sin is a dangerous idea.

*This error is not only ancient—but also quite modern!* **Next time you are in church, listen to what the preacher is saying!** Is he preaching the “doctrine of the Nicolaitans”? It is easy to identify this; *for he will have a two-part message:*

*Part One:* **“Right now, you can come to Christ and receive forgiveness; and then you are saved.”**

*Part Two:* **“You are now accepted by Christ, and your conduct does not matter; for nothing you do can affect your salvation.”**

“Forgiveness” and “salvation right now” is the basic message. —But there are two words that these preachers avoid: **“Sin” and “law.” They emphasize that you do not need to put away your sins, and they are very quiet about obeying anything written in the Bible, or anything God has commanded.**

The next time you go to church, or hear a preacher on the radio, see what his underlying message is. Be on guard. **If he is a false preacher, do not listen to him anymore!** It is unsafe to remain there any longer! Take your family and leave!

*Here is a lengthy—but very powerful—quotation which*

*clearly explains this:*

“Professor Edwards A. Park, in setting forth the current religious perils, ably says: **‘One source of danger is the neglect of the pulpit to enforce the divine law.** In former days the pulpit was an echo of the voice of conscience . . . Our most illustrious preachers gave a wonderful majesty to their discourses by following the example of the Master, and giving prominence to the law, its precepts, and its threatenings. They repeated the two great maxims, that **the law is a transcript of the divine perfections, and that a man who does not love the law does not love the gospel; for the law, as well as the gospel, is a mirror reflecting the true character of God.** This peril leads to another, that of **underrating the evil of sin, the extent of it, the demerit of it. In proportion to the rightfulness of the commandment is the wrongfulness of disobeying it . .**

“ ‘Affiliated to the dangers already named is **the danger of underestimating the justice of God.** The tendency of the modern pulpit is to strain out the divine justice from the divine benevolence, **to sink benevolence into a sentiment rather than exalt it into a principle.** The new theological prism puts asunder what God has joined together. **Is the divine law a good or an evil? It is a good. Then justice is good; for it is a disposition to execute the law.** From the habit of underrating the divine law and justice, the extent and demerit of human disobedience, **men easily slide into the habit of underestimating the grace which has provided an atonement for sin.**’ Thus the gospel loses its value and importance in the minds of men, and soon they are ready practically to cast aside the Bible itself.

“**Many religious teachers assert that Christ by His death abolished the law, and men are henceforth free from its requirements.** There are some who represent it as a grievous yoke, and in contrast to the bondage of the law they present the liberty to be enjoyed under the gospel.

“**But not so did prophets and apostles regard the**



**holy law of God.** Said David: ‘I will walk at liberty: for I seek Thy precepts.’ Psalm 119:45. The apostle James, who wrote after the death of Christ, refers to the Decalogue as ‘the royal law’ and ‘the perfect law of liberty.’ James 2:8; 1:25. **And the revelator, half a century after the crucifixion, pronounces a blessing upon them ‘that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.’** Revelation 22:14.

“**The claim that Christ by His death abolished His Father’s law is without foundation. Had it been possible for the law to be changed or set aside, then Christ need not have died to save man from the penalty of sin. The death of Christ, so far from abolishing the law, proves that it is immutable.**”—*Great Controversy*, 465-466.

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

**“Sword of My mouth”:** There is power in the truths of the Bible! **The words of Scripture cut deeply into the conscience,** because it is the Holy Spirit which impresses the heart with those searching truths.

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**“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”** Revelation 2:17.

**“He that hath an ear”:** This means to heed the counsel given! This phrase is found seven times in Revelation 2 and 3. Jesus also said this in Matthew 11:15. This warning is especially for those who are inclined to ignore the messages in God’s Word.

**“The hidden manna”:** Jesus promises those who re-

main faithful, in spite of the persecution, that they will eat of the “hidden manna” and be given a white stone—with a new name engraved on it!

During the 40 years that the Israelites were in the wilderness, God fed them day after day with manna from heaven (Ex. 16). Aaron was told to place some of this manna in a pot, and then put it into the Ark of the Covenant in the most holy place of the tabernacle (Ex. 16:33; Heb. 9:3-4). It remained there, always fresh and never spoiling, as a continual reminder of the care of God over His people. **As we study the Inspired Writings, God feeds us from that hidden manna.**

Unfortunately, there are false shepherds and pastors who feed the flock errors which cannot help anyone. God has given us this warning about the false shepherds of the flock:

“Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, **I am against the shepherds; and I will require My flock at their hand**, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves anymore; for I will deliver My flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. For thus saith the Lord God; **Behold, I, even I, will both search My sheep, and seek them out** . . . I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.”—*Ezekiel 34:10-11, 14.*

**“The white stone”:** That white stone is a promise that God accepts the faithful as His children. In ancient times, each juror was handed a white and black stone. If they voted in favor of the one on trial, they would turn in those white stones; otherwise they would present the black ones. The Investigative Judgment is nearing its conclusion, and we want to be sure that we are given that white stone.

**The white stone with the new name meant that God’s faithful ones were being enrolled in the records of heaven** in spite of the fact that they were persecuted and ejected from the paganizing Christian church which is headquar-

tered in Rome. The faithful were accepted by God, even though they had to flee for their lives into the wilderness.

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#### 4 - THYATIRA A.D. 538 - 1517

**“And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.” Revelation 2:18-19.**

This was the church during the Dark Ages of papal supremacy.

**“Thyatira”**: The word, “Thyatira,” means “sacrifice and humility.” Jesus is speaking directly to His true “church” which has fled into the wilderness. **Because the apostate church had not repented, but had continued practicing wickedness and bringing more and still more pagan practices into the church, Jesus had removed its candlestick.** It was no longer His church.

The faithful fled into desolate places. **Jesus acknowledges the faithful ones as belonging to Him. They are the “true church.”** This is the church which experienced a thousand years of papal persecution from A.D. 538 to 1517, at which time the Reformation began.

This is the only church that contains a recognition of improvement. In spite of difficulties at Thyatira, the church there experienced spiritual growth.

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**“Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols . . . Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one**

of you according to your works.” Revelation 2:20, 22-23.

**“Jezebel”**: But problems still existed; for Satan was determined to destroy the faithful ones who were scattered in far places. They were permitting the errors of Jezebel to enter some of their churches. Who was this person?

Jezebel was the wife of Ahab, one of the most wicked kings of ancient Israel (1 Kgs. 16:31; 18:13; 19:1-2; 21:5-16, 23-25; 2 Kgs. 9:30-37). She brought the worship of Baal into Israel (1 Kgs. 21:25-26; 16:31-33; PK 114). In Bible history, Jezebel represented the power that produced the great apostasy that ultimately led to the destruction of Jerusalem.

**Jezebel also represents that power which produced the great apostasy of the Dark Ages. The apostasy was keyed to Sun worship; since the worship day of Mithra, the ancient pagan Sun god, was Sunday. The bishop of the Christian church at Rome had fully adopted it by the time of Constantine; and, afterward, he persecuted all Christians who continued to keep the Bible Sabbath. Many of the faithful ones who had formerly tried to resist papal demands, under heavy coercion, gradually switched over to Sundaykeeping.**

**Baal worship**—This was the worship of the sun god. We surely do not want to have anything to do with that today! **Sunday sacredness came directly from the ancient mystery religions, through Mithric sun worship, and from there into the papacy.** Baal was the name of the Sun god in Old Testament times

“Baal [was] the sun-god of Phoenicia.”—*Great Controversy*, 583.

“ ‘O Baal, hear us’ . . . Their pleadings are mingled with cursings to their sun-god that he does not send fire for their altars.”—*3 Testimonies*, 282.

But, by the early Christian centuries, the Sun god (originally called Tammus, and later Baal by the Israelites) was named Mithra in the pagan Roman Empire.

**“Commit fornication”**: Jezebel also brought the worship of Ashtoreth (PK 230), the Mother goddess worship of the heathen, back into Israel. **By the time of this period of church history, the worship of the immaculate Virgin had been brought from paganism into the papacy.**

According to the Bible, when God’s people unite with the world and begin worshipping as they do,—they are committing spiritual adultery. We are to be followers of Jesus alone!

“As the stream of Christianity flowed farther from its foundations, it became more and more corrupt, and as the centuries advanced, superstition advanced with them; and . . . tales of purgatory, and pious frauds, and the worship of saints, relics, and images, took the place of pure and simple Christianity: till at length, the Book of God being laid aside for legendary tales, and ‘the traditions of men,’ all these corruptions were collected into a regular system of superstition and oppression.”—*J.C. Woodhouse, The Apocalypse, p. 146.*

**Tradition**—“**Tradition**” is the placing of papal decrees, councils, and the sayings of “saints” above that of Scripture.

“Scripture and Tradition are called the *remote rule of faith*, because the Catholic does not base his faith directly on these sources. **The proximate rule of faith is for him the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, which alone has received from God the authority to interpret infallibly the doctrines** He has revealed, whether these be contained in Scripture or in Tradition.”—*John Laux, A Course in Religion for Catholic High Schools and Academies, Vol. 1, p. 51.*

In the following quotation, “the New Law” means Catholic Tradition:

“Some of the truths which God has revealed and which have always been taught by the Catholic Church, **are not contained in the Bible.** These truths have come down to us by what is called **Tradition** . . .

**“Some of the truths, that have been handed down**

to us by Tradition and are not recorded in the Sacred Scripture, are the following: That there are just seven Sacraments; that there is a Purgatory; that, in the New Law, **Sunday should be kept holy instead of the Sabbath**; that infants should be baptized.

“The truths of Catholic Tradition have been handed down in the Church by means of the **writings of the ‘Fathers of the Church,’** as well as by the **decrees of Councils,** by **approved Creeds,** and by the prayers and ceremonies of the Church.

“However, **it is only the infallible teaching of the Church that secures us against error** as to truths contained in Tradition . . . **The voice of the Church is the voice of God.**”—*Francis J. Butler, Holy Family Series of Catholic Catechisms, p. 63.*

“The origin of our faith is not the Bible alone, but the Church which gives us both the written and the unwritten word . . . So, in the New Law, **Catholics believe some things not in the Scriptures, because of the infallible witness of the Church** as to their divine origin. Why do Protestants accept the Scriptures as inspired? **Why do they honor the first day of the week instead of the seventh?** Why do they baptize children? Contrary to their principles, **they must look outside the Bible to the voice of tradition,** which is not human, but divine, because guaranteed by the divine, infallible witness of the Catholic Church.”—*Bertrand L. Conway, The Question Box Answers, pp. 75-76.*

**Monasteries**—During this period of church history, the monasteries arose. The following statement by an eminent historian reveals how far the Church fell:

“It is abundantly evident from monastic literature that **the great majority of the inmates of monasteries represented a very low type of intellectual, moral, and spiritual life.** Many whose lives had been disreputable sought to hide themselves in monasteries from public contempt. **Given a body of men and women, many of them young and sensually inclined, the great mass devoid of high moral and religious principles, all**

**pledged to celibacy**, ministered to by monastic officials and by clergy who in many cases set the example of vicious living and were ready to debauch their charges, freed to a great extent from outside observation and from the jurisdiction of secular courts, and the moral rottenness of mediaeval monasteries can be easily accounted for.

“Add to this the fact that **the confessors [in the confessionals] were instructed to ask questions that presupposed moral vileness** in the individual and caused vice to be looked upon as a matter of course, that slight disciplinary penance was supposed to make good the gravest breaches of morality, and especially the fact that **many priestly confessors were ready to use their power of absolution for making victims of the weak and the ignorant**, and the wonder would be that any should escape the contagion.”—*A.H. Newman, Manual of Church History, Vol. 1, pp. 453-454.*

***The Error of Original Sin*—Adding to this ongoing work of corruption was the teaching that man cannot escape from sin in this life!**

This strange error was introduced into the papacy by “St.” Augustine (A.D. 354-430), a Catholic monk who could not control his lusts. **He theorized that God did not want people to stop sinning, and that they could not escape from it in this life** because they were said to be “born in sin”; that is, born sinners (“*original sin*”). Therefore, **according to this error, we are not individually responsible for our sins.** (Augustine was canonized for teaching that, outside of the Catholic Church, there is no salvation.)

In contrast, **the Bible truth is that we are born with a fallen nature (which we inherited from Adam), but that we are not born sinful. It is because we choose to sin that we become sinners.**

Through Christ’s sacrifice on the cross and His mediation in the Sanctuary in heaven, He provides enabling grace to those who surrender their lives to Him, so they can resist temptation and overcome sin.

The Bible teaches that we are individually responsible for our own sins and that we do not inherit them from our fathers. It is our decision whether we will cooperate with God in putting them away.

“The soul that sinneth, it shall die. **The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son:** the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. **But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all My statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live,** he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.”—*Ezekiel 18:20-22 (also 18:14, 17-25)*.

“The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: **every man shall be put to death for his own sin.**”—*Deuteronomy 24:16*.

“Every one shall die for his own iniquity.”—*Jeremiah 31:30 (Prov. 9:12; Rom. 2:6; Gal. 6:5, 7)*.

Here are additional passages which disprove the error of Original Sin: Isaiah 3:10-11; Psalm 128:1-2; 1:3-5; 11:4-6; Ecclesiastes 8:12-13; Galatians 6:7-9; Romans 2:6-9; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 6:12.

“**Through belief in Him [Christ] it is our privilege to be partakers of the divine nature, and so escape the corruption that is in the world through lust.** Then we are cleansed from all sin, all defects of character. We need not retain one sinful propensity.”—*7 Bible Commentary, 943*.

“**By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God’s commandments.** When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons, 312*.



“If we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. **The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience.** Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.”—*Desire of Ages*, 668.

When Satan cannot get us to abandon the truth and return to our old sins, he tempts us to imagine that we can safely compromise just a little in order to have peace in our time. But once this is done, Satan more rapidly enters our lives and takes control of us.

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**“But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.” Revelation 2:24, 25.**

**“Thyatira”:** In the letter to this church, Jesus is encouraging those who have obeyed His Word and refused to take part in pleasure seeking, the thirst for power and honor,—and the willingness to compromise with the world. It is only while they do their best to serve and obey Him, that Christ accepts them as His.

**“The depths”:** This means “deeps” or deep things. We are here given the very words which the apostates proudly apply to their own teachings: **“The deep things of Satan.”** These were spiritualistic teachings of the Gnostics and false Christians. Only in obedience to Christ are we safe, “lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Cor. 2:11).

“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities,

against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”—*Ephesians 6:11-12*.

**“The rest”:** This refers to small groups throughout the Dark Ages that sought to remain faithful to God and the Bible. This included the Waldenses (also called Waldensians) on the European continent, and the followers of Wycliffe in England. Upon them, God placed no further burden than to remain faithful to the light that was theirs.

**“Hold fast”:** Yes, we must hold fast to Jesus and His precious Scriptures! We must study and remain close by His side.

“Christ as a son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”—*Hebrews 3:6*.

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**“And he that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” Revelation 2:26-29.**

**“The rod of iron”:** A rod of authority, always held by Christ as He punishes the wicked.

“Thou [Christ] shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”—*Psalms 2:9*.

Of Christ’s Second Advent, we are told:

“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.”—*Revelation 19:15 (Rev. 12:5)*.

**“To shivers”:** This means to break something “to pieces.”

**“Power over the nations”:** Those who on earth have sought for selfish power will, in the end, gain only death

and eternal loss. But those who remain faithful to Jesus will someday have “power over the nations.” What does this mean? According to Revelation 20:4, **during the millennium the redeemed will determine the final sentence of punishment for the wicked, prior to their final death.**

“Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.”—*Daniel 7:22*.

“Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?”—*1 Corinthians 6:2-3*.

**“The morning star”**: What is this star? It is whichever one of the nearby planets (Venus, Jupiter, or Saturn) that happens to shine just before daybreak. The phrase symbolizes the fact that **Jesus is soon to return, and we must prepare for His coming. We must be a “morning star” today—and warn others to come to God and repent before it is too late.** To be given the morning star is to be given a message to bear to the world. In heaven, we will still have this morning star; for we will continue to have a message to share with all the angels and the unfallen worlds about the love of God and how He saved us.

As John Wycliffe was the morning star that preached not long before the Reformation, so we are to do a like work today, just before the return of Christ for His people.

### Revelation 3

## *Letters to the Churches - 2*

**Brief overview**—This chapter covers the history of God’s people in three periods, from A.D. 1517 to the close of human probation.

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## 5 - SARDIS A.D. 1517- 1820

**“And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.” Revelation 3:1-2.**

**“Sardis”:** Sardis means “that which remains.” Jesus tells this church that there are still some good things remaining in it, but they need to be strengthened. By this time, the Protestant churches had cast off domination by the papacy.

**This is the church of Reformation times** and, as such, may be thought of as beginning in 1517 or a little earlier.

**Reformation and afterward**—Although the first Reformers were humble and faithful, eagerly searching the Bible for Heaven-sent truth, eventually **there came a time when their followers stopped seeking for new truth from the Bible. Instead they made “creeds” and decided they would not believe anything not taught by the first Reformers.** The majority lapsed back into worldliness, from the late 1500s onward for centuries. Because of this, Jesus was not able to open to them many new truths from the Bible. He said that far too many of them were spiritually dead.

**The Jesuits**—It was during the Sardis period that the “Society of Jesus” (called the Jesuits), founded by Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556), was skillfully organized into a great force on behalf of the papacy. It was not until 1540 that Pope Paul III gave his approval to this new organization. **The following quotations reveal the spirit of obedience which serve to make the Jesuits such a powerful force in its ongoing attempt to destroy Protestantism.**

“With the formal establishment of the new order in 1540, a *constitution* provided the framework for one of the most totalitarian institutions ever conceived . . .

**Absolute obedience became a mark of the order.** As the [Jesuit] constitution put it [quoting now from the Jesuit Constitution]:

“ ‘Let us with the utmost pains strain every nerve of our strength to exhibit **this virtue of obedience, firstly to the Highest Pontiff, then to the Superiors of the Society . . . by persuading ourselves that all things [commanded] are just,** by all opposing opinion or judgment of our own . . . And let each one persuade himself that they that live under obedience ought to allow themselves to be borne and **ruled by divine providence working through their Superiors exactly as if they were a corpse** which suffers itself to be borne and handled in any way whatsoever; **or just as an old man’s staff which serves him who holds it in his hand wherever and for whatever purpose he wishes to use it.**’ [End of quotation from the *Jesuit Constitution*, which all members must obey.]

“In the course of a long and, in some respects, glorious history **the Jesuits became famous for recovery of Protestant lands for Rome.** They were the epitome of counter-reformation.”—*Frederick A. Norwood, The Development of Modern Christianity since 1500, p. 81.*

***The Council of Trent***—The *Council of Trent* was convened by the pope and continued from December 13, 1545, to December 4, 1563. **Its assigned purpose was to clarify Roman Catholic doctrine in order to strengthen the Church in its fight against Protestantism.** It is generally considered to have been one of the most important councils in the history of the papacy.

**Every basic modern doctrine of Catholicism finds its foundation in the decisions affirmed at the *Council of Trent*.**

“From a doctrinal and disciplinary point of view, it was the most important council in the history of the Roman Church, fixing her distinctive faith and practice in relation to the Protestant Evangelical churches.”—*Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, article entitled “Council of Trent.”*

During the Reformation, the Protestants had urged that all doctrine must be brought to the test of the Inspired Word. And if not found there, it must be rejected. This deep truth lies at the very heart of Protestantism.

But Rome was determined to overthrow that truth and again bring the people into bondage to its errors. How they were to do this was the question; for **there was a division in the Church of Rome over the primacy of Tradition.**

The Roman Catholic Church had always been founded on the words of men (“Tradition”), with a sprinkling of the Word of God (“Scripture”). **They had always declared Tradition to be superior to Scripture in every dispute over worship, doctrine, or practice. But this fact had never been codified in a Catholic council—**until the Council of Trent. The very idea of man’s words being more important than God’s words is an absurd concept that the Church had not dared to state officially—before Trent.

***Del Fosso and Tradition*—“Tradition” is the sayings of men; this is more specifically the decisions of Roman Catholic councils, the decrees of its popes, and the words of its canonized saints. For, according to Canon Law, the words of all three are infallible (as defined dogmatically at the Council of Trent, and later in the First Vatican Council of 1870).**

“Like two sacred rivers flowing from Paradise, the Bible and divine Tradition contain the Word of God, the precious gems of revealed truths. Though these two divine streams are in themselves, on account of their divine origin, of equal sacredness and are both full of revealed truths, still, **of the two, Tradition is to us more clear and safe.**”—*Joseph F. Di Bruno, Catholic Belief, 1884 ed., p. 33. (Di Bruno was an Italian Catholic priest and writer.)*

**There was much bickering over this matter at Trent.** Protestants, during the sixteenth-century Reformation, were making a powerful attack on papal beliefs, which were based on Tradition. **Since Roman Catholic Tradition was nothing more than a hodgepodge collection of**

confused sayings, many of the archbishops and cardinals attending this very important Catholic council naturally hesitated to officially announce that Tradition was the basis of the Roman Catholic Church.

*But then came the deciding point*—and it came as a surprise.

*What is not generally known is that the entire argument was settled in one day:*

When Gaspar del Fosso, the Archbishop of Reggio, stood up and spoke on January 18, 1562, he decided, once and for all, the entire future course of Catholicism.

Rising to his feet, and calling for attention, he wholeheartedly praised Tradition and then made bitter jibes at those bishops who wanted to downgrade its supremacy in the Church.

Since others had already spoken in defense of Tradition, what is it that made del Fosso's speech so decisive? *It was this:*

He first reasoned that the Church of Rome was founded on Tradition—and its beliefs would soon perish without it as their foundation. Then he gave his punch line: He told the assembled delegates that the great proof that the doctrine of "Tradition above Scripture" must be right was *the fact that the Church of Rome had centuries earlier changed the seventh-day Sabbath, which God Himself had commanded, to Sunday*, the first day of the week.

Del Fosso declared that this proved that Tradition was more important than the Bible—*for Church Tradition had presumed to change the very laws of God Himself—and had apparently succeeded!* And what is more, del Fosso climaxed,—*the Protestants were obeying Rome and keeping Sunday also!* That morning, del Fosso made it clear that Sunday sacredness was the pivotal proof of the entire doctrinal structure of Catholicism.

His logical speech settled the matter. The tone of the gathering changed. **Never again, in the councils of Rome, was a question to be raised in regard to the supreme authority of Roman Catholic Tradition; for the fact of**

**Sundaykeeping had settled it.** In their reasoning, (1) the fact that Rome had changed the Sabbath to Sunday and (2) the fact that Protestants carefully obeyed the papacy by keeping it was the “proof” needed to forever establish Rome’s authority.

“Finally, at the last opening [session] on the eighteenth of January, 1562, **their last scruple was set aside**; the Archbishop of Reggio made a speech in which **he openly declared that Tradition stood above Scripture. The authority of the church could not therefore be bound to the authority of the Scriptures, because the church had changed the Sabbath into Sunday, not by the command of Christ but by its own authority.** With this, to be sure, the last illusion was destroyed, and it was declared that Tradition does not signify antiquity, but continual inspiration.”—*Heinrich Holtzman, Canon und Tradition (Canon and Tradition), 1859, p. 263.*

(The logical flaw here is that while large numbers of people and their leaders have, for centuries, accepted a change in God’s law,—*that fact does not make it so!* God made the law and only He can change it! In order to change the seventh day Sabbath to the first day of the week, God would have to redo all of Creation Week—and remake our world!)

***Del Fosso and the Sabbath***—Here is more on del Fosso. In that same address, he also said this:

“The authority of the church is illustrated most clearly by the Scriptures; for while on the one hand she [the church] recommends them, declares to be divine, . . . on the other hand, **the legal precepts in the Scriptures taught by the Lord have ceased by virtue of the same authority [the church].**

“The Sabbath, the most glorious day in the law [he acknowledged it!] has been changed into the Lord’s day, **but it has been changed [alone] by the authority of the church.**”—*Gaspar del Fosso, Archbishop of Reggio, Address in the 17th session of the Council of Trent, January 18, 1562, in Mansi SC, Vol. 33, cols. 529-530.*



*After Trent*—Tragically, the Protestant Reformers, so soon having come out of the Church of Rome, had refused to sacredly observe the Bible Sabbath, which had been kept by most of the “church in the wilderness,”—and clung to the papal holy day on the Sun day, which has no higher authority than the decrees of the papacy. **By this Protestant compromise with a papal doctrine, Rome received new strength in its battle to regain control of the nations.**

The Council of Trent authorized the Jesuits to penetrate royal courts as confessors, establish colleges attended by Protestant youth, and wage open war. Thus began the Hundred Years’ War (a series of wars waged from 1337 to 1453) and the even more devastating Thirty Years’ War.

*The Thirty Years’ War*—**The Thirty Years’ War (1618–1648) was one of the most destructive conflicts in European history.** The war was fought by Catholic nations against Protestant nations, and at times involved most of the countries of Europe. **The pope was determined to regain all of Europe for Catholicism.** An amazing fanaticism encouraged the Catholic forces not to convert those who oppose them, but use a simpler approach: kill them. While he had earlier set the *Dominicans* in charge of the Inquisition, he now told the *Jesuits* to take charge of inciting the Catholic nations of Europe to blot Protestantism out of Europe.

God sent Gustavus II Adolphus, King of Sweden, to come to the aid of the Protestants; and he helped to turn the war in their favor. He knelt and thanked God when he first landed in Germany.

As a result of immense desolation throughout the northern half of Europe, where the war was fought, the exhausted nations finally drew closer to a peace treaty. Enraged at this, the pope (Innocent X, 1644-1655) and his papal nuncio (Fabiana Chigi) demanded that the war continue until the last Protestant had been slain!

**When the Peace of Westphalia (1648) was finally signed, that same pope issued a bull declaring that her-**

etics should be slain. In it he decreed that no one was bound to observe the provisions of the treaty, and he demanded a resumption of that terrible war.

**“The extent of the destruction of life through the Thirty Years’ War cannot be estimated.** If we take into account the multitudes who died of starvation and exposure, the hundreds of thousands of women and children who were slain in the sacking and destroying of the towns and cities, the fearful waste of life that must have been involved in camp following [“camp following” was begging and prostitution by women and children following armies, in return for food to keep alive], the deaths caused by the war would amount to many millions. In Bohemia, at the beginning of the war, there was a population of two million, of whom about eight-tenths were Protestant; at the close of the war there were about 800,000 Catholics and no Protestants. **Taking Germany and Austria together, we may safely say that the population was reduced by one-half, if not by two-thirds. And the deaths were in most cases the result of untold sufferings and as horrible as we can conceive . . .** Businesses of all kinds had been entirely destroyed. Agriculture had equally suffered. Livestock had been almost exterminated . . . Desolation was everywhere.”—*A.H. Newman, Manual of Church History, Vol. 2, pp. 410-411.*

And all because the papacy was determined to wipe Protestants from the face of Europe. Written on the side of the Archives Building in Washington, D.C., is the statement, “Those who refuse to study history will be condemned to repeat it.”

**In the books of Daniel and Revelation, the God of heaven has foretold in startling detail the rise, activities, and fall of this, the most massive apostasy in Christian history, which ruled Europe for over a thousand years.**

*Positions of leading Reformers—Here are several statements which clarify certain doctrinal beliefs held by the leading Protestant leaders of this period:*

Andreas Karlstadt (or Karolostadt; 1486-1541) was a

German Christian theologian during the Protestant Reformation. He was head of the theology department of Wittenberg University; and, in 1511, he became chancellor. In 1512, he awarded Martin Luther his doctorate.

In 1520, Pope Leo X (1513-1521) issued the papal bull, *Exsurge Domine*, that threatened Luther and Karlstadt with excommunication and condemned several of their theses. Both Reformers remained steadfast and excommunication followed, 23 days before Leo's death, in a bull issued June 15, 1520.

Karlstadt and Luther did not agree on several doctrinal points. One was the seventh-day Sabbath, which Karlstadt believed should be kept instead of Sunday.

**“God says without distinction, ‘Remember that you observe the seventh day’ . . . Concerning Sunday it is known that men have instituted it.”—Andreas Karlstadt, *Concerning the Sabbath and Commanded Holidays*, Chap. 4 (1524).**

“God has given to mankind all commandments and prohibitions that man may . . . understand how God created him in His image, and that he may become as God is, that is, holy . . . As it is written: Ye shall become holy and be holy. I, your God and Lord, am holy. Says God: keep My commandments and do them . . . Hence **the Sabbath is instituted by God so that we may desire to become holy as God is holy, and rest as He did rest . . . That is the spiritual reason for the Sabbath which is commanded in the honor of God, to our benefit . . .** Whoever turns his eyes upon his own advantage, he sullies himself, makes himself unholy, and neglects the reason for the Sabbath . . .

“If a soul does not become aware of its . . . wickedness and unholiness, it is far from and foreign to the purpose of the instituted Sabbath and God hates their Sabbath. . . For in all commandments it is the purpose and the spirit which must be kept in mind . . .

“The above-stated purpose is eternal and unchangeable . . . This purpose is spiritual, invisible and eternal. Nor is man in this way Lord of the Sabbath; he is rather

a servant of God or a servant of this Sabbath. Therefore man cannot without noticeable loss depart from the purpose of the Sabbath even the width of his hair. The faith and love of God look to this purpose and just as man may not without his destruction shorten faith or transgress against God's love, so **he may not transgress God's Sabbath without damnation.**"—*Ibid.*, Chap. 2.

**Martin Luther was trying to dig his way out of a great pile of papal error; and, in the process, he did not grasp all the truths of the Bible.** Luther rejected Karlstadt's discovery of the Bible Sabbath and remained with Sunday sacredness. His influence in this matter affected millions of Christians throughout later centuries. In one somewhat sarcastic comment, Luther wrote these significant words:

"Thanks be unto the pious Paul and Isaiah, that they so long ago freed us from these factitious spirits [people refusing to yield to authority] . . . Indeed, if Karlstadt were to write further about the Sabbath, Sunday would have to give way, and the Sabbath, i.e., Saturday, must be kept holy."—*Martin Luther*, "Wider die himmlischen Propheten," in his *Sammtliche Schriften*, Vol. 20, col. 148.

**Johann Eck, the leading Catholic orator and debater against Luther, wrote a book of objections to Protestant teachings and practice which others could use in debates.**

"The Scripture teaches 'Remember that you sanctify the day of the Sabbath; six days shall you labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God,' etc. But **the Church [of Rome] has changed the Sabbath into the Lord's day by its own authority, concerning which you [Protestants] have no scripture** [in support of your Sundaykeeping] . . .

"**The Sabbath is commanded many times by God; neither in the Gospels nor in Paul is it declared that the Sabbath has ceased;** nevertheless the Church has instituted the Lord's day through the tradition."—*Johann Eck, Handbook of Common Places against the Lutherans*, 1533.

**The Augsburg Confession is the primary confession**

**of faith of the Lutheran Church and one of the most important documents of the Lutheran Reformation.** It was written in both German and Latin, and was presented by a number of German rulers and free-cities at the Diet of Augsburg on June 25, 1530. The Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (1500-1558, ruled 1519-1556) had called on the Princes and Free Territories in Germany to explain their religious convictions, in an attempt to restore religious and political unity in the Holy Roman Empire and rally support against the Turkish invasion. The Augsburg Confession is the fourth document contained in the Lutheran *Book of Concord*.

On April 3 the elector of Saxony and the Reformers started from Torgau and reached Coburg on April 23. There Luther was left behind because he was an outlaw, according to the Diet of Worms. The rest reached Augsburg on May 2. On the journey, Melanchthon worked on an “apology” (afterward called the Augsburg Confession) and sent his draft to Luther at Coburg on May 11; and Luther approved it. **The Augsburg Confession became the primary confessional document for the Lutheran movement.**

**In the following remarkable statement, the German princes acknowledged that the seventh-day Sabbath was the correct worship day.** Unfortunately, not long after this gathering, sporadic and almost unending war by Catholics against Protestants eventually began and continued until the Peace of Augsburg in 1648. Thus, the doctrinal change from Sunday back to the Bible Sabbath never occurred.

“Besides these things, there is a controversy whether Bishops or Pastors have power to institute ceremonies in the Church and to make laws . . . **They allege the change of the Sabbath into the Lord’s day, contrary, as it seemeth to the Decalogue; and they have no example more in their mouths than the change of the Sabbath. They will needs have the Church’s power to be very great, because it hath dispensed with a precept of the Decalogue.**

“But of this question ours [our side, the Protestants]

do thus teach: that the Bishops have no power to ordain anything contrary to the Gospel, as was showed before.”—*Augsburg Confession (1530), Part 2, art. 7, “Of Ecclesiastical Power,” Philip Schaff, The Creeds of Christendom, Vol. 3, pp. 63-64.*

It is of interest that **Roger Williams, the advocate of religious liberty in the American Colonies and founder of Rhode Island, also recognized the truth about the Sabbath.** (The Seventh Day Baptists started their first church in the Colonies of Rhode Island, in 1671, through Steven Mumford, who first settled there in 1664.)

**“You know yourselves do not keep the Sabbath, that is the seventh day . . .** All the Romanists confess, saying, viz.: that there is no express scripture, first, for infant’s baptism, nor, second, for abolishing the seventh day, and instituting of the eighth day worship, but that is at the churches’ pleasure.”—*Roger Williams, Letter to Major John Mason of Connecticut, June 22, 1670, in Letters of Roger Williams, Vol. 6, pp. 346-347.*

*In regard to obedience to the Ten Commandments, many Protestant leaders, as well as official church documents, have declared that it is binding and has not been abolished, and must be kept. Here are statements by Luther, Wesley, Moody, and Billy Graham:*

**“I wonder exceedingly how it came to be imputed to me that I should reject the law or the ten commandments . . .** Can anyone think that sin exists where there is no law? Whoever abrogates [abolishes] the law, must of necessity abrogate sin also.”—*Martin Luther, “Against the Antinomians,” secs. 6, 8, in his Sammtliche Schriften, Vol. 20, cols. 1613-1614.*

**“The ten commandments were not only before Moses but also before Abraham** and all the patriarchs, also they have gone over the whole world. Even if no Moses had ever come, and Abraham had not been born, still **in all mankind the Ten Commandments would have had to reign from the beginning,** as they have done and still do.”—*Martin Luther, “Against the Sabbathkeepers,” in his Sammtliche Schriften, Vol. 20.*

“God threatens to punish all who transgress these Commandments [the Ten Commandments]. We should, therefore, fear His anger, and do nothing against such Commandments. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep them. **We should therefore, love and trust in Him, and gladly obey His Commandments.**”—*Martin Luther, Luther’s Small Catechism (1529), in Creeds of Christendom, Vol. 3, p. 77.*

“**The moral law, contained in the Ten Commandments and enforced by the Prophets, He did not take away . . . This is a law which never can be broken,** which stands fast as the faithful witness in heaven. The moral [law] stands on an entirely different foundation from the ceremonial or ritual law . . . **Every part of this [moral] law must remain in force upon all mankind, and in all ages,** as not depending either on time or place, or any other circumstances liable to change, but on the nature of God, and the nature of man, and their unchangeable relation to each other.”—*John Wesley, Sermon 25, “Upon Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount,” in the Works of John Wesley, Vol. 5, pp. 311-312.*

“**The commandments of God given to Moses in the mount at Horeb are as binding today as ever they have been** since the time when they were proclaimed in the hearing of the people . . . Jesus never condemned the law and the prophets, but He did condemn those who did not obey them. Because He gave new commandments, it does not follow that He abolished the old. Christ’s explanation of them made them all the more searching. In His Sermon on the Mount, He carried the principles of the commandments beyond the mere letter. He unfolded them and showed that they embraced more, that they are positive as well as prohibitive.”—*Dwight L. Moody, Weighed and Wanting, p. 15.*

“Men may cavil as much as they like about other parts of the Bible, but **I have never met an honest man that found fault with the Ten Commandments.** Infidels may mock the Lawgiver and reject Him . . . but they can’t help admitting that the commandments are right . . .

**“If God created this world, He must make some laws to govern it.** In order to make life safe we must have good laws; there is not a country the sun shines upon that does not possess laws. Now this is God’s law. It has come from on high, and infidels and skeptics have to admit that it is pure.”—*Ibid.*, p. 11.

**“These ten commandments are not ten different laws; they are one law.** If I am being held up in the air by a chain with ten links and I break one of them, down I come, just as surely as if I break the whole ten. If I am forbidden to go out of an enclosure, it makes no difference at what point I break through the fence. ‘Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.’ **The golden chain of obedience is broken if one link is missing.**”—*Ibid.*, p. 119.

“Like Wesley, I find that I must preach the law and judgment before I can preach grace and love . . . **The Ten Commandments . . . are the moral laws of God for the conduct of people. Some think they have been revoked. That is not true.** Christ taught the law. They are still in effect today. God has not changed.”—*Billy Graham, sermons on the Ten Commandments, quoted in George Burnham and Lee Fisher, Billy Graham and the New York Crusade, p. 108.*

***Preterism and Futurism***—As part of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, two Jesuit scholars were assigned the task of eliminating the papacy from Daniel and Revelation!

***Preterism*** came from the mind of the Spanish Jesuit Luis de Alcasar (1554-1613) during the Counter-Reformation. He wrote down his theory in his *Vestigatio arcani sensus in Apocalypsi*, which was first published in 1614.

**His theory was that all the prophecies in Daniel and Revelation were fulfilled by the end of the first century, within five years after the Apostle John wrote the book of Revelation. According to this thinking, none of the prophecies in Daniel and Revelation apply to the papacy. Many**



Protestants today believe this theory.

*Futurism* came from Francisco **Ribera** (1537-1591), who was a Spanish Jesuit doctor of theology. He began writing a lengthy commentary in 1585 on the book of Revelation, entitled *In Sacrum Beati Ioannis Apostoli*, and published it about the year 1590. He died in 1591 at the age of fifty-four; so he was not able to expand on his work or write any other commentaries on Revelation. **In order to remove the Catholic Church from consideration as the Antichrist power, Ribera proposed that the first few chapters of Revelation applied to ancient pagan Rome, and the rest he limited to a yet future period of 3½ literal years, immediately prior to the second coming.** He wrote that the Antichrist would be a single individual who would persecute and blaspheme the saints of God, and try to abolish the Christian religion.

Because of **Jesuit penetration into many Protestant denominations, the persecutions during church history, an ignorance of the facts, and a desire to be on good terms with Rome, a large number of Protestant denominations today adhere to futurism; this clearly matches the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. They teach that the Antichrist is soon to appear and will fulfill the Bible prophecies formerly applied to papal Rome.**

This present book teaches *historism* (sometimes called *historicism*); this is the belief held by Christians throughout the Dark Ages, that **the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation are to be interpreted just as they read—historically, down through the centuries, without trying to jam them far off into the past or throw them far into the future.** (*For more on Preterism and Futurism, see comments on Daniel 8:25.*)

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**“Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they**

**shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy.”  
Revelation 3:3-4.**

**“Hold fast and repent”:** Jesus is here reminding them that the first Reformers began by searching the Word of God and rediscovering the truths which the papacy had taken from the church. Those who afterward continued doing this would gain a great blessing. But, unfortunately, many found it easier to compromise with those around them.

**“ ‘Hold fast.’ This does not mean, Hold fast to your sins; but, Hold fast to the comfort, the faith, the hope, that God has given you in His Word.** Never be discouraged. A discouraged man can do nothing. Satan is seeking to discourage you, telling you it is of no use to serve God, that it does not pay, and that it is just as well to have pleasure and enjoyment in this world. But ‘what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?’ You may have worldly pleasure at the expense of the future world; but can you afford to pay such a price?”—*7 Bible Commentary, 959.*

This next quotation is a fabulous one!

**“ ‘And repent.’ The life we live is to be one of continual repentance and humility. We need to repent constantly, that we may be constantly victorious. When we have true humility, we have victory.** The enemy never can take out of the hand of Christ the one who is simply trusting in His promises. **If the soul is trusting and working obediently, the mind is susceptible to divine impressions, and the light of God shines in, enlightening the understanding.** What privileges we have in Christ Jesus!”—*7 Bible Commentary, 959.*

**Christ told them (the church at Sardis) that there remained a few faithful ones in it; and, if they would overcome sin through the enabling grace of Christ,** their names would not be removed from His Book of Life.

During the “Great Advent Awakening” which began in the 1830s, a small, humble group that chose to keep studying and obeying the Word of God, instead of clinging to popular traditions, began earnestly studying the books of

Daniel and Revelation.

**“Come upon you as a thief”:** We must constantly be on guard! We never know when we wake up what we will meet that day. Begin each day with God and walk closely by His side all through it!

“The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. **But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief . . . Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.**”—*1 Thessalonians 5:2-4, 6.*

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**“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. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”** Revelation 3:5-6.

**“Not blot out”:** A garment of purest white will be given to the faithful in heaven, and their names will not be blotted out of the Book of Life. It is during the Investigative Judgment, which began in 1844, that the life of everyone who has ever professed faith in God is examined and the decision is made whether to retain his name in that book or blot it out. **Those who, in the strength of Christ, have repented of their sins and put them away have their sins blotted out of the book of sin and their names retained in the book of life.** The names of those who chose to remain in their sins are blotted out of the book of life and entered into the book of death.

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.”—*Acts 3:19 (Isa. 44:22).*

“Let them [those who continue in sin] be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.”—*Psalms 69:28.*

It is urgent that we carefully listen to these warnings

which are given to the seven churches.

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### 6 - PHILADELPHIA 1830-1850

**“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie, behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.” Revelation 3:7-9.**

**“Philadelphia”**: This city in Asia Minor, located about 30 miles southeast of Sardis, was founded before 138 B.C. and was named for Attalus II Philadelphus, the ruler over the district of Pergamum at that time. The name, which means “brotherly love,” came from his kind manner and deep love for others.

**This is the church of the Advent Movement of the late 1700s and early 1800s.** Many were opening God’s Word in order to gain fresh light. Especially at that time were the books of Daniel and Revelation studied.

**This is one of the two churches which Jesus said nothing negative.** (The other is Smyrna.) They were studying God’s Word and sharing what they were learning with others. Oh, that all might do that today!

**“Synagogue”**: Unfortunately, as in every reformatory movement, **there were those who, clinging to errors and traditions, were opposing these faithful souls.** These were the popular churches of the time who rejected the great truths about the Second Advent, and also the light about the Sanctuary and the Bible Sabbath. Those in the Sardis church who appeared to be alive spiritually, but were “dead” (3:1), are now (3:9) declared to be fallen so far as to be called the “synagogue [church] of Satan.” They

are not part of the Philadelphian Church. Oh, let us cling to Jesus and continue to study and obey the truths He shows us in Scripture; so that we will be safe in the days ahead.

**“An open door”:** The door into the Most Holy Place was opened at the same time that Jesus shut the door into the first apartment of the heavenly Sanctuary. The great Day of Atonement had begun! This is discussed in more detail in Daniel 8:14 and 7:3 in this present book. In addition, *Great Controversy*, chapters 23 and 24 (available from this publisher), also explains this in detail.

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; **let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith**, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. **Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised.**”—*Hebrews 10:19-23*.

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**“Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”** Revelation 3:10-11.

**“Hold that fast”:** We dare not forsake Christ and drift out into the world! Notice that Jesus is here speaking about His soon coming. He is encouraging the little group to cling to the Bible truth they had just learned—that His coming is near. **In spite of their great disappointment in 1844, they patiently kept studying the Bible for further light; and they learned the truth, as foretold in the prophecy of Daniel 8:14, about the “cleansing of the Sanctuary” in heaven** which must begin at the close of the 2300 year prophecy.

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**“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God: and I will write upon him My new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” Revelation 3:12-13.**

**“A pillar in the temple”:** A symbolic “pillar” would, of course, be part of a symbolic temple. The word for “temple” here is *naos*, which means the inner sanctuary containing the holy and most holy places, and not to the whole complex of buildings connected with it. Therefore this promise means that the overcomer will hold a permanent and important place in the very presence of God.

**“Ye are God’s building.”—1 Corinthians 3:9.**

**“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”—1 Peter 2:5 (Ps. 65:4; 92:13).**

**“Go no more out”:** Those who cling to Jesus and His truths on earth now will remain with Him in heaven forever, never again to wander off into sin.

**“Name of the city”:** The humble, obedient children of God will be enrolled as citizens of the New Jerusalem, and will inherit a place in it someday.

**“The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads.”—Revelation 22:3-4.**

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## **7 - LAODICEA 1852 TO END OF PROBATION**

**“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth.”**

**Revelation 3:14-16.**

**“Beginning of the creation of God”:** This word, in the Greek, means “beginner” of the Creation of God. Christ and the Father created all things.

**“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.”—John 1:1-3.**

**“For by Him [Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether [they be] thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.”—Colossians 1:16-17.**

**“Laodicea”:** It is very significant that **this is the only one of the seven churches about which Jesus had nothing good to say. This church period is our time in history, starting about 1852;** and it is important that we understand this message. **Laodicea means “Judged.” We today live in the time of the Investigative Judgment!** It is now in progress; and soon, none know how soon, it will end.

**“Lukewarm”:** This church is in a tragic situation; for it has become very worldly, yet it imagines that it is doing very well and is fully accepted by God.

**“Spew them”:** Because of this, Jesus says **He is going to spew them out of His mouth.** Spitting them out of His mouth means He will not plead for them when their names come up in the investigative judgment. Without Jesus to plead on their behalf—they are lost, with no hope ever to see heaven. *We dare not remain in the Laodicean condition!*

**“How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.”—1 Kings 18:21.**

**“No man can serve two masters:** for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to

the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”—*Matthew 6:24*.

**Jesus strongly urges them to repent of their sins and return to Him before it is too late!** But tragically, at the very time in history when they should be preparing for His coming and warning others that it is very near, the Laodiceans are becoming even more compromising and worldly.

**“What stronger delusion can beguile the mind than the pretense that you are building on the right foundation** and that God accepts your works, when in reality you are working out many things according to worldly policy and are sinning against Jehovah? Oh, **it is a great deception, a fascinating delusion, that takes possession of minds when men who have once known the truth mistake the form of godliness for the spirit and power thereof;** when they suppose that they are rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing, while in reality they are in need of everything.”—8 *Testimonies*, 249-250.

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**“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.”** Revelation 3:17-18.

**“Sayest, I am rich”:** Laodicea was a wealthy town, and had experienced no persecution. The spiritual Laodiceans have the same problem. They are also “increased with goods” and imagine that they “have need of nothing” else but that which the world offers them.

“There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.”—*Proverbs 13:7*.

What is the solution? It is to **believe the urgent warn-**



ings in the message to the Laodiceans, and act upon them! It is to accept the fact that they are actually poor, blind, and unclothed.

Christ Jesus tells the Laodiceans that **they must, in humbleness of heart, repent of their sins and put them away.** They need to obtain that which Jesus offers them:

**“The gold”:** Instead of seeking for the riches of the world, we need to come to Jesus to obtain true gold, the riches of a godly character which will last forever. We need the “faith which works by love” (Gal. 5:6) and purifies the soul.

**“Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith,** and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?”—*James 2:5.*

**“The gold tried in the fire is faith that works by love.** Only this can bring us into harmony with God. We may be active, we may do much work; but **without love, such love as dwelt in the heart of Christ, we can never be numbered with the family of heaven.**”—*Christ’s Object Lessons, 158.*

**“Tried in the fire”:** Literally “fired out of fire;” that is, gold that has come out of the fire with its dross burned away.

**“But He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”**—*Job 23:10.*

**“The white raiment”:** This clothing of purest white is the righteousness of Christ. (We are told that the ancient city of Laodicea was famous for its woolen cloth.)

**“The white raiment is purity of character,** the righteousness of Christ imparted to the sinner. This is indeed a garment of heavenly texture, **that can be bought only of Christ for a life of willing obedience.**”—*4 Testimonies, 88.*

We do not want to be like the man in the parable who was cast out because he did not have on the special garment which had been provided for him (Matt. 22:11-13).

**“The eyesalve”:** The eyesalve is **permitting the Holy**

Spirit to teach and guide us, so we can once again recognize right from wrong. The purpose is to **open our eyes to our own true condition**, so that we will seek help from Jesus.

**“The eyesalve is that wisdom and grace which enables us to discern between the evil and the good, and to detect sin under any guise. God has given His church eyes which He requires them to anoint with wisdom, that they may see clearly . . . The divine eyesalve will impart clearness to the understanding.”—4 Testimonies, 88-89.**

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

**“I rebuke”:** With deepest love, Jesus tells them that He rebukes their sins because He wants them to return to Him before it is too late!

These messages apply to each of us today. **In the strength of Christ, we must repent and put away our sins. We must accept the white raiment of His character, the gold of deep faith and love for Jesus, and the “eyesalve” to open our eyes to what we need to study, learn, and do at this hour in history—just before time ends. We need to diligently study the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy writings and obey what we find there.**

**“And chasten”:** **The difficulties of this life are preparing us for the next!**

**“Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, and to fear Him. For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills.”—Deuteronomy 8:5-7.**

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**“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him,**

and will sup with him, and he with Me.” Revelation 3:20.

**“If any man open the door”:** The Laodicean message is a letter from Christ to each of us individually. Will we individually accept that which He offers? Will we dedicate our lives anew to Him, to obey Him to the end? If so, the promise is given that He will come and take up His abode with us individually!

**“If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.”—John 14:23.**

Some will accept the Laodicean message; others will reject it. The decision lies with each one of us.

**Some will break away from following the world, and will invite Jesus to come in and live with them.** In humble obedience, they will daily follow and love the truth of God’s Holy Word. They will refuse to follow the laws of man that would force them to disobey God’s Law and break His Sabbath day. **In the final test, they will stand true to Jesus; for, day by day right now, they had been making that decision.**

**The Laodicean message is not one of unconditional rejection, any more than those addressed to the other “churches.”** If the spiritual poverty of the Laodiceans were beyond solving, they would not be offered “gold” by the True Witness. If their spiritual eyesight were beyond remedy, He would not offer them the heavenly “eyesalve.” If their spiritual “nakedness” were beyond hope, He would not offer them His own “white raiment.”

“Says the true Witness, ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock.’ **Every warning, reproof, and entreaty in the Word of God, or through His delegated messengers, is a knock at the door of the heart; it is the voice of Jesus, asking for entrance.** With every knock unheeded, your determination to open becomes weaker and weaker. **If the voice of Jesus is not heeded at once, it becomes confused in the mind with a multitude of other voices,** the world’s care and business engross the attention, and conviction dies away. **The heart**

becomes less impressible, and lapses into a perilous unconsciousness of the shortness of time, and of the great eternity beyond.

**“The heavenly Guest is standing at your door, while you are piling up obstructions to bar His entrance. Jesus is knocking through the prosperity He gives you. He loads you with blessings to test your fidelity, that they may flow out from you to others. Will you permit your selfishness to triumph? Will you squander God’s talents, and lose your soul through idolatrous love of the blessings He has given?”—7 Bible Commentary, 966-967.**

Here are the concluding words for Laodiceans:

**“There is hope for our churches if they will heed the message given to the Laodiceans.”—7 Bible Commentary, 966.**

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**“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” Revelation 3:21-22.**

***“To him that overcometh”***: All who, by clinging to Christ and in His enabling strength, resist temptation will sit with Him in the kingdom of heaven someday. That is what we want. That is what we must have! Anything short of that will mean eternal loss.

**Each of the seven messages to the churches of Revelation 2 and 3 concludes with an appeal and a promise. It is highly significant that this promise is always to the “overcomers.”**

***What is an overcomer?***—An overcomer is overcoming sin in his life; he is not yielding to it! There are those who claim that all we need do is profess faith in Christ, and that will save us. But this is not the teaching of the Bible. Our thoughts, words, and conduct are very important in determining our destiny!

Jesus said, “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”—*Matthew 12:36-37.*

**Not only our words but also our actions are important.** It will accomplish nothing to go around saying, “Down with the law, I am saved by grace alone!” For the Bible teaches a far different message.

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: **Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment,** with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”—*Ecclesiastes 12:13-14.*

**Read again each of the seven promises to overcomers:** Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21. Each one points to the same conclusion: **It is the wonderful, enabling grace of Christ in our lives that strengthens us, day by day, to overcome.** Only He can keep us from veering off into sin; only He can lift us out of our sinful selfishness and give us a blameless character like His. Only this can make us fit to enter the gates of God’s kingdom.

**And here is the eighth promise to overcomers:**

“**He that overcometh shall inherit all things;** and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.”—*Revelation 21:7.*

“**He who repents of his sin and accepts the gift of the life of the Son of God, cannot be overcome.** Laying hold by faith of the divine nature, he becomes a child of God. He prays, he believes. **When tempted and tried, he claims the power that Christ died to give, and overcomes through His grace.** This every sinner needs to understand. He must repent of his sins, he must believe in the power of Christ, and accept that power to save and to keep him from sin.”—*Sons and Daughters of God, 349.*

“**Sit with Me in My throne**”: What a glorious heritage is ours: to someday be with Jesus—and to be with Him

forever!

**“We are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”—Romans 8:16-18 (2 Tim. 2:12; Luke 22:28-30; John 12:26).**

## Revelation 4

# A View into Heaven

*Brief overview*—This is the first of two transitional chapters which introduces us to a scene in heaven, where all are praising God.

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**“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.” Revelation 4:1-2.**

**“Was opened”:** This means “was standing open.”

In his vision **John saw heaven opened and a great voice told him to come and see what was there. He saw the great throne room of God in heaven, bright and full of beautiful colors.**

**“If we are true to our vow [of dedication to God], there is opened to us a door of communication with heaven—a door that no human hand or satanic agency can close.”—Faith I Live By, 146.**

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**“And He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about**

**the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.” Revelation 4:3.**

**“A rainbow”**: You may recall that **the rainbow was first given to mankind as a special sign of promise at the end of the Flood**, as Noah and his family were leaving the Ark. It symbolized the fact that God, as He promised, would never again use a flood of water to destroy the earth. The rainbow around the throne of God reminds us that, **while God is just, He is also merciful. He not only asks us to obey Him, but He provides the enabling grace so that we can obey Him.**

**“Jasper and sardine”**: Red (in the sardius, or sardine stone) was a symbol of royalty, and red and purple (in the jasper stone) were usually worn by kings.

Red also symbolizes Calvary, where Christ shed His blood on our behalf. **When red is mingled with blue (making purple), we view God’s justice**; for both justice and mercy are in the working out of the plan of salvation.

**“An emerald”**: This beautiful stone is deep green and represents the chlorophyll in leaves—that quality of life which provides food for every living creature. In this verse, **green is a symbol of the Source of life, which is God and Christ.**

All three of these stones were in the breastplate of the high priest (Ex. 28:17-20): the sardius, emerald, and jasper. It is of interest that the throne which Ezekiel saw (Eze. 1:26) had the appearance of a sapphire stone, which is blue.

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**“And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.” Revelation 4:4.**

**“The elders”**: The twenty-four “elders” sitting around the throne of God represent His people from both Old and New Testament times. In the Old Testament, there were the 12 tribes of Israel; and, in the New, there were 12 disciples.

These “elders” are human beings, probably the ones that were raised at the resurrection of Christ (Matt. 27:52-53). We are told that they thank God for redeeming them from the earth (Rev. 5:9). According to the marginal reading of Ephesians 4:8, when Christ ascended to heaven, He took some of the faithful who had died and been raised at His resurrection with Him to heaven.

These elders are mentioned twelve times in heavenly scenes in Revelation, and are frequently mentioned as noticing what is happening, asking questions, and praising God (Rev. 4:4, 10; 5:5, 6, 8, 11, 14; 7:11, 13; 11:16; 14:3; 19:4).

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**“And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.” Revelation 4:5.**

**“Out of the throne”:** Heaven is a busy place, with its activity, here symbolized by **“lightnings and thunderings,”** which indicates speed of travel and **“voices”** reporting to God and departing on new missions. Although working in an infinite calm, God is in constant contact with the entire universe; and He orders that which is the best for everyone. Everything is done amid deep love, courtesy, and care; yet the needs of all are met. Other Bible writers in vision have also said this regarding the Voice of God:

“He thundereth with the voice of His excellency . . . God thundereth marvellously with His voice; great things doeth He, which we cannot comprehend.”—*Job 37:4-5 (also Ps. 29:3-4; Eze. 43:2).*

**“Seven lamps”:** The seven candlesticks (Rev. 1:12-13, 20) are the same as the seven lamps of God described here. **Both represent the faithful people of God on earth, who are burning, shining lights to the world, revealing the truths of salvation in Christ.** They are symbolized as standing right in front of the throne of God—receiving His direct attention.

Remember that all heaven is working to help you.



**“And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.” Revelation 4:6.**

**“Four beasts”**: Before the throne are symbolized four “beasts” full of eyes. **The Greek here means “living creatures.”** These are not animals, but intelligent persons. All the eyes reveal that they are very intelligent and very alert to what is happening. (We find something similar in Ezekiel 1 and 10.) **These represent the angels of God, which are unceasingly working for our salvation.**

**“Sea of glass”**: This is not actual glass, but a broad expanse resembling glass for its transparency; something solid like crystal. In Revelation 15:2, it is mingled with fire. In Revelation 21:21, it is golden in color.

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

**Four faces**: These four faces are very similar to those described in Ezekiel 1:10 and 10:14.

“Every one had four faces, and every one had four wings . . . As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle.”—*Ezekiel 1:6, 10 (also 10:14).*

**“Lion”**: The lion symbolizes sovereignty or royalty. **It represents the sovereignty of God and of Christ** (who is also the “lion of the tribe of Judah” in Revelation 5:5). In regard to us, it might also symbolize the fact that **the redeemed will someday reign with Christ in heaven.**

**“Calf or ox”**: The calf or ox is a symbol of great, enduring strength. These animals were also used in the

sacrificial services. As such, they can also represent the sacrifices of God's faithful ones on earth, as well as their determination to remain true to Jesus regardless of consequences.

**“Face of a man”**: The human face would be the highest symbol of the Eternal. **Supreme intelligence, above that of all others, resides in the Godhead.** It also symbolizes the fact that **it is human beings that Christ died to save.**

**“Eagle”**: The eagle is a symbol of great speed in what he does and a penetrating eye which can see afar. We on earth should try to emulate **the decisiveness and foresight** of the eagle.

Jewish tradition declared that the four forms in Ezekiel's vision were the standards borne by the tribes of Reuben, Judah, Ephraim, and Dan when they encamped in the wilderness. While Numbers 2:2 said that each tribe had its own standard, the idea that some had these four symbols is probably a later imaginary Jewish tradition.

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**“And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” Revelation 4:8.**

**“Holy, holy, holy”**: Utter purity, holiness, kindness is the hallmark of Divinity. We want to live in such a way that our lives will also bring glory and honor to God. In heaven, we will praise God and Christ through the ages for what they have both done to save us.

“And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory.”—*Isaiah 6:3.*

**“Wings”**: In Bible prophecy, wings is an indication of great speed in traveling or carrying a message, from one place to another.

In the above passage, each of the four living creatures has six wings. In Daniel 7:6, the leopard representing

Greece had four wings. The cherubim in Ezekiel's vision each had four wings (Eze. 1:6; 10:21); whereas the seraphim of Isaiah 6:2 had six. **The wings represent the speed with which God's heavenly messengers travel on their errands.**

Not only do wings represent the speed with which God can move (Ps. 18:10), but **wings also represent the caring protection which God gives to His faithful ones**, like that of an eagle above its young on the nest.

“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, **and how I bare you on eagles' wings**, and brought you unto Myself. **Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant** [My law; Ex. 34:27-28], then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine.”—*Exodus 19:4-5*.

“As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, **spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings**, so the Lord alone did lead him.”—*Deuteronomy 32:11-12*.

“A full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, **under whose wings thou art come to trust.**”—*Ruth 2:12*.

“Keep me as the apple of the eye, **hide me under the shadow of Thy wings.**”—*Psalms 17:8 (Ps. 36:7 identical)*.

“**In the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge**, until these calamities be overpast.”—*Psalms 57:1 (Ps. 34:7-8; 61:4; 63:7; 91:4)*.

The final message, given by God's people to all the world, will travel on eagle's wings. “That which hath wings shall tell the matter” (Eccl. 10:20). It will go especially rapidly during the final crisis, just prior to the close of human probation. Modern methods of communication and transportation will help speed it on its way. God's faithful ones will be “under Christ's wings” of protection, as they travel everywhere with the final message to the inhabitants of earth.

“But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their

strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”—*Isaiah 40:31*.

**“Rest not”**: The divine power upholding the universe never relaxes. **The care of God and Christ for Their people on earth never ceases.**

“I will say of the Lord, **He is my refuge and my fortress**: my God; in Him will I trust.”—*Psalm 91:2*.

**“Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.** The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.”—*Psalm 121:4-5*.

**“Was, and is, and is to come”**: “Is to come” is “which will be.” **Each member of the Godhead is an eternal Presence**, having existed from eternity past through eternity future, without beginning or ending. Each one is therefore the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning of all things and the One without end (Rev. 1:8).

“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, **even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.**”—*Psalm 90:2*.

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**“And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to Him that sat on the throne, who liveth forever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”** Revelation 4:9-11.

**“Give thanks”**: The angels of heaven, as well as men, owe deep thanks to God—for He has given all His creatures life, and He continually sustains that life.

**“Who liveth forever”**: Of all the gods on earth which men worship, only ours is “the living God” (Joshua 3:10; Ps. 42:2; 84:2). All the other gods are either imaginary or

dead objects.

**“My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.”**—*Psalm 42:2*. “My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.”—*Psalm 84:2*.

**“O Lord”**: In the original, this is “Our Lord and God.” The word, *kurios* (“Lord”), is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *Yahweh*, the divine name by which God revealed Himself to Israel through Moses (Ex. 6:2-3).

**Original pronunciation of the Hebrew text**—We do not know the original pronunciation of *Yahweh*; since Old Testament Hebrew was written without vowels: **The pronunciation of YHWH and the entire Hebrew language was nearly lost by the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. Vowel points were only added by guesswork over a thousand years later, in the seventh to tenth centuries A.D. by the Massorite Jews. We wish we could return to the original pronunciation, but we are not able to do so.**

**“Between the seventh and tenth centuries of the Christian era, Jewish scholars supplied a complete system of vowel points and accents to consonants of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. The result of their labors became known as the Massoretic text, while the scholars themselves are known as the Massorites from Massorah, meaning tradition. But since this attempt to insert vowels into the Old Testament text occurred over a thousand years after the pronunciation of the Hebrew language was lost in the time of Ezra, it was with deep uncertainty that they tried to reconstruct the vowels.”**—*Jewish Commentary on Massorites*.

**“For Thy pleasure”**: The original says, **“By Thy will” everything was created.** This clarification is helpful. It pleased Him to fill the universe with intelligent beings, capable of appreciating and reflecting His infinite love and perfect character. This was His purpose in creating them.

## Revelation 5

# *The Lamb Takes the Sealed Book*

*Brief overview*—In this second of two interlude chapters, only the Lamb is able to open the sealed book.

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**“And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.” Revelation 5:1-4.**

**“Book”:** This is actually a scroll. That was the only kind of “book” produced when John was writing.

**“On the back side”:** This can be translated “written on both sides” or “written on one side and sealed on the other.” The first possibility appears most likely.

**“Sealed with seven seals”:** In the hand of the One on the throne is a book (scroll) which has seven seals.

And the question is asked, “Who is worthy to open this Book?” John was deeply concerned because no one was able to open the book. Who would be able to open those seals?

**“Wept much”:** Literally “was weeping with deep feeling.”

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**“And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders,**

stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne.” Revelation 5:5-7.

**“*Stood a Lamb*”**: This can be translated as “suddenly appeared.”

**“*Lion . . . Lamb*”**: Christ is here both the defender of His people and also the one who earlier had been sacrificed on their behalf. **He is our Saviour and Defender.**

**“*Root of David*”**: This is another phrase, in the Bible, which emphasizes that **Christ really took our nature, when He came to earth.** This title is based on Isaiah 11:1, 10. The original says: “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stock of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots [out of David’s offspring].”

**“*Hath prevailed*”**: Actually **“hath conquered.”** It was only by defeating Satan that Christ could open the book.

**“*The book*”**: In the study of Revelation, **the book of Daniel, which had been sealed** (Dan. 12:4), is now opened.

**“*Lamb as it had been slain*”**: This word, *arnion*, is used 29 times in Revelation and only once elsewhere (John 21:15). In contrast, the other Greek word for lamb (*amnos*) is used a total of three times (John 1:29, 36; Acts 8:32; Isa. 53:7).

**This phrase, “Lamb as it had been slain,” is a key phrase.** It directs our attention to **Calvary**, to Christ, and His sacrificial death. It also points us to **the Sanctuary** in heaven, where He mediates His blood on our behalf. Lastly, in this chapter it is clear that **only the Lamb who died on our behalf is able to unseal the book of history**; that is, explain the events of time and eternity to us. Because He is the Lamb that had been slain on our behalf, “all power” in heaven and earth has been given to Him (Matt. 28:18).

**“*Seven horns*”**: Seven is a symbol of perfection, and horns represent governmental power. **The Lamb, which**

had once been slain, has been given all power to help His people complete their work on earth.

**“All power is given unto Me** in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . . to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: **and, lo, I am with you always**, even unto the end of the world.”—*Matthew 28:18-20.*

**“Seven eyes”**: Christ is perfect in strength and in intellect. **He knows everything that happens everywhere, and both the past and future are alike known by Him.**

**Past, present, and future known**—The Godhead knows all things—past, present, and, future. They have total omniscience.

**“I Am means an eternal presence; the past, present, and future are alike to God. He sees the most remote events of past history, and the far distant future** with as clear a vision as we do those things that are transpiring daily. We know not what is before us, and if we did, it would not contribute to our eternal welfare. God gives us an opportunity to exercise faith and trust in the great I AM.”—*1 Bible Commentary, 1099.*

**“God had a knowledge of the events of the future, even before the creation of the world.** He did not make His purposes to fit circumstances, but He allowed matters to develop and work out. He did not work to bring about a certain condition of things, but He knew that such a condition would exist. The plan that should be carried out upon the defection of any of the high intelligences of heaven—this is the secret, the mystery which has been hid from ages. And an offering was prepared in the eternal purposes to do the very work which God has done for fallen humanity.”—*6 Bible Commentary, 1082.*

**“If you have given yourself to God, to do His work, you have no need to be anxious for tomorrow. He whose servant you are, knows the end from the beginning. The events of tomorrow, which are hidden from your view, are open to the eyes of Him who is omnipotent.”**—*Mount of Blessing, 100.*



“The history which the great I AM has marked out in His Word, uniting link after link in the prophetic chain, from eternity in the past to eternity in the future, tells us where we are today in the procession of the ages, and what may be expected in the time to come. All that prophecy has foretold as coming to pass, until the present time, has been traced on the pages of history, and we may be assured that **all which is yet to come will be fulfilled in its order.**”—*Education*, 178.

“We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.”—*Life Sketches*, 196.

“*Came and took the book*”: Only Christ was able to take that book and open its seals.

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“**And when He had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.**” Revelation 5:8-9.

“*Golden vials*”: These are the “golden bowls” used in offering incense. Jesus offers up prayers to the Father on behalf of His people, but **we are here told that they are offered with the prayers of His faithful ones on earth**—not instead of them (Rev. 8:3-4, 5:8).

“*New song*”: This was different from any previous song. *Here are other new songs*: Ps. 33:3; 40:3; Isa. 42:10. **This new song, here in Revelation 5:8-9, grows out of a unique experience of victory in Christ** (Rev. 5:5). It is the new song of those who have a “new name” (Rev. 2:17; 3:12), and will live in the “new Jerusalem” (Rev. 21:2), when all things are made “new” (Rev. 21:5).

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“**And hast made us unto our God kings and priests:**

and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” Revelation 5:10-12.

**“Made us kings”**: This phrase is actually referring to the redeemed ones in verse 9.

**“Made them a kingdom”**:

**“In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.”—Daniel 2:44.**

**“The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.”—Revelation 11:15.**

**“But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever . . . And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.”—Daniel 7:18, 27.**

**“Reign on earth”**: This reign (Rev. 21) occurs after the millennium (Rev. 20).

**“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.”—Matthew 5:5.**

**“For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.”—Psalm 37:9-11.**

**“Ten thousand”**: This was the largest number at that

time; so multiples of it were used to indicate far greater amounts (10,000 x 10,000 x 1,000s x 1,000s = equals a very a large number of joyful, singing beings praising God!). They are declaring that Jesus, the precious Lamb of God, is worthy of all praise and honor.

“A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.”—*Daniel 7:10.*

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**“And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth forever and ever.”**  
**Revelation 5:13-14.**

**“*And every creature*”**: Everyone else in heaven and throughout the universe now joins in the song of thankful, triumphal praise!

**“*Him that sitteth . . . the Lamb*”**: This shows the divine equality of the Father and the Son (Rev. 6:16; 7:10).

**“*Amen*”**: Historians have learned that in the early Christian churches, when any had prayed or had sung in praise of God, **the congregation would say “amen,” expressing their agreement, full approval, and thankfulness to God.** It would be well if we would do more of this today. **It is not applause that is needed; for applause is made to praise the speaker—and men should not be praised! It is the “amens” that direct the praise to God.**

Such an acknowledgement of God’s omnipotence and glory, as is now coming from the angels of heaven and Christ’s followers on earth, will someday be given also by the wicked, just before they forever perish. **In the great final day of Judgment, the wicked will acknowledge that**

Christ tried to save them—but they repeatedly refused (at the close of the millennium, GC 662, and just before they are destroyed, GC 668-669).

It is urgent, right now while probation still lingers, that we give Jesus all of our love and all of our praise.

### Revelation 6

## *The First Six Seals*

*Brief overview*—This chapter covers the various experiences of the church in six periods of church history, from A.D. 34 on down to just before the Second Advent of Christ.

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#### 1 - THE FIRST SEAL - APOSTOLIC - A.D. 34-95

**“And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and He that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto Him: and He went forth conquering, and to conquer.” Revelation 6:1-2.**

In the fifth chapter, we saw a book “sealed with seven seals” and no one could open it (Rev. 5:1, 3). Then the Lamb, which had once been slain on our behalf, took the book. **He now begins opening those seals, one after another.**

**“Noise of thunder”**: When the Lord Jesus speaks, we do well to listen. The magnitude of His words can sound like thunder.

“God thundereth marvelously with His voice.”—*Job 37:5 (Ex. 19:16; 1 Sam. 7:10; Job 40:9).*

**“Opened one of the seals”**: As each seal is opened, part of the information in the scroll can be seen and read. This is due to the fact that there is a scroll handle on each end; and, as the scroll is unrolled, a portion can be read. Then, as another seal is broken, the next part can be read.

**This scroll opened before John some of the future history of Christ's church for many centuries, even down to our own time.**

According to the Bible, the rolling up of a scroll signifies the end (Isa. 34:4; Rev. 6:14).

While the letters to the seven churches gave a brief view of the history of God's true church, *the opening of the seven seals will also reveal what happened in different periods of history by those who refused to accept Christ.* Tragically, we will learn how a great apostasy developed, which permitted a strange, central church authority to gain control over the other Christian churches.

Actually, a similar pattern is followed throughout both Daniel and Revelation, as one prophecy after another presents still more of the complete picture of human history from ancient times down to our own.

**"A white horse":** A man on a white horse is galloping at high speed. **This symbol, like the first church—Ephesus (Rev. 6:2), is taking the truth of salvation to the world.**

**"Crown":** This is the wreath of greenery (*stephanos*) given to the victor in a race.

**"Conquering, and to conquer":** Literally "conquering, that he might conquer [more and more]." We are happy to learn that, in this case, as the rider traveled, **he was winning many to the Christian faith.** This first seal shows a church that is still dedicated to Jesus and His work.

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## 2 - THE SECOND SEAL - A.D. 95-313

**"And when He had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red; and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword." Revelation 6:3-4.**

**"Red horse":** Now the second creature, represented as a calf or ox, calls to us to view the second horse. *The*

*period of this red horse continues on up to a little past the beginning of the fourth century. The end of this period is dated at A.D. 313, when Constantine issued an edict of toleration toward Christians.*

So the period of the red horse covers the period from the end of the Bible (A.D. 95) on down to that edict (A.D. 313). **During those early centuries, Christians repeatedly experienced great persecution from pagan Rome.** This was symbolized by the blood-redness of the symbolic horse. **Many Christians yielded the faith and compromised; yet many others remained true.**

For example, about A.D. 200, a number of Christians, including three women, suffered joyfully at Scillirte in Namidia, falling on their knees and praising God as they were slain. Another example was Perpetua and Felicitas, who, when confronted with the choice of either being slain by lions or compromising their faith and adoring Mithra, the Sun god, resolutely refused to yield their faith in order to worship the pagan gods.

Christ predicted that this persecution would arise:

**“Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name’s sake.”—Matthew 24:9 (cf. Matt. 5:10-12).**

**“They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me.”—John 16:2-3.**

**“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”—Revelation 2:10.**

**Deepening apostasy at Alexandria and Rome—While many churches remained faithful during this period, there were two churches which were radically different.** Alexandria and Rome were determined to copy every foolish rite, practice, article of clothing, and title they could

find in paganism and bring it into Christianity.

**“Alexandria at the beginning of the Christian era was the most cosmopolitan city in the world. Oriental and Occidental cultures met and blended there as nowhere else . . . The writings of Plato and Gnosticism flourished . . . A distinct mode of Christian theological thought, of which Clement and Origen were the great exponents, was here developed.”**—*Albert H. Newman, Manual of Church History, Vol. 1, p. 271.*

**The church at Alexandria had a “Christian” seminary for the training of pastors.** Alexandria once had the largest pagan library in the world (which was accidentally burned to the ground by Julius Caesar in 48 B.C., when he set fire to his fleet; he did this so it could not be captured by the Egyptian fleet).

**But, by A.D. 290, Alexandria still remained the leading center for pagan culture and learning in the Empire.**

**“The practice of astrology and magic which had long been forbidden was now tolerated** and countless magical texts have come down to us from Christian Egypt. They resemble the pagan ones except that the names of the old Egyptian gods are replaced by those of Jesus and the saints.”—*Jaroslave Cerny, Ancient Egyptian Religion, p. 149.*

Its rites and superstitions had penetrated the seminary located in that city. **Sunday sacredness first entered the Christian church at this time; and it was in Alexandria that this began.** With the help of Tertullian (160-220), **Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 150-215) led out in this apostasy.** He loved the writings of Plato (428-348 B.C.), an Athenian philosopher; and he used allegory to weave Plato’s teachings into the Christian religion.

Priding himself on his deep research into Gnostic errors and the importance of bringing them into the Christian church, **Clement declared that, in addition to honoring Mithra, honor should be paid to the pagan concepts of Plato.** The quotation below is an example of Clement’s confused thinking. He said it was his reason for calling

Sunday “the Lord’s day.” **This is the first written statement by a professed Christian, linking Sunday with “the Lord’s day.”** (More were to follow in the early centuries.)

**“And the Lord’s day** Plato prophetically speaks of the tenth book of the Republic, in these words, ‘**And when seven days have passed to each of them in the meadow, on the eighth day** they are to set out and arrive in four days.’”—*Clement, Miscellanies, Book 5, chapter 14.*

So much for Clement’s confused mind. Here is an example of Tertullian’s concern for pagan rites. He is another one of the few authenticated Christian writers, before A.D. 300, who advocated Sundaykeeping. Active in A.D. 196-220, **Tertullian supplies careful instructions for keeping Sunday holy, in place of the Bible Sabbath; he then adds to it another new feature, the “sign of the cross”:**

“At every forward step and movement, at every going in and out, when we put on our clothes and shoes, when we bathe, when we sit at table, when we light the lamps, on couch, on seat, in all the ordinary actions of daily life, we trace upon the forehead the sign of the cross.”—*Tertullian, De patientia.*

Consistently, **it was the church at Alexandria which would first bring pagan beliefs and ceremonies into the church. And, as soon as he heard of them, the bishop of the church at Rome (later given the name of “pope”) would quickly copy them!** *Then that bishop conceived the idea that, by requiring that these pagan practices be kept by the other Christian churches, it would enable him to gain dominance over them.* To whatever degree they did so, they acknowledged his authority.

When the Roman and Alexandrian Christians began observing Sunday as a merry religious festival in honor of the Lord’s resurrection about the latter half of the second century A.D., **the Christians were told that this would help them have fellowship with the heathen.**

**“Let us live with all [the pagans]; let us be glad with them,** out of community of nature, not of supersti-



tion. We are peers in soul and fellow possessors of the world . . . **How better to celebrate them [the Sundays] with them among brethren [the pagans], how far more wicked [it would be] to celebrate the Sabbath.** . . . Who can maintain or defend this? The Holy Spirit upbraids the Jews with the holy days . . . their Sabbaths. But by us, to whom Sabbaths formerly belonged, to God are strange.”—*Tertullian, On Idolatry, Chap. 14.*

However, they did not, at that time, try to teach that God commanded it in the Bible. In fact, **no ecclesiastical writer before Eusebius of Caesarea, in the fourth century, ever suggested that either Christ or His apostles instituted the observance of the first day of the week.**

“These Gentile Christians of Rome and Alexandria began calling the first day of the week ‘the Lord’s day.’ This was not difficult for the pagans of the Roman Empire who were steeped in sun worship to accept, because they [the pagans] referred to their sun-god as their ‘Lord.’ ”—*E.M. Chalmers, How Sunday Came into the Christian Church, p. 3.*

(It is a historical fact that **no one ever started calling Sunday “the Sabbath” until the Puritans began doing so in the 17th century!** Today, because so few know what the Bible teaches, it is quite commonplace to hear people call Sunday “the Sabbath.” But they do this in spite of the clear teaching of Scripture.)

**Lord Mithra the Sun god**—By A.D. 300, the old emperor worship was dying out; and the two leading religions which kept increasing in numbers were **Mithraism and Christianity.** While Mithra was a god of war, Christ was a God of peace.

Mithra was the Zoroastrian (Persian) Sun god, who was worshiped in caves. His followers would face the back of the cave, which had a carving of him slaying a bull with a knife. Mithra became the warlike god both of the Roman soldiers and a large number of the citizens of the empire. **Fondly calling him “Lord Mithra,” they had ritual meals;** and those desiring to join the religion were baptized into the

faith by standing under an iron grating—as a bull was slain over their heads and the blood poured down upon them.

**They venerated the day of the sun, which was the first day of the week** (because their Sun god, as the greatest of all gods, deserved to be honored on the first day of each week). **They called it “the Venerable Day of the Sun”** (*Venerable dies Solis*, The Sacred Day of the Sun). **This holy day of Lord Mithra was also called “the Lord’s Day.”**

*Ancient sun gods*—We are told that “**sun worship was the earliest idolatry**” (*Fausset Bible Dictionary*, p. 666). Every pagan religion had its own Sun god. Here are several of these ancient Sun gods:

Arinna (Hebat) - Hittite (Syrian) Sun goddess

**Shemesh/Shepesh** - Ugarit Sun goddess

Utu (Shamash) - Mesopotamian Sun god

**Baalam** - Phoenician Sun god

**Re** (Ra, Amun-Ra) - Egyptian Sun god

Liz - West African Sun god

**Apollo** - Greek Sun god (earlier called **Helios**)

Freyr - Norse Sun god

**Sol** (Sunna) - Norse Sun goddess

Lugh - Celtic Sun god

Surya - Hindu Sun god

Huitzilopochtli (Uitzilopochtli) - Aztec Sun god

Inti - Inca Sun God

Tonatiuh - Aztec Sun god

**Mithras** - Persian and Frigian Sun god

**Sol Invictus** or **Mithra** - Roman Sun god

For more on this see *David H. Sick*, “*Mithra and the Myths of the Sun.*”

*Victor and Easter*—By A.D. 200, the Christian churches regularly gathered for a brief meeting in remembrance of Christ’s death each spring on the 14th day of Nisan (kept by the Jews as the *Pascha*, or **Passover**); since that was the day on which Christ died on Calvary. **They were commemorating the crucifixion, not the resurrection.**

But, in order to assert his authority over the other churches, Victor (the bishop of the church at Rome in A.D. 189-199, centuries later canonized and called Pope **Victor I**) **dared to issue an edict, in A.D. 195, to all the churches throughout the Empire. He demanded that they keep the spring celebration, not of Christ's death but of His resurrection, and that they dedicate an entire Sunday morning** in the spring of each year to this. He wanted it kept on the date of the annual pagan "Easter" service, the centuries-old name of the pagan fertility celebration, a licentious orgy in honor of the goddess Ishtar (also called Attis) which was held every spring.

Because Christ rose on a Sunday, **Victor wanted this spring memorial changed from the crucifixion to the resurrection in order to emphasize the importance of Sunday, the first day of the week**, which at that time was the holy day of the other largest religion in the Empire—that of Mithra the Sun god. Sunday worship was sacredly observed in honor of Mithra; and, **if Christians could be persuaded to keep Easter, it would help bring the money of more pagans into the church at Rome.**

Unfortunately, even down to our own time, people still obey Victor's demand and honor the day of Christ's resurrection far more than the day of His crucifixion. They always do it on a Sunday in the spring, and even call it "Easter." As if that is not enough, **calling it the "Easter Sunrise Service," on that Sunday morning, many will arise early and face the sun as it rises in the east and offer prayers.** (Although the word, "Easter," is in Acts 12:4 of the KJV, this is a mistranslation. The Greek word is *Pascha*, Passover, which has no connection with Easter.)

**"Satan knows that, if he can cause others to violate God's law, he has gained them to his cause; for every transgressor of that law must die.** Satan decided to go still farther . . . Some would be so jealous [protective] of God's law that they could not be caught in this snare; the ten commandments were so plain that many would believe that they were still binding, and therefore he

must seek to corrupt only one of the commandments.

**“He then led on his representatives to attempt to change the fourth, or Sabbath, commandment, thus altering the only one of the ten which brings to view the true God, the Maker of the heavens and the earth.**

Satan presented before them the glorious resurrection of Jesus and told them that, by His rising on the first day of the week, He changed the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week.

“Thus Satan used the resurrection to serve his purpose. He and his angels rejoiced that the errors they had prepared took so well with the professed friends of Christ.”—*Early Writings*, 215-216.

Commenting on Victor’s attempt to impose the Roman custom upon all the churches—and compel them to observe the spring memorial on Sunday, Bower said, **“This bold attempt, we may call the first assay of papal usurpation”** (*Bower, History of the Popes, Vol. 1, p. 18*). And Dowling terms it the **“earliest instance of Romish assumption”** (*History of Romanism, p. 32*).

When the other Christian churches received this daring message of Victor, they were utterly astonished! The insolent boldness of the Roman bishop in demanding that all the other churches obey him! This had never happened before. They wrote him letters, protesting his arrogance. As we will learn below, **in a little more than one hundred years, another pope in Rome would be more successful in extending the influence of the Roman bishop over the other churches.** And Easter celebrations on Sunday would be brought into the church—because, by that time, he had the backing of the Roman Emperor!

***Commemorations given by Jesus*—While on earth, Christ gave His followers ways to commemorate both His crucifixion and resurrection. Here they are:**

“If either of these events [the crucifixion or resurrection] should be commemorated by a day of rest, it is the crucifixion. But I saw that neither of these events was designed to alter or abrogate God’s law; on the contrary,

they give the strongest proof of its immutability.

**“Both of these important events have their memorials. By partaking of the Lord’s supper, the broken bread and the fruit of the vine, we show forth the Lord’s death** until He comes. The scenes of His sufferings and death are thus brought fresh to our minds. **The resurrection of Christ is commemorated by our being buried with Him by baptism**, and raised out of the watery grave, in likeness of His resurrection, to live in newness of life.”—*Early Writings*, 216-217.

***Origin of Easter***—As mentioned earlier, **the word comes from the name of a pagan goddess**—the goddess of the rising light of day and spring. It is the modern spelling of *Eostre*, *Ostera*, *Astarte*, or *Ishtar* (which, according to *Hislop*, p. 103, was pronounced the same as “Easter” today). **Ishtar was a vile goddess; and the spring festival in her honor, by the heathen, was a sexual orgy.**

“The English word Easter and the German *Ostern* come from a common origin which to the Norsemen meant **the season of the rising sun**, the season of new birth, and by the Babylonians as the Feast of New Life in the spring. The same root is found in the name for the place where the sun rises (East, *ost*). **The word Easter, then, originally meant the celebration of the spring sun, which had its birth in the East** and brought new life upon earth.”—*Francis X. Weiser, Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs*, p. 211.

“Christianity . . . incorporated in its celebration of the great Christian feast day many of **the heathen rites and customs of the spring festival of the heathen.**”—*Encyclopedia Britannica*, art. “Easter,” Vol. 7, p. 859.

“The church took the pagan philosophy and made it the buckler of faith . . . She took the pagan, Roman Pantheon, temple of all the gods, and made it sacred to all the martyrs. **She took the pagan Sunday and made it the Christian Sunday. She took the pagan Easter and made it the feast we celebrate** during this season . . . The sun is a fitting emblem of Jesus. The Fathers often compared Jesus to the sun as they compared Mary to the

moon.”—*William L. Gildea, “Paschale Gaudium,” The Catholic World, No. 58; March 1894, p. 809.*

“**Contact with the Greeks led to the introduction of Greek divinities** and, of much greater importance, to the identification of the native Italian gods with those of the Greek mythology. And forms of artistic representation were taken over wholesale by the Romans.”—*A.E.R. Boak, The Growth of European Civilization, p. 93.*

**Sunday enters the church**—Prior to A.D. 200 (169 years after Calvary), there had been almost no mention of Sunday sacredness in the Christian churches—and, of course, almost no Sunday worship by Christians. It was quite obvious, in the Bible, that the seventh-day Sabbath was the sacred worship day commanded by the Creator God.

“It would be an error to attribute [the sanctification of Sunday] to a definite decision of the Apostles. **There is no such decision mentioned in the Apostolic documents** [that is, the New Testament].”—*Antoine Villien, A History of the Commandments of the Church, 1915, p. 23.*

“It must be confessed that **there is no law in the New Testament concerning the first day.**”—*McClintock and Strong, Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature, Vol. 9, p. 196.*

“**The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals was always only a human ordinance,** and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a Divine command in this respect, **far from them and from the early apostolic church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday.**”—*Augustus Neander, The History of the Christian Religion and Church, 1843, p. 186.*

“Until . . . [nearly the close of] the second century we do not find the slightest indication in our sources that Christians marked Sunday by any kind of abstinence from work.”—*W. Rordorf, Sunday, p. 157.*

Speaking of the latter part of the second century and into the third, James Wharey says:

**“Christianity began already to wear the garb of heathenism.** The seeds of most of those errors that afterwards so entirely overran the church, marred its beauty, and tarnished its glory, were already beginning to take root.”—*James Wharey, Sketches of Church History, p. 39.*

Here are several other statements by historians about this period in church history:

**“The mighty Catholic Church was little more than the Roman Empire baptized.** Rome was transformed as well as converted . . . Christianity could not grow up through Roman civilization and paganism, however, without in turn being colored and influenced by the rites, festivities, and ceremonies of old polytheism. **Christianity not only conquered Rome, but Rome conquered Christianity. It is not a matter of great surprise, therefore, to find that by the fourth century the Church had undergone many changes.**”—*A.C. Flick, The Rise of the Mediaeval Church, pp. 148-149.*

**“Modern Christians who talk of keeping Sunday as a ‘holy’ day, as in the still extant ‘Blue Laws’ of colonial America, should know that as a ‘holy’ day of rest and cessation from labor and amusements Sunday was unknown to Jesus . . . It formed no tenet [teaching] of the primitive church and became ‘sacred’ only in the course of time. Outside the church its observance was legalized for the Roman Empire through a series of decrees starting with the famous one of Constantine in 321, an edict due to his political and social ideas.”**—*W.W. Hyde, Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire, 1946, p. 257.*

**“The Church made a sacred day of Sunday . . . largely because it was the weekly festival of the sun;—for it was a definite Christian policy to take over the pagan festivals** endeared to the people by tradition, and give them a Christian significance.”—*Arthur Weigall, The Paganism in Our Christianity, 1928, p. 145.*

**“Is it not strange that Sunday is almost universally observed when the Sacred Writings do not endorse**

it? Satan, the great counterfeiter, worked through the ‘mystery of iniquity’ to introduce a counterfeit sabbath to take the place of the true Sabbath. Sunday stands side by side with Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Holy (or Maundy) Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Whitsunday, Corpus Christi, Assumption Day, All Souls’ Day, Christmas Day, and a host of other ecclesiastical feast days too numerous to mention. **This array of Roman Catholic feasts and fast days are all man-made.** None of them bears the divine credentials of the Author of the Inspired Word.”—*M.E. Walsh.*

**In the time of Ezekiel, even people who had known the true God fell into sun worship** and made it a part of their worship. As you can see from the following quotation, the God of heaven considered this to be an abomination.

“And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up. **Then said He unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark,** every man in the chambers of his imagery? **For they say, The Lord seeth us not;** the Lord hath forsaken the earth. He said also unto me, **Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. Then He brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord’s house** which was toward the north; and, behold, **there sat women weeping for Tammuz** [a pagan god]. Then said He unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these. And He brought me into the inner court of the Lord’s house, and, **behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.** Then He said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence,



and have returned to provoke Me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. Therefore will I also deal in fury: Mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in Mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.”—*Ezekiel 8:11-18*.

“**Sun worship was the earliest idolatry.**”—*Fausset Bible Dictionary*, p. 666.

**From Mount Fujiyama, Japan, prayers are made to the rising sun:**

“**The pilgrims pray to their rising sun while climbing the mountain sides . . .** Sometimes one may see several hundreds of Shinto pilgrims in their white robes turning out from their shelters and joining their chants to the rising sun.”—*F.S. Dobbins, Story of the World's Worship*, p. 330.

“**Sun worship was one of the oldest components of the Roman religion.**”—*Gaston H. Halsberge, The Cult of Sol Invictus*, 1972, p. 26.

“ ‘Babylon, the mother of harlots,’ derived much of her teaching from pagan Rome and thence from Babylon. **Sun worship—that led her to Sundaykeeping—was one of those choice bits of paganism that sprang originally from the heathen lore of ancient Babylon:** The solar theology of the ‘Chaldeans’ had a decisive effect upon the final development of Semitic paganism . . . [It led to their] seeing the sun the directing power of the cosmic system. **All the Baals were thence forward turned into suns;** the sun itself being the mover of the other stars—like it eternal and ‘unconquerable’ . . . Such was the final form reached by the religion of the pagan Semites, and following them, by that of **the Romans . . . when they raised ‘Sol Invictus’ [the Invincible Sun] to the rank of supreme divinity in the empire.**”—*Franz F.V.M. Cummont, Astrology and Religion among the Greeks and Romans*, p. 55.

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### 3 - THE THIRD SEAL - A.D. 313-538

**“And when He had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black**

horse; and He that sat on him had a pair of balances in His hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.” Revelation 6:5-6.

*The period of time indicated for this third seal is A.D. 313 to 538, the period of the legalization of the Christian Church.* <sup>[P]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub> **“Black horse”**: The third living creature, with the face of a man, now presents to us a different horse—one that is totally black, indicating that it has gone into full apostasy.

*Who was Constantine?*—This man, destined to become one of the most influential people in the Christian church, never was a Christian. What is his background?

“Flavius Constantinus [Constantine] was the illegitimate son of Constantius by his legal concubine Helena, a barmaid from Bithynia.”—*Eusebius, Life of Constantine, Vol. 1, p. 28.*

Constantine received only a meager education; yet he was an expert at managing soldiers and winning their loyalty. He fought bravely in wars against Egypt and Persia. Joining his father, Constantius, he took part in a British campaign. Then, **in A.D. 306, when his father died, the army proclaimed the young man Caesar.** There were already three other Caesars (because Diocletian, upon retiring, had appointed four to succeed him); and, gradually, Constantine fought his way to the top.

**Besieging the dominant Caesar, Galerius (the one who especially slew Christians), in Marseilles (A.D. 311), Constantine captured him and let him commit suicide.** The other two (Licinius and Maximinus) began plotting to slay Constantine; but, taking the initiative, he crossed the Alps, defeated an army near Turin, and then advanced toward Rome with such speed that, on October 27, 312, **he met the forces of Maxentius at Saxa Rubra, nine miles north of Rome.** With superior strategy, he forced Maxentius to fight with his back to the Tiber River, with no retreat

possible except over the Mulvian Bridge.

Advancing to the front of the battle, Constantine bore a banner with a cross on it. He later said it was a Christian cross; but **his soldiers, most of whom were worshipers of the Sun god, had previously fought under a standard bearing a “Mithraic cross of light”** (*Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. 1, p. 4*). Constantine won the battle.

Early in 313, he and Licinius met at Milan to coordinate their rule. **In order to consolidate Christian support in all the providences, without offending the Mithrites, they issued the *Edict of Milan*, confirming religious toleration to all religions.**

Later, in 314, he headed east and defeated part of Licinius' forces. In 323, against overwhelming odds, Constantine defeated him entirely in two battles in the east. Licinius begged for, and received pardon; but two years later, on a pretext, Constantine had him killed. **Constantine was now master of the Roman Empire.**

***Sylvester, Constantine, and the Sunday Law***—It was in A.D. 313, the year after the Diocletian/Galerius persecution ended, that Emperor Constantine (272-337; ruled 306-337) issued this edict of toleration toward the Christians. This was the first time, since the Bible ended, that this had occurred.

While this made Constantine very popular with the Christian churches; **the bishop of the Christian church in the city of Rome, Sylvester I (A.D. 314-335), was determined to use his close friendship with Constantine as a way to gain control over the other Christian churches.**

Sylvester urged Constantine to unite the pagan religions with Christianity in order to unify and strengthen the Empire in its ongoing battles against foreign powers.

**Constantine was a pagan throughout most of his reign; and, unfortunately, he did not have the slightest idea what it meant to be a humble follower of Jesus. A cold-blooded killer, he made sure that he was not baptized until just before his death, hoping that this would wash his**

sins away.

Between May 15 and June 17, 326, Constantine had his eldest son, Crispus, by Minervina, seized and put to death by “cold poison” at Pola (Pula Croatia). In July, Constantine had his wife, the Empress Fausta, killed at the behest of his mother, Helena. (See David Woods, “On the Death of the Empress,” pp. 70–72.) Helena was later canonized by the Roman Church as a saint.

**“He [Constantine] was outwardly, and even zealously, pagan.** In a public oration his panegyrist extols the magnificence of his offerings to the gods.”—*Henry Hart Millman, History of Christianity, Vol. 2, p. 284.*

“It was, indeed, in keeping with the pragmatic spirit of his faith that he should have retained on his coins the figures and emblems of the traditional pagan gods.”—*Charles Norris Cochrane, Christianity and Classical Culture, p. 215.*

“A star cult, sun worship became (in the third century) the dominant official creed, paving the road for the ultimate triumph of Christianity. **So strong was the belief in the Invincible Sun (*Sol Invictus*) that Constantine, at first a devotee of the sun cult, found it perfectly compatible with his pro-Christian sympathies to authorize his own portrayal as Helios (the Egyptian sun god).**”—*Frederick H. Cramer, Astrology in Roman Law and Politics, p. 4.*

A clever idea was suggested to the Emperor by Sylvester: Require the keeping of Sunday, the holy day of the other most powerful religion, that of Mithra, the Sun god. **Constantine was told that, if everyone in the Empire would unite in keeping Sunday holy, Constantine’s problems would be solved. He would unite the people and thus strengthen the Empire. So he enacted the first National Sunday Law.**

“When, in A.D. 321, he declared Sunday a general holiday, he had in mind both Christians and pagans, for while the former celebrated it as the Lord’s Day, the latter could regard it as the day of the Sun god.”—



#### LATIN TEXT

IMPERATOR CONSTANTINUS AUG. HELPIDIO:  
 OMNES JUDICES, URBANÆQUE PLEBES ET CUNC-  
 TARUM ARTIUM OFFICIA VENERABILI DIE SOLIS  
 QUIESCANT. RURI TAMEN POSITI AGRORUM CUL-  
 TURÆ LIBERE LICENTERQUE INSERVIAN'T, QUO-  
 NIAM FREQUENTER EVENIT, UT NON APTIUS ALIO  
 DIE FRUMENTA SULCIS AUT VINÆ SCROBIBUS  
 MANDENTUR, NE OCCASIONE MOMENTI PEREAT  
 COMMODITAS CŒLESTI PROVISIONE CONCESSA.

#### TRANSLATION

CONSTANTINE, EMPEROR AUGUSTUS, TO HELPI-  
 DIUS: ON THE VENERABLE DAY OF THE SUN LET  
 THE MAGISTRATES AND PEOPLE RESIDING IN  
 CITIES REST, AND LET ALL WORKSHOPS BE  
 CLOSED. IN THE COUNTRY, HOWEVER, PERSONS  
 ENGAGED IN AGRICULTURE MAY FREELY AND  
 LAWFULLY CONTINUE THEIR PURSUITS; BECAUSE  
 IT OFTEN HAPPENS THAT ANOTHER DAY IS NOT  
 SO SUITABLE FOR GRAIN SOWING OR FOR VINE  
 PLANTING; LEST BY NEGLECTING THE PROPER  
 MOMENT FOR SUCH OPERATIONS, THE BOUNTY  
 OF HEAVEN SHOULD BE LOST.

Latin text and translation from Schaff's "History of  
 the Christian Church," Vol. III, sec. 75, par. 5, note 1.

**THE FIRST GOVERNMENTAL SUNDAY LAW IN  
 HISTORY WAS ENACTED ON MARCH 7, A.D. 321,  
 BY EMPEROR CONSTANTINE.**

*Arthur E.R. Boak, A History of Rome to A.D. 565 (4th ed.), p. 432.*

**“He enjoined the civil observance of Sunday, though only as the day of the sun,** and in connection with an ordinance requiring the consultation of the soothsayer.”—*Albert Henry Newman, A Manual of Church History, Vol. 1, p. 307.*

**Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea (A.D. 260-339), was one of Sylvester’s closest advisers, and also a close friend to Constantine.** He became the active agent of Sylvester in prompting the emperor to enact his Sunday laws. **A prolific writer, Eusebius later bragged about the fact that the church was behind the attempted change of the Bible Sabbath to the first day of the week.**

**“All things whatsoever that were prescribed for the [Bible] Sabbath, we have transferred them to the Lord’s day,** as being more authoritative and more highly regarded and first in rank, and more honorable than the Jewish Sabbath.”—*Eusebius, quoted in J.P. Migne, “Patrologie,” pp. 23, 1169-1172. (Eusebius later wrote one of the most complete biographies of the life of Constantine.)*

(It was commonplace back then, as it is today, to disregard the importance of the Sabbath by the sneering comment, “that old Jewish Sabbath.” Yet this is a daring insult to the Creator who instituted it at the Creation of the world [Gen. 2:1-3] over 2,000 years before the birth of Abraham, the first Jew, and placed it in the Ten Commandments [Ex. 20:8-11].)

**As a result, the first National Sunday Law in history was enacted on March 7, A.D. 321.** This was the first of six Sunday Law decrees issued by Constantine, to exalt Sunday observance.

In another law, Constantine issued the order that all of his heathen troops be marched onto the drill field each Sunday morning, to recite a prayer composed by the emperor, **as they faced the rising sun.** This made the sun worshippers happy; since the followers of Mithra, the Sun god, still

numbered in the millions. **Our “Easter Sunrise Services” originated with Mithric sun worship.**

“He [Constantine] sent to the legions, to be recited upon that day [Sunday], a form of prayer which could have been employed by a worshiper of Mithra, of Serapis, or of Apollo, quite as well as by a Christian believer. This was the official sanction of the old custom of addressing a prayer to the rising sun.”—*Victor Duruy, History of Rome, Vol. 7, p. 489.*

“Unquestionably the first law, either ecclesiastical or civil, by which the Sabbatical observance of that day is known to have been ordained, is the edict of Constantine, A.D. 321.”—*Chamber’s Encyclopedia, article, “Sabbath.”*

It is obvious that, by using the Mithric phrase for their Sun god’s holy day, **Constantine was trying to unite both Christians and Mithrites in one religion in order to strengthen the Empire.** *Here is the actual wording of the first Sunday law in history, a legal enactment by Constantine I (reigned 306-337):*

“**On the Venerable Day of the Sun** [“*Venerable dies Solis*”—the sacred day of the Sun] let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain-sowing or for vine-planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost—**given the 7th day of March [A.D. 321]**, Crispus and Constantine being consuls each of them for the second time.”—*The First Sunday Law of Constantine I, in “Codex Justinianus,” lib. 3, tit. 12,3; trans. in Phillip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, Vol. 3, p. 380.*

“Constantine’s decree marked the beginning of a long, though intermittent, series of imperial decrees in support of Sunday rest.”—*Vincent J. Kelly, Forbidden Sunday and Feast-Day Occupations, 1943, p. 29.*

**“Constantine labored at this time untiringly to**

**unite the worshipers of the old and the new into one religion.** All his laws and contrivances were aimed at promoting this amalgamation in order to meld together a purified heathenism and a moderated Christianity . . . Of all his blending and melding together of Christianity and heathenism, none is more easy to see through than this making of his Sunday law: The Christians worshiped their Christ, the heathen their sun-god [so they should now be combined].”—*H.G. Heggtveit, Illustreret Kirkehistorie, 1895, p. 202.*

“This [Constantine’s Sunday decree of March 321] is the ‘parent’ Sunday law making it a day of rest and release from labor. For from that time to the present there have been decrees about the observance of Sunday which have profoundly influenced European and American society. **When the Church became a part of State under the Christian emperors, Sunday observance was enforced by civil statutes, and later when the Empire was past, the Church in the hands of the papacy enforced it by ecclesiastical and also by civil enactments.**”—*Walter W. Hyde, Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire, 1946, p. 261.*

**Church councils**—It was during this period of the black horse that the papacy was fully established and, from then on, gradually gained control over the other Christian churches of the Empire. Yet it was Sunday enforcement that made this possible. Within a century and a half, Mithric worship had disappeared. Satan no longer needed it; for now its worship day was being commanded by leading officials in the Christian church.

**In A.D. 325, the Council of Nicaea met** in Bythynia, in Asia Minor (present day Turkey). Emperor Constantine was present and led out in making sure that the decisions made would help unify the religions of the Empire into one.

**Under his guidance, as urged on by Sylvester, the Church leaders at Nicaea decreed that all honor the resurrection of Christ by keeping the “Easter” festival—and only on a certain Sunday of each spring.**



Immediately following this ruling, Constantine issued an imperial order commanding all the churches everywhere to keep it. **Another decree was also issued commanding Sunday worship.**

“In all of his dealings with Christian matters the supreme motive seems to have been that of securing unity. About doctrinal differences he was almost indifferent. But he dreaded dissension among those on whom he depended for the support of his government.”—*Albert Henry Newman, A Manual of Church History, Vol. 1, p. 307.*

In his introductory instructions to the Church leaders who arrived at the Council of Nicaea, **Constantine told them that they must do all they could to win pagans and those of other religions to want to come into the Church** (*Constantine, Instruction to the Bishops at the Council of Nicaea, in Eusebius, Life of Constantine, iii, 21, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1, p. 526*).

**After Constantine’s death in A.D. 336, the campaign of the papacy—to demand that all keep the united Sunday of pagans and Christians—intensified.**

**It was only 28 years later, at the Council of Laodicea (held in Phrygia in A.D. 364), that the following decree was issued by church leaders:**

“**Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday** [in the original text: *sabbato*—shall not be idle on the Sabbath], but shall work on that day; **but the Lord’s day they shall especially honor**, and as being Christians, shall if possible, do no work on that day. If however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be shut out [*anathema*, or excommunicated] from Christ.”—*Council of Laodicea, Canon 29, quoted in C.J. Hefele, A History of the Councils of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 316.*

“The keeping of the Sunday rest arose from the constitution of the Church . . . Tertullian was probably the first to refer to a cessation of affairs on the Sunday; the Council of Laodicea issued the first conciliar [church] legislation for that day; Constantine I issued the first civil legislation.”—*Priest Vincent J. Kelly, Forbidden*

*Sunday and Feast-Day occupations, p. 203 (R.C.).*

Thus we find that, **at the 325 Council of Nicaea, Christians were ordered by Church leaders to keep Sunday holy. Then, at the 364 Council of Laodicea, they were commanded to defile God's sacred day, the Bible Sabbath.** Satan was gleeful; for he knew that to break one of the ten commandments was to break them all.

**“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.** For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law.”—*James 2:10-12.*

**Yet the sacredness of the seventh day of the week was not given only to the Jews; it was given to all mankind, by the order of God, on the seventh day of the Creation of our world!** This occurred over two thousand years before Abraham, the first Jew, was born! It is the Fourth of the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:8-11)! **All men who worship the true God, the Creator God, are required to keep His moral law,** written by His own finger (Ex. 31:18; Deut. 9:10) on solid stone tables!

“The assimilation of Christ to the sun god, as Sun of Righteousness, became widespread in the fourth century. Constantine's legislation on Sunday is related to the fact that the sun god was the titular divinity of his family.”—*Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church, 3rd ed., p. 155.*

**“Rome took the pagan Easter [in honor of Ishtar] and made it the feast we celebrate during this season . . . The sun was a foremost god with heathendom . . . Hence the church would seem to say, ‘Keep that old pagan name [Sunday]. It shall remain consecrated, sanctified.’** And thus the pagan Sunday . . . became the Christian Sunday, sacred to Jesus.”—*William L. Gildea, “Paschale Gaudium,” in The Catholic World, March 1894, p. 809.*

**Early each winter, Mithra would gradually die, as**

day by day the sun dropped lower in the sky; and they celebrated his rebirth on the first day after the winter solstice (December 21), when they could see that the sun was again heading north—which was December 25. They called the day, *dies natalis Solis*—the “birthday of the Sun.” For this reason, they worshiped him as a “dying, rising Saviour.” **All this had been planned out in advance by Satan in order to counterfeit Christianity.**

“Obviously the season of the winter solstice, when the strength of the sun begins to increase, is appropriate for the celebration of the festival of a sun-god. **The day in a sense marks the birth of a new sun . . . The significance of a popular pagan holiday was wholly in accord with the policy of the Church.** Of the actual celebration of a festival of the nativity, it should be added, there is no satisfactory evidence earlier than the fourth century. **Its first observance in Rome on December the twenty-fifth took place in 336.** In Constantinople it seems to have been introduced in 377 or 378.”—*Gordon J. Laing, Survivals of Roman Religion, p. 150.*

“**A very general observance required that on the 25th of December the birth of the ‘new Sun’ should be celebrated,** when after the winter solstice [December 21] the days began to lengthen and the ‘invincible’ star triumphed again over darkness . . . **That is why we still celebrate Christmas on the 25th of December.** The pre-eminence assigned to the *dies Solis* [day of the Sun god] also certainly contributed to the general recognition of Sunday as a holiday.”—*Franz Cumont, Astrology and Religion among the Greeks and Romans, pp. 89-90.*

“Remains of the struggle [between the religion of Christianity and the religion of Mithraism] are found in **two institutions adopted from its rival by Christianity in the fourth century, the two Mithraic sacred days: December 25, ‘dies natalis solis’ [the birthday of the Sun god], as the birthday of Jesus,—and Sunday sacredness, ‘the venerable day of the Sun,’ as Constantine called it in his edict of 321.**”—*Walter Woodburn Hyde, Paganism to Christianity in the Ro-*

*man Empire, p. 60.*

“The choice of December 25 was influenced by the fact that the Romans, from the time of Emperor Aurelian [A.D. 270-275], had celebrated the feast of the Sun god (*Sol Invictus*: the Unconquered Sun) on that day. **December 25 was called the ‘Birthday of the Sun,’** and great pagan religious celebrations of the Mithras cult were held all through the Empire.”—*Francis X. Weiser, Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs, p. 61.*

“While Christianity won a comparatively easy victory over the Graeco-Roman religion, it had a hard struggle with the Mithras religion. **The worshipers of Mithras were won by taking over the birthday of Mithras, December 25, as the birthday of Christ.**”—*H. Lamer, “Mithras,” Worterbuch der Antike, 2nd ed.*

“The date—or even the month—of Christ’s birth is not known; yet, **because December 25 was a pagan celebration to the Sun god, it was brought into the Christian church in order to hasten the influx of even more heathen into the church.**

“The supposed anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ occurring on December 25 has no sufficient data existing for the month or the day of the event . . . **There is no historical evidence that our Lord’s birthday was celebrated during the apostolic or early post-apostolic times . . .** The earliest record of the recognition of December 25 as a church festival is in the Philocalian Calendar, representing Roman practice in 336.”—*A.H. Newman, “Christmas,” New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Vol. 3, p. 47.*

It is an astounding fact that, **while claiming millions of worshipers by A.D. 300, within 150 years after that, Mithraism had totally disappeared!** Satan no longer needed it; since its sacred day had, by that time, been established as the worship day of the official Christian church at Rome.

**There was another religion which also had hundreds of thousands of worshipers by the fourth century, but was also gone within 150 years after Constantine. This was the worship of Isis and Horus, the Queen of Heaven**

and her baby Son, both of whom were originally gods of Egypt (and also of ancient Babylon and Greece, but under different names). Once again, Satan no longer needed them; for, by A.D. 550, Mary the Virgin Queen of Heaven had been declared equal to God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ and sitting beside them on the throne in heaven. For more than a thousand years, the people bowed down before statues and paintings of Mary holding baby Jesus. *More on this later.*

“For Christianity, the reign of Constantine marked the transition from the days in which it lived perilously and amid derision to the days of its freedom from fear and the beginnings of its social prestige. To be sure, **the legal process by which Christianity became the religion of the state** was not completed for nearly half a century after Constantine’s death. But Constantine took the decisive steps that were to culminate in the edicts of Theodosius [Theodosius I ‘the Great,’ 347-395; emperor 379-395].”—*Paul Hutchinson and Winfred E. Garrison, 20 Centuries of Christianity: A Concise History, p. 51.*

**“Not until Theodosius I [emperor 379-395] did it become politically practicable [practical] to attempt serious enforcement of decrees banning pagan worship and making orthodox Christianity the sole and compulsory religion within the Empire.**

“A series of edicts, beginning in 380 and continuing for more than half a century, through the reign of Theodosius II [emperor 408-450], achieved this result. With the increasingly rigorous enforcement of these decrees, the revolution in the character of the church became complete. It had ceased to be a voluntary association of believers; **it had become the sole legal religion of the Empire; its membership had become everybody.** To reject this religion was thereafter equivalent to treason against the state and, naturally, was punishable by death.”—*Ibid., pp. 72-73.*

“How could any improvements have been expected? **The new Christians were, so far as thinking and habits went, the same old pagans;** their desire for baptism

was strictly prudential. Their surge into the churches did not mean that Christianity had wiped out paganism. On the contrary, **hordes of baptized pagans meant that paganism had diluted the moral energies of organized Christianity to the point of social impotence . . .**

“Even more distressing, as one looks back, was the alacrity with which **the Christian clergy who had suffered under pagan persecution turned to persecuting their opponents . . .** By the time a century had passed, St. Augustine had found in the text from Luke 14:23, ‘compel them to come in,’ a command from Christ Himself for the persecution of heretics!”—*Ibid.* p. 57.

“In the hour of victory, the intransigence [unyielding quality] of the Christian martyrs degenerated into the intolerance of Christian persecutors who had picked up from the martyrs’ defeated pagan opponents the fatal practice of resorting to physical force as a short cut to victory in religious controversy.”—*Arnold Toynbee, A Study of History, Vol. 7, p. 439.*

***Additional Sunday decrees***—Since it was by requiring Sunday worship, in place of the Bible Sabbath, that the papacy first gained control over the other churches,—**additional Sunday decrees were issued in later centuries, each law stricter and each penalty more severe.** Governmental decrees were issued in 386, 389, 458, 460, 554, 589, 681, 768, 789; and church council decrees in 343, 538, 578, 581, 690, and onward. ***Satan was determined to destroy the Bible Sabbath; for it represented an important part of God’s will for mankind.*** Why? Because the Sabbath is the weekly worship day that had been specifically commanded by God in honor of His creation of our world! —And it was being exchanged for a weekly day of worship in honor of a pagan Sun god!

“Constantine’s [six Sunday Law] decrees marked the beginning of **a long, though intermittent, series of imperial decrees in support of Sunday rest.**”—*A History of the Councils of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 316.*

“What began, however, as a pagan ordinance ended

as a Christian regulation; and a long series of imperial decrees during the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries enjoined with increasing stringency abstinence from labor on Sunday.”—*Hutton Webster, Rest Days, pp. 122-123, 270.*

**“Pair of balances”:** With the exaltation of the popes, seemingly everything in the church was offered for sale. **Wealthy pagans poured into the church, and their money enabled them to buy church offices. The people were happy to learn that the payment of money would bring pardon from sin.**

The papacy also found that festivals also brought money into the Church. The pagan Easter festival, supposedly in honor of Christ’s resurrection, plus many other celebrations in honor of saints and jubilees were additional sources of Church wealth.

“The issue here is the fact that **Christians began keeping a pagan holiday [Easter] sacred to an ancient and well-known goddess, and licentious one at that: Ishtar.** We are told that “Attis awoke from his sleep of death, and the joy created by his resurrection burst out in wild merrymaking, wanton pleasures, and luxurious banquets.”—*Franz Cumont, Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism, pp. 56-57.*

**It was during this period that the bishop of Rome began calling himself “the pope.”** Pope John I (523-526) was the first to assume this title. But, in later centuries, it was declared by the Vatican that all the bishops of Rome, from the time of the Apostles, had called themselves “pope.”

The foundation for the whole system of apostate Christianity was firmly put in place during this period.

“An enormous train of different superstitions were gradually substituted in the place of true religion and piety. This odious revolution was owing to a variety of causes, which included **a preposterous desire of imitating the pagan rites, and of blending them with the Christian worship,** and that idle propensity which

mankind has toward a gaudy and ostentatious religion, all contributed to establish the reign of superstition upon the ruins of Christianity.”—*J.L. Mosheim, Institutes of Ecclesiastical History, Bk. 2, cent. 4, para. 2, Chap. 3.*

Edward Gibbon, author of *The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ironically declared that **paganism disappeared only to emerge again in the Church. Christianity not only conquered Rome, but Rome also conquered Christianity.**

**“Hurt not the oil and the wine”**: The oil represents the work of the Holy Spirit; the wine is the pure truth of Bible doctrine. **All through this period of church history, there remained faithful believers, often in small churches here and there in rural areas over which the papacy had not yet gained full control.** God’s hand protected His own.

**Sabbathkeeping in A.D. 415**—It is highly significant that, in spite of Constantine’s Sunday laws, Sozomen (400-447) and Socrates Scholasticus (completed his major book in 439), two Christian historians, wrote about A.D. 420 that **most of the Christian churches were still keeping the Bible Sabbath—a full one hundred years after Constantine’s first Sunday law!**

**“The people of Constantinople, and almost everywhere, assemble together on the Sabbath, as well as on the first day of the week, which custom is never observed at Rome or at Alexandria.”**—*Hermias Sozomen, quoted in Ecclesiastical History, vii, 19, in A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd Series, Vol. 2, p. 390 (written soon after A.D. 415).*

**“Although almost all churches throughout the world celebrate on the Sabbath every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, have ceased to do this.”**—*Socrates Scholasticus, Ecclesiastical History, Bk 5, Chap. 22 (written about 420; he died about A.D. 440).*

**People cannot “cease” to do what they have never done; and so we can know that, even at Rome and Alexandria, the Bible Sabbath was once widely kept. Here**



we see that, *400 years after the death of Christ* and 100 years after Constantine's linking of church and state by his National Sunday Law, Rome and Alexandria were still the only places in the world where the majority of Christians kept Sunday and not the Bible Sabbath!

Historians corroborate the fact that it was not until the fifth century—a full one hundred years after Constantine's Sunday Law was enacted—that most of the Christian churches began keeping Sunday.

**“Down even to the fifth century the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was continued in the Christian church,** but with a rigor and solemnity gradually diminishing until it was wholly discontinued.”—*Lyman Coleman, Ancient Christianity Exemplified, Chap. 26, sec. 2, p. 527.*

**“The ancient Sabbath did remain and was observed . . . by the Christians of the Eastern Church [in the area near Palestine] above three hundred years after our Saviour's death.”**—*A Learned Treatise of the Sabbath, p. 77.*

As might be expected, **it was at this time that the pure woman of Revelation 12:6, 13-16 (symbolizing the true church) began fleeing into the wilderness and to distant lands,** in order to escape from the ever-deepening apostasy and tyrannical power of the papacy.

***Three basic methods of apostasy***—As it was then, so it is today. **There are three basic methods that Satan uses to bring in apostasy and deepen it:** (1) Downgrade the importance of obeying God's law. (2) Teach the people that they should look first to religious leaders and their creeds for guidance, instead of searching the Bible. (3) Eliminate those who refuse the changes in doctrinal belief and the divinely given source of instruction and guidance.

**“It has ever been the design of Satan to draw the minds of the people from Jesus to man, and to destroy individual accountability.** Satan failed in his design when he tempted the Son of God; but he succeeded better when he came to fallen man. Christianity

became corrupted. Popes and priests presumed to take an exalted position, and taught the people to look to them for the pardon of their sins, instead of looking to Christ for themselves.

“The people were wholly deceived. They were taught that the popes and priests were Christ’s representatives, when in fact they were the representatives of Satan, and those who bowed to them worshiped Satan. The people called for the Bible; but the priests considered it dangerous to let them have it to read for themselves, lest they should become enlightened and expose the sins of their leaders. **The people were taught to receive every word from these deceivers as from the mouth of God.** They held that power over the mind which God alone should hold. **If any dared to follow their own convictions, the same hate which Satan and the Jews exercised toward Jesus would be kindled against them.**”—*Early Writings, 213-214.*

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### 4 - THE FOURTH SEAL - A.D. 538-1517

“**And when He had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold, a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.**” Revelation 6:7-8.

“*Pale horse*”: This horse was ghastly pale in color and appeared hideous (similar in color to a dead body). And so were conditions during this period of history: from A.D. 538 onward to about 1517, when the Reformation began. Millions of faithful Christians who refused to obey pagan rites and ceremonies were hunted to the death or forced to flee into exile. **This period of history was the same as that of the difficult times foretold in Revelation 12:6, 13-16.**

*The papacy took control of the West*—It is a remarkable fact that, when Constantine moved his capital to

**Constantinople in A.D. 330,—he left the entire western portion of the empire in the hands of the pope:**

“The removal of the capital of the Empire from Rome to Constantinople in 330, left the Western Church practically free from imperial power, to develop its own form of organization. **The Bishop of Rome, in the seat of the Caesars, was now the greatest man in the West,** and was soon [when the barbarians overran the empire] forced to become the political as well as the spiritual head.”—*A.C. Flick, The Rise of the Mediaval Church, p. 168.*

“**Whatever Roman elements the barbarians and Aryans left . . . came under the protection of the Bishop of Rome,** who was the chief person there after the Emperor’s disappearance . . . **The Roman Church in this way privily pushed itself into the place of the Roman World-Empire, of which it is the actual continuation; the empire has not perished, but has only undergone a transformation . . .** It [the Catholic Church] is a political creation, and is imposing as a World-Empire, because [it is a continuation of] the Roman Empire. **The Pope, who calls himself ‘King’ and ‘Pontifex Maximus’** [the title of the Roman Emperor in the time of Christ], **is Caesar’s successor.**”—*Adolf Harnack, What Is Christianity? 1963, pp. 269-270.*

“Long ages ago, when Rome through the neglect of the western emperors was left to the mercy of the barbarous hordes, the Romans turned to one figure for aid and protection, and asked him to rule them; **and thus . . . commenced the temporal sovereignty of the popes.** And meekly stepping to the throne of Caesar, **the vicar of Christ took up the scepter to which the emperors and kings of Europe were to bow in reverence through so many ages.**”—*American Catholic Quarterly Review, April 1911.*

[Speaking of the time, about 500 A.D., when the Roman Empire was crumbling to pieces:] “No, the [Catholic] Church will not descend into the tomb. It will survive the Empire . . . **At length a second empire**

will arise, and of this empire the Pope will be the master—more than this, he will be the master of Europe. He will dictate his orders to kings who will obey them.”—*Andrea Lagarde, The Latin Church in the Middle Ages, 1915, p. vi.*

(For more quotations on this, see comments for Revelation 13:2.)

**Origins of Papal Practices**—An excellent summary of the pagan origins of papal rites is given in *Gordon Laing, Survivals of Roman Religion, pp. 197-200*. Here is a brief summary of it:

*Holy water and infant baptism:* The use of “**holy water**” for touching the baby’s forehead came from the cult of Isis in Egypt (*ibid.*, p. 198). The purpose was to avert the machinations of a witch or demon.

*Bells in religious services:* Common in India and China since ancient times. Later by the Etruscans and in the Temple of Jupiter in Rome. In the cult of Isis the rattle, or **small bell (sistrum)**, was in constant use in processions and in temple services. The sound warded off evil spirits.

*Lighted lamps and torches:* Eventually, these were replaced by **candles which were placed before images of the gods** and on votive offerings in pagan Rome, and earlier in Babylonia.

*Incense:* Prior to the time of Constantine, **the burning of incense to the gods** was the test of whether one was a pagan. Those who refused must be the despised Christians, and were thus slain. Because of that bitter experience, the use of incense did not enter the Church until A.D. 500.

*Garlands of flowers on the heads of images:* This was regularly done in paganism.

*Tonsure (shaved top of head):* The priests of Isis all had the tonsure. **The hair around the central shaved spot symbolized the moon goddess in the embrace of the Sun god.** By 450, it had entered the church and was worn by priests and monks.

“Tonsure was an old practice of the priests of Mithra, who in their tonsures imitated the solar disk.”—*Alex-*

*ander Hisop, The Two Babylons, p. 222.*

**“Rites and ceremonies, of which neither Paul nor Peter ever heard, crept silently into use, and then claimed the rank of divine institutions.** Offices for whom the primitive disciples could have found no place, and titles which to them would have been altogether unintelligible, began to challenge attention and to be named ‘apostolic.’ ”—*William D. Killen, The Ancient Church, p. xvi.*

“There is scarcely anything which strikes the mind of the careful student of ancient ecclesiastical history with greater surprise than **the comparatively early period at which many of the corruptions of Christianity, which are embodied in the Roman system, took their rise;** yet it is not to be supposed that when the first originators of many of these unscriptural notions and practices planted those germs of corruption, they anticipated or even imagined **they would ever grow into such a vast and hideous system of superstition and error as is that of popery.**”—*John Dowling, History of Romanism, 13th Edition, p. 65.*

***The sign of the cross***—The so-called “mystic Tau” (“T”) was marked on the foreheads of those initiated into the Mithric Mysteries (*Tertullian, against Heretics, Chap. 40, Vol. 2, p. 54*). The “tau” is the letter in the Greek alphabet, the capital of which is shaped like our capital “T.” The T symbol and the sun symbol were frequently used together. Both represented the Sun god. The T stood for Tammuz, an ancient Sun god, and the sun circle symbolized the more recent Mithra. The Maltese cross (†), which is another T symbol, is appended by Roman bishops to their names. Layard found it as a sacred symbol in Nineveh in such connections as to identify it with the sun (*Layard, Nineveh and Babylon, p. 211; also his book, Nineveh and Its Remains, Vol. 2, p. 446*). **The mystic Tau, as the symbol of the great pagan divinity, was called “the sign of life”** (*Wilkinson, Vol. 1, p. 365*) and also **the “sacred heart,” when it was used as an amulet over the heart.** It was

marked on the garments of the priests of Rome. **The Vestal Virgins of pagan Rome wore it suspended from their necklaces, as nuns do now.** This symbol was already in use on necklaces “as early as the fifteenth century before the Christian era” (*ibid.*, p. 376).

**“In Egypt the earliest form of the cross was no other than the ‘Crux Ansata,’ or ‘Sign of life,’ borne by Osiris and all the Egyptian gods . . . The design of its first employment on the sepulchres [of Christians] . . . was the result of the attachment to old and long-cherished pagan symbols, which is always strong in those who, with the adoption of the Christian name and profession, are still, to a large extent, pagan in heart and feeling. This, and this only, is the origin of the worship of the ‘Christian cross.’ ”**—*Alexander Hislop, Two Babylons, p. 201.*

**“Soon people and priests [in papal times] would use the sign of the cross as a magic incantation to expel or drive away demons.”**—*Will Durant, Vol. 4, The Age of Faith, p. 75.*

***Persecution of Sabbathkeepers intensified***—Pope Gregory I (“the Great”), who reigned from 590 to 604, denounced Sabbathkeepers.

“About 590, Pope Gregory, in a letter to the Roman people, **denounced as the prophets of Antichrist those who maintained that work ought not to be done on the seventh day.**”—*James T. Ringgold, The Law of Sunday, p. 267.*

Here is Gregory’s statement:

“Gregory, bishop by the grace of God to his well-beloved sons, the Roman citizens: It has come to me that certain men of perverse spirit have disseminated among you things depraved and opposed to the holy faith, so that **they forbid anything to be done on the day of the Sabbath [the seventh day]. What shall I call them except preachers of Antichrist?**”—*Gregory I, Epistles, Bk. 13:1, in Labbe and Cossart, Sacrosancta Concilia, Vol. 5, col. 1511.*

Gregory will have to answer for those words someday.

He was also the first to send “missionaries” to Ireland, Britain, and Germany, with the objective of winning the chieftains to his side. There were a large number of Christians in Britain and Ireland, under the leadership of Patrick and Columba (neither of whom were ever Catholic). The papal emissaries from Gregory told the pagan rulers that, if they would slay all who refused obedience to the pope, the papacy would fully support their governmental authority. (*Great Controversy*, pp. 62-63 explains in more detail how this was done.)

“‘Remember,’ said Gregory the Great, when issuing his instructions to a missionary to the Saxon heathens, that ‘you must not interfere with any traditional belief or religious observance that can be harmonized with Christianity.’ ”—*Gregory I, “the Great,” in Gordon J. Laing, Survivals of Roman Religion, p. 130.*

It is of interest that **Pope Gregory I (“the Great”; 590-604) was also the first pope to insist that priests could not marry.** This un-Scriptural practice has brought great evil into the papacy ever since.

**In the later centuries, persecution against believers in the Bible Sabbath intensified** until very few were left alive. When the Reformation began, the true Sabbath was almost unknown.

“Now the [Catholic] Church . . . instituted, by God’s authority, Sunday as the day of worship. The same Church, by the same divine authority, taught the doctrine of Purgatory . . . **We have, therefore, the same authority for Purgatory as we have for Sunday.**”—*Martin J. Scott, Things Catholics Are Asked About, 1927, p. 236.*

“Of course **the Catholic Church claims that the change [of the Sabbath to Sunday] was her act . . . AND THE ACT IS A MARK of her ecclesiastical power.**”—*From the office of Cardinal Gibbons, through Chancellor H.F. Thomas, November 11, 1895 (caps ours).*

**“Power was given Him”:** The papacy claimed to be superior to everyone else in the entire the world!

*The supreme authority*—Can you imagine this? the head of an organization claiming to be superior to kings, nations, and everyone else? (We will learn later that he even claimed to be superior to God Himself!)

**“The Roman Catholic Church . . . must demand the right of freedom for herself alone.”**—*Civiltà Cattolica*, April 1948 (official Jesuit newspaper, published at the Vatican).

**“The pope has the right to pronounce sentence of deposition against any sovereign.”**—*Bronson’s Review*, Vol. I, p. 48.

“We declare, say, define, and pronounce that every being should be subject to the Roman Pontiff.”—*Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303)*, quoted in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XV, p. 126.

**“The pope is the supreme judge, even of civil laws, and is incapable of being under any true obligation to them.”**—*Civiltà Cattolica*.

“Individual liberty in reality is only a deadly anarchy.”—*Pope Pius XII*, April 6, 1951.

**“Protestantism of every form has not, and never can have, any rights where Catholicity is triumphant.”**—*Bronson’s Review*.

**“Heretics may be not only excommunicated, but also justly put to death.”**—*Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIV, p. 768.

“Non-Catholic methods of worshipping God must be branded counterfeiters.”—*Flynn, Loretto, and Simon*, *Living Our Faith*, p. 247 (a widely used Catholic high school textbook).

“In themselves, all forms of Protestantism are unjustified. They should not exist.”—*America*, January 4, 1941 (R.C. journal).

“And, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things . . . And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given



into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”—*Daniel 7:8, 25.*

**“His name was death”:** “**Destroy all who will not submit**” was the watchword of the papacy.

**Millions slain**—These were difficult years for the faithful who refused to disobey the words of God in the Bible.

Millions were martyred for their faith during these dark centuries. J.A. Wylie stated it well when he said, **“The noon of the papacy was the midnight of the world”** (*The History of Protestantism, Vol. 1, p. 16*).

Here is but one example of the horror committed by the popes against God’s faithful ones: **Pope Martin V (1417-1431) commanded the King of Poland in 1429 to exterminate the Hussites** (believers in the Biblical teachings of the martyred John Huss), who had fought back and routed the king’s army. (*See Great Controversy, pp. 115-119*). The following excerpt from the pope’s letter to the king reveals the deep hatred of the papacy against people who believed in maintaining their freedom to read the Bible and worship directly without having to go through a priest or pope. Pope Martin declared that the safety of kings would be endangered if the Hussites were permitted to live in peace in their land.

“Know that the interests of the Holy See, and those of your crown, make it a duty to exterminate the Hussites. **Remember that these impious persons dare proclaim principles of equality**; they maintain that all Christians are brethren, and that God has not given to privileged men the right of ruling the nations; they hold that Christ came on earth to abolish slavery; **they call the people to liberty**, that is to the annihilation of kings and priests.

“While there is still time, then, turn your forces against Bohemia. **Burn, massacre, make deserts everywhere; for nothing could be more agreeable to God** or more useful to the cause of kings than the extermination of the Hussites.”—*Pope Martin V, quoted in Cormenin, History of the Popes, pp. 116-117, as cited in R.W.*

*Thompson, The Papacy and the Civil Power, p. 553.*

H.G. Wells described the papacy as an attempt at world domination through religion. That which Alexander, Caesar, and others had tried to do, but failed, this politico-religious power seemed determined to accomplish.

**The persecutions of this power are also found in other prophecies (Dan. 7:21, 25; 11:33; Matt. 24:21-22; Rev. 12:6, 14; 13:15). But God has a record of every suffering saint; and the martyrs will have a special place of honor in the coming kingdom of glory (Rev. 7:13-17; 20:4).**

**“When a religion is good, I conceive that it will support itself; and, when it cannot support itself, and God does not take care to support, so that its professors are obliged to call for the help of civil power, it is a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one.”—Letter dated October 9, 1780, in the Writings of Benjamin Franklin, Vol. 8, p. 154.**

**Christ predicted that His followers would experience such terrible opposition and persecution:**

**“Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name’s sake.”—Matthew 24:9 (cf. Matt. 5:10-12).**

**“They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me.”—John 16:2-3.**

**“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”—Revelation 2:10.**

The papacy had forbidden the reading of the Bible and destroyed every copy they could find; yet the Waldenses had translated it into their own language. **This people, living hidden in the mountains of the southern Alps, worshiped God and kept the Bible Sabbath.** But, eventually, they

were heavily persecuted by papal armies (every 50-70 years). One of their opponents wrote:

“They do not hear the masses of Christians [Catholics] . . . They flee the image of the Crucifix as the devil, they do not celebrate the feasts [holy days] of the divine Virgin Mary and of the Apostles. **Some indeed celebrate the Sabbath that the Jews observe!**”—*Translated by J.J von Doellinger, Beitrage zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters, Vol. 2, No. 61, p. 662.*

Someday, if we are faithful, we will meet those precious souls who loved Jesus so much that they refused to yield their Bible-based faith, even though it frequently cost them their lives. Will we be as loyal to God today as they were? If so, we will receive the same reward.

**“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.** Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.”—2 *Thessalonians 2:3-6.*

“Q.—Have you any other way of proving that the [Catholic] Church has power to institute festivals of precept?

“A.—**Had she not such power . . . she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week for Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority.**”—*Doctrinal Catechism, p. 174.*

**With the Bible removed from the people, the darkness deepened. Magic rituals, calling on spirits for help, and strange practices soon became regular functions and rites, even in the leading cathedrals.** Speaking of the “magic, astrology, and divination” in the church, Will Durant, who wrote a multi-volume history, spanning down

through the centuries, tells us some of the peculiar practices that all this led to in these darkest days of the Dark Ages:

**“Soon people and priests would use the sign of the cross as a magic incantation to expel or drive away demons. Exorcisms [to cast out demons] were pronounced over the candidate for baptism (*Averroes, Discourse, 14*). The dream cures once sought in the temples of Aesculapius could now be obtained in the sanctuary of Sts. Cosmas and Damian in Rome, and would soon be available at a hundred shrines . . . It was natural that amid war and desolation, poverty and disease, a frightened people should find refuge and solace in chapels, churches, and cathedrals, in mystic lights and rejoicing bells, in processions, festivals, and colorful ritual.”—*Will Durant, Vol. 4, The Age of Faith, p. 75.***

Before passing on to the next time period, it should be mentioned that **four popes deserve special mention as having greatly increased the power of the papacy over the surrounding nations:** Leo I (440-461), Gregory I, the Great (590-604), Gregory VI (1045-1046), and Innocent III (1198-1216). An excellent summary of these four popes will be found in *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church* by Alexander C. Flick, pp. 182-192, 445-469, and 549-565.

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### 5 - THE FIFTH SEAL - A.D. 1517-1755

**“And when He had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” Revelation 6:9-10.**

Through the imagery of four horses, the preceding seals told the history of the apostasy that occurred in the church from the time that the Bible was finished, on down through the Dark Ages to the beginning of the Reformation. **But this fifth seal presents a different message; it symbolizes the righteous dead crying out for these terrible**

persecutions to stop!

**“Souls that had been slain”:** This fifth seal began at about the time of the Reformation in the 16th century (about 1517 onward), which began to bring an end to the Papal rule of 1260 years. But it was not over yet; others were also to witness for their faith as martyrs: “their brethren, that should be killed as they were.”

**“Under the altar”:** This symbol indicates that these were faithful Christians, not apostate ones. Their plea is emphasizing the terrible reality of the horror that continued for centuries without stopping.

Why is this plea included here? God wants His faithful children, all down through the ages as they study the Scriptures, to understand that these terrible persecutions are indeed going to occur,—and that they will indeed be horrible!

Even before the Reformation period started, an intense persecution began by the papacy and Catholic nations against Christians—that would continue for centuries in Europe: first in the 100 Years’ War (1337-1453) and then in the even more terrible 30 Years’ War (1618-1648).

**The state of the dead—Revelation 6:9-10 is a symbol.** None of the Christians slain in earlier times are now “under an altar,” and none of them are alive at this time. (This is an allegorical statement, like “the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto Me from the ground” in Gen. 4:10). They are resting in the grave, awaiting the call of the Life-giver at His Second Advent. Here is what the Bible teaches about this:

**When we die, we go to the grave, not to heaven.**

“All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.”—*Ecclesiastes 3:20*.

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.”—*Ecclesiastes 9:10*.

The Bible repeatedly tells us that, at death, we sleep in the grave.

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.”—*1 Thessalonians 4:13 (1 Cor. 15:17-18, 20; John 11:11-14)*.

“**And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake**, some to everlasting life, and some to shame [and] everlasting contempt.”—*Daniel 12:2 (also Eccl. 3:20; 9:10)*.

**A person that dies is not in heaven, but in the grave; he is no longer aware of what is happening on earth.**

“His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; **in that very day his thoughts perish.**”—*Psalms 146:4 (Job 14:21)*.

“**For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing.**”—*Ecclesiastes 9:5*.

“**For in death there is no remembrance of Thee:** in the grave who shall give Thee thanks?”—*Psalms 6:5*.

“The dead praise not the Lord, **neither any that go down into silence.**”—*Psalms 115:17*.

**Christ will call His faithful ones from their graves at His Second Coming.**

“We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [go ahead of] **them which are 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 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”—*1 Thessalonians 4:15-18*.

**God’s faithful ones will then live with Jesus forever.**

“**So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption**, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, **Death is swallowed up in victory**. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”—*1 Corin-*

*thians 15:54-55.*

**“Neither can they die anymore:** for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.”—*Luke 20:36.*

Notice the difference between the wicked and God’s faithful ones. **The time will come when the wicked will be forever gone, while God’s humble children will live forever.**

**“For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.”**—*Psalm 37:10-11.*

**Death is a sleep**—**Death is like a sound sleep. There is no consciousness;** for the brain is totally gone. When David is resurrected, it will seem but the next instant after he died, “the twinkling of the eye,” as it were.

**In the Bible, it is significant that death is called “sleep” 54 times.** Paul said this about death:

**“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep,** that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.”—*1 Thessalonians 4:13 (also 1 Corinthians 15:16-20).*

The Bible is very certain about this matter: **“The dead know not any thing”** (Eccl. 9:5).

The prophet Daniel wrote: **“Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”**—*Daniel 12:2.*

Jesus described death in very clear words:

**“Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him** out of sleep. Then said His disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. **Howbeit Jesus spake of his death:** but they thought that He had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. **Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.”**—*John 11:11-14.*

Thomas Gray, in his well-known poem *“Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard,”* wrote this:

“The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power, And all that beauty, all that wealth e’er gave, Await alike the inevitable hour: **The paths of glory lead but to the grave . .**

“Can storied urn or animated bust, Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath? Can Honor’s voice provoke the silent dust, Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?”

**“Avenge our blood on them”**: What will happen to the wicked that die? We will learn much more about this when we study Revelation 20.

“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.*

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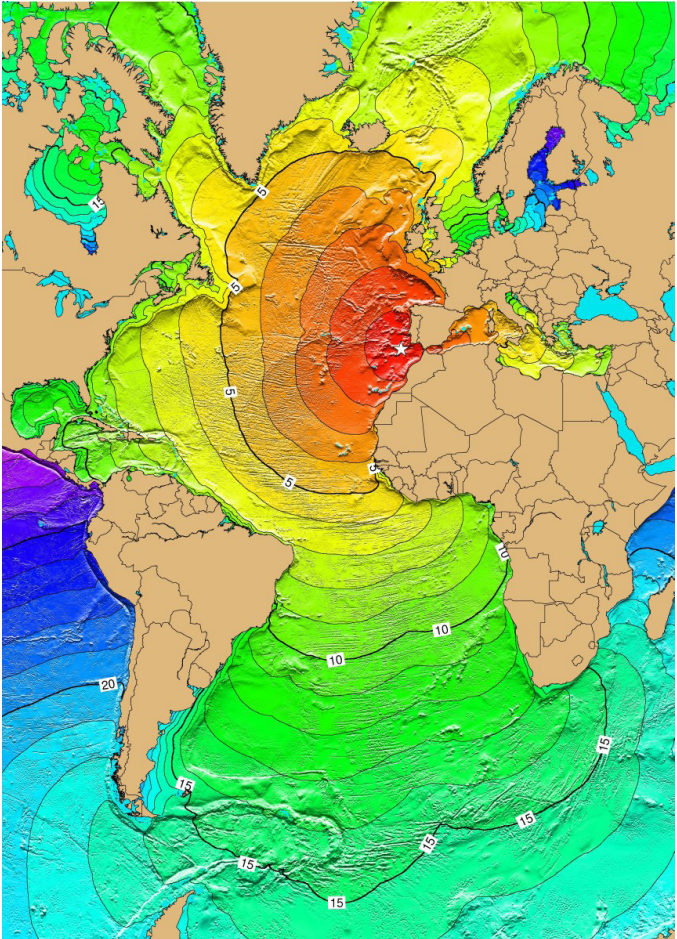
**“And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.” Revelation 6:11.**

**“White robes”**: This word for robe (*stole*) is a different word from that translated “raiment” in Revelation 3:5; 4:4. **This is not merely regular clothing, but a robe of distinction worn by important people. And it is white.** The symbol here is that those who died for their faith are counted in heaven as receiving a special garment of distinction. The martyrs will be very close to Christ at that time, when the wicked are judged (GC 665:2) and then eternally blotted out of existence.

**Those who came out of great tribulation received white robes** (Rev. 7:13-14). They include a multitude that no man can number (Rev. 7:9). **Only overcomers are clothed in white raiment** (Rev. 3:5).

It is from Jesus that you and I can receive that garment of purest white. Please, come to Him that you may have it!





**THE LISBON EARTHQUAKE,  
"THE MOST NOTABLE EARTHQUAKE OF HISTORY,"  
OCCURRED ON THE MORNING OF NOVEMBER 1, 1755.  
AS INDICATED ON THE ABOVE SEISMOLOGICAL MAP,  
ALTHOUGH CENTERED CLOSE TO LISBON, PORTUGAL,  
THE FULL EXTENT OF THIS MAMMOTH QUAKE  
WAS REMARKABLY WIDESPREAD.**

The healing of His seamless dress  
Is by our beds of pain;  
We touch Him in life's throng and press,  
And we are whole again.

—*John Greenleaf Whittier*

**“Rest for a little season”:** At the time of the fifth seal, there was still more suffering to be experienced by the faithful still living on the earth. But the years of trial down here on earth were not to continue forever. Soon the final crisis will occur and Jesus will return for His own. Then the difficulties of earth will be past—and we will be with Jesus forever!

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### 6 - THE SIXTH SEAL - A.D. 1755-1833

**“And I beheld when He had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.” Revelation 6:12-13.**

“The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble; the sun and the moon shall be dark; and the stars shall withdraw their shining.”—*Joel 2:10.*  
(Compare *Isa. 13:9-10* and *Amos 8:9.*)

Now, under the sixth seal, we come to the end of the 1260 years that ended in 1798. Several remarkable events occurred at about that time.

**The Lisbon Earthquake:** There was a great earthquake (Rev. 6:12). This is not the massive, worldwide earthquake which will occur just before Jesus returns (Rev. 8:5; 16:18-20). Instead, this was the very large Lisbon Earthquake which struck Europe and North Africa at 9:40 a.m., November 1, 1755. It was one of the most extensive and severe seismological disturbances ever recorded. The shock of the quake was felt not only in North Africa but also as far away as the West Indies. The earthquake was followed by a tsunami and fires, which caused near-total

destruction of Lisbon and adjoining areas. Geologists today estimate the Lisbon Earthquake approached a magnitude 9. **Estimates place the death toll in Lisbon alone at about 60,000 people, making it one of the deadliest earthquakes in history.**

“The Lisbon Earthquake, which occurred on November 1, 1775, is the most notable earthquake of history.”—*Nelson’s New Loose-leaf Encyclopedia*, art. “Earthquake.”

“A violent shock threw down the greater part of the city. In the course of about six minutes, 60,000 persons perished. The sea first retired and laid the bar dry; it then rolled in, rising 50 feet or more above its ordinary level . . . The area over which this convulsion extended is very remarkable.”—*Sir Charles Lyell, Principles of Geology*, Vol. 2, pp. 147-148.

***The Dark Day: The next great sign of the nearness of the end was the darkening of the sun on May 19, 1780.***

“Candles were used; and hearth fires shone as brightly as on a moonless evening in autumn . . . Fowls retired to their roosts and went to sleep, cattle gathered at the pasture bars and lowed, frogs peeped, birds sang their evening songs, and bats flew about. But the human knew that night had not come.”—*Great Controversy*, 307.

A report, issued by Cambridge University at that time, included this comment: **“This extraordinary darkness came on between the hours of 10 and 11 A.M. and continued till the middle of the next night.”**

“The extent of this darkness was extraordinary. It was observed as far east as Falmouth. To the westward it reached to the farthest part of Connecticut, and to Albany. To the southward, it was observed along the seacoasts; and to the north as far as the American settlements extend.”—*William Gordon, History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the U.S.A.*, Vol. 3, p. 57.

***The falling of the stars: On November 13, 1833, people in the eastern U.S. (and as far west as there were***

settlers to later report it) were awakened to what appeared to be a downpour of stars.

“In the early morning hours thousands of shooting stars were seen descending from the skies. People gathered in the streets to gaze at the remarkable sight. **This was the most extensive and wonderful display of falling stars which has ever been recorded.** From 2 a.m. until broad daylight, the sky being perfectly serene and cloudless, an incessant play of dazzlingly brilliant luminosities continued across the entire sky and was seen all over North America.

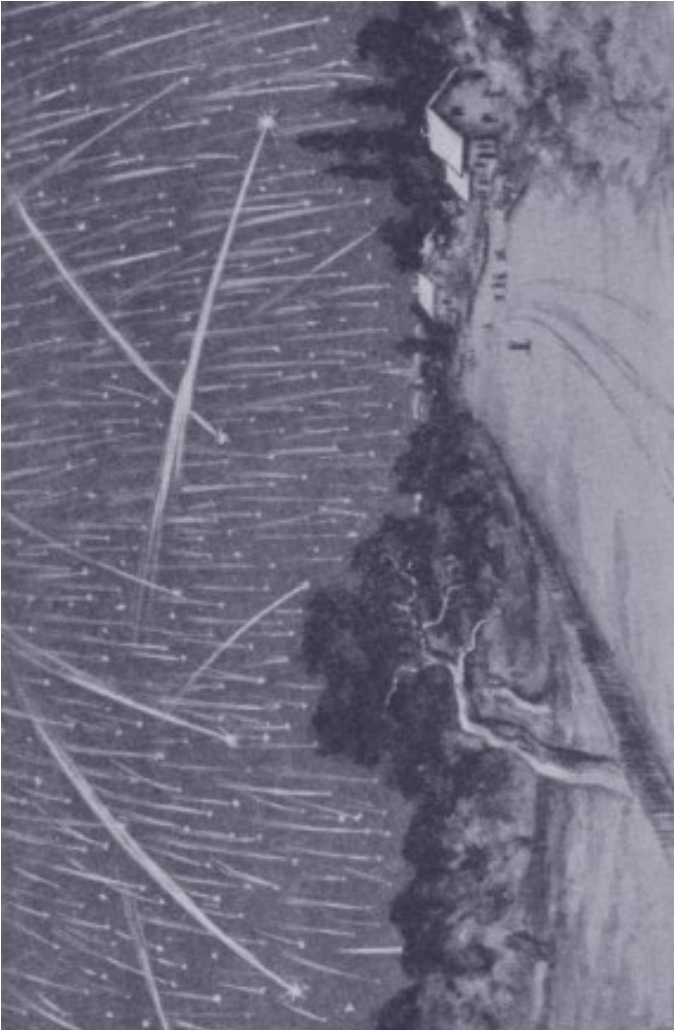
“**The whole firmament over all the United States being then, for hours, in fiery commotion!** No celestial phenomenon has ever occurred in this country, since its first settlement, which was viewed with such intense admiration by one class in the community, or with so much dread and alarm by another . . . **Its sublimity and awful beauty still linger in many minds . . . Never did rain fall much thicker than the meteors fell toward the earth;** east, west, north, and south, it was the same. In a word, the whole heavens seemed in motion.”—*M. Devens, American Progress; or, The Great Events of the Greatest Century, Chap. 28, pars. 1-5.*

“Probably the most remarkable of all the meteoric showers that have ever occurred was that of the Leonids, on November 12-13, 1833.”—*Charles A. Young, Manual of Astronomy, p. 521.*

“**A prophet eighteen hundred years ago foretold it exactly, if we will be at the trouble of understanding stars falling to mean falling stars . . . in the only sense in which it is possible to be literally true.**”—*New York Journal of Commerce of November 14, 1833.*

On a normal night, a careful observer who is scanning a clear, dark sky may see about ten meteors brightly streaking across the sky. **But it is estimated that the 1833 star shower ran to 60,000 or more an hour.** Some people spoke of the event as a “snowstorm” of stars.

“*As a fig tree casteth her untimely figs*”: As normally occurs, the meteors seemed to proceed from a central point.



**A MASSIVE METEORITE SHOWER OCCURRED  
IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS, BEFORE DAWN,  
ON NOVEMBER 13, 1833.**

As the thousands of streaks lingered momentarily, all radiating outward from the common center, they appeared like the ribs of a gigantic umbrella.

**Timing:** Thus was displayed the last of those signs of His coming, concerning which Jesus bade His disciples: “When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors” (Matt. 24:33). *After these signs, John beheld the great events next impending:* the heavens departing as a scroll, the earth quaking, mountains and islands removing out of their places, and the wicked in terror seeking to flee from the presence of the Son of man.

The varied events of this sixth seal continue all the way from chapter 6:12, down to the end of chapter 7.

**We are, at the present time, living between verse 13 (1833) and verse 14 (at the Second Advent).** Verses 14 through 17 describe events which will occur when Jesus appears in the skies to deliver His faithful ones and take them to Himself.

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### 7A - THE SEVENTH SEAL - JESUS COMES

**“And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” Revelation 6:14-17.**

***End of the sixth seal:*** The sixth seal ends with the wicked aware that Jesus is returning to earth to rescue His people. Filled with terror, those who are not ready for His return cry for the rocks and mountains to fall on them. People of all classes and types are here mentioned. **All who have fought against God’s truth would rather be buried alive than to see the face of the One who died to**

save them, the One whom they refused to obey, and whose followers they killed and tormented.

## Revelation 7

# *The Sealing and the Redeemed*

**Brief overview**—In this chapter, we are told about the sealing, the 144,000, and the great multitude who will be redeemed from the earth.

**The pattern in chapters 2 through 7:** The letters to the seven churches, in chapters 2 and 3, encouraged each of the faithful churches, in different periods of history, to remain faithful to the end. This is followed by a **view of heaven** in chapters 4 and 5.

Next comes **the six seals** in chapter 6; this is followed here in chapter 7, first by a **view of the sealing of the faithful** just before the return of Jesus, and then by a **glorious portrayal of the redeemed in heaven**. This present chapter is given to encourage the faithful to persevere, in spite of the hardships and persecution they are enduring.

After this, in chapters 8 and 9, we will learn about **the seventh seal** and then the **first six of the seven trumpets**. After that, beginning in chapter 10, we **enter directly into last-day events, which will carry us all the way through the remainder of Revelation to eternity beyond**. (The seventh trumpet will sound in Revelation 11:15, announcing the Second Advent.)

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

In this chapter, we are first shown an event just prior

to the Second Advent; and then we are given a view of the faithful in heaven, after Christ returns for His own.

**“Four corners”**: This phrase is also found elsewhere in Scripture (Isa. 11:12; Eze. 7:2) and means **all four directions of the compass—north, east, south, and west**. Only the angels of God are able to keep the evil forces in check in the last days.

**“Holding the four winds”**: The four winds are striving (Dan. 7:2), but **the four angels are holding back the forces of evil until God’s faithful ones are fully prepared for Christ’s Second Coming**. This phrase, “four winds,” also represents the four directions of the compass (Dan. 8:8; Mark 13:27).

**After the ascension of Christ, Satan has been in a frenzy to capture and destroy as many as possible**, because he knows his end is near. The heavy persecution he gives to God’s people from that time on down to the present is an evidence of this.

“Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”—*Revelation 12:12*.

But the angels are holding back the winds of strife until the people of God are fully prepared for the final crisis.

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**“And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.” Revelation 7:2-3.**

**“From the east”**: This is the direction from which the glory of God and Christ, at His Second Advent, first appears (Eze. 43:2-5; GC 640-641).

**“Till we have sealed”**: The reason given for holding the winds is until God’s faithful ones are fully prepared



for Christ's coming and the terrible crisis just before it. Their characters will be perfectly "sealed."

In ancient times, a seal was placed on a document to show authenticity and ownership. **The seal on the saved will show that they are genuinely like Jesus in character,** and are fully His property. According to 2 Timothy 2:19, the seal establishes the fact that "the Lord knoweth them that are His."

**"Hurt not the earth":** It is obvious that **the winds of strife are only held back until the faithful are ready for what is ahead,—and then those winds will blow!** (Mar. 266).

**"The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent.** God's long-suffering has ended. The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. **Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble.** As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old."—*Great Controversy*, 614.

**"In their foreheads":** Immediately behind the forehead are the frontal lobes of the brain. **This is the thinking portion of the mind.** It is the part that makes the final decision as to what shall be thought, said, and done. **Those decisions over a period of time determine what our character is like.** The redeemed will have chosen to humbly obey God and help those around them. As a result, they will have the seal in their foreheads. Revelation 7:2-3 is the first of four places in Revelation which mention this sealing in the foreheads of the faithful. The others are Revelation 9:4; 14:9-10; and 20:4.

"Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh

and that cry for all the abominations that be done.”—*Ezekiel 9:4*.

“The seal of the living God will be placed upon those only who bear a likeness to Christ in character.”—7 *Bible Commentary*, 970.

“Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads—it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved—just as soon as God’s people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; the judgments of God are now upon the land . . . that we may know what is coming.”—*Faith I Live By*, 287.

**While the righteous prepare to meet Jesus, the wicked keep rejecting God’s merciful offer to come to Him.** Instead, they choose to remain in their sins. With the passing of time, they become more and more hardened.

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**“And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.”** Revelation 7:4.

**“The number sealed”:** The 144,000 is a symbol of a perfect number, the perfect whole of those who are sealed. Some think that this number is literal; others that it is symbolic. Either way, **it represents those who will be alive during the final crisis, following the close of human probation**, just before Christ returns to earth. At that time, He will translate the living redeemed and call to life the faithful in their graves—and take them all to heaven. More on this later. (GC 649:0, quoted below, clearly identifies those who are in this group).

**Twelve is said to be God’s kingdom number.** In ancient Israel there were 12 tribes, 12 rods, 12 stones gathered from Jordan, 12 stones in the high priest’s breastplate, etc. In the New Testament there are 12 apostles, 12 gates in the New Jerusalem, 12 foundations to the Holy City (which are

the names of the 12 apostles). Also the height of the walls is 144 cubits (12 x 12), while each side is 12,000 furlongs. 144,000 is the square of 12 multiplied by 1,000.

**The point to which we want to give special attention is not the number in that group,—but the character development that is needed, and the importance of obtaining it through the enabling grace of Christ!**

In the statement below, **this special group is identified as those who will have received the seal of God and are protected by Him after the close of human probation, during the great time of trouble** (described in GC, chapter 40). Speaking of that special group, we are told:

“ ‘These are they which came out of great tribulation;’ **they have passed through the time of trouble** such as never was since there was a nation; **they have endured the anguish of the time of Jacob’s trouble; they have stood without an intercessor** through the final outpouring of God’s judgments. But they have been delivered, for they have ‘washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’ ‘In their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault’ before God. ‘Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.’ They have seen the earth wasted with famine and pestilence, the sun having power to scorch men with great heat, and they themselves have endured suffering, hunger, and thirst. But ‘they shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes’ (Revelation 7:14-17).” —*Great Controversy*, 649.

This group is approved of God; for later John sees them with the Lamb on Mt. Zion (Rev. 14:1). They are declared to be without guile or fault (Rev. 14:5). John hears them singing a song that “no man could learn” (Rev. 14:3). They are designated as “firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb” (Rev. 14:4).

There is yet another way in which we can identify the 144,000: **This is the group which is translated to heaven at Christ's Second Advent without having experienced death.** This definition, of course, exactly matches the above description in *Great Controversy*, 649.

**144,000: literal or symbolic?**—*Postscript*: I had not planned to write further on this subject; but, while working on Revelation 19, the present writer discovered something relating to the 144,000.

As many may be aware, **there is a phrase in *Early Writings*, 15, which says "144,000 in number."** This may or may not indicate that the 144,000 is a literal, rather than a symbolic number. That statement is from a description of the first view of an event seen in December 1844. **It does not seem likely that such a brief view would include certainty as to an exact number.**

**It is well-known that many things in Revelation are symbolic and not to be understood literally.** A good example of this is **Revelation 7:5-8, quoted immediately after the mention of the "144,000" in Revelation 7:4, which speaks about 12,000 from each of 12 tribes.** That passage is obviously directly connected with Revelation 7:4, referring to the total count of the tribes (144,000, which is 12 x 12,000). **Yet, in Revelation 7:5-8, no one believes that there are exactly 12,000 sealed from each tribe; it is obviously symbolic.** If that passage (which is directly connected with Revelation 7:4) is symbolic, therefore would we not expect Revelation 7:4 to also be a symbolic number?

At any rate, the present writer found several passages which help explain whether or not the 144,000 is a symbolic number. ***It is not until the close of probation that the exact, literal number of this special group is determined:***

[At the close of probation:] "Every case has been decided for life or death. Christ has made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. **The number of His subjects is made up;** 'the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,' is about to be given to the heirs of salvation, and Jesus

is to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.”—*Great Controversy*, 613-614.

“An angel with a writer’s inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and reported to Jesus that his work was done, and **the saints were numbered** and sealed. Then I saw Jesus, who had been ministering before the ark containing the ten commandments, throw down the censer. He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said, ‘It is done.’”—*Early Writings*, 279.

“When Christ shall cease His work as mediator in man’s behalf, then this time of trouble will begin. **Then the case of every soul will have been decided**, and there will be no atoning blood to cleanse from sin. When Jesus leaves His position as man’s intercessor before God, the solemn announcement is made.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 201.

“**When Jesus ceases to plead for man** [and not beforehand], **the cases of all are forever decided**. This is the time of reckoning with His servants. To those who have neglected the preparation of purity and holiness, which fits them to be waiting ones to welcome their Lord, the sun sets in gloom and darkness, and rises not again. Probation closes; Christ’s intercessions cease in heaven. This time finally comes suddenly upon all . . . They became indifferent and careless, as though His coming were yet in the distance. But while their interest was buried up in their worldly gains, the work closed in the heavenly Sanctuary, and they were unprepared.”—*2 Testimonies*, 191 (also see 2T 691).

**It is after the loud cry has ended, at the general close of probation, that the decision is made as to who are redeemed.** It will come silently and unnoticed as the midnight thief (GC 491; SD 355). It is then that “the mandate will go forth: ‘He that is unjust, let him be unjust still . . . and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still’ ” (8T 316).

The above passages clearly indicate that **the actual number of the redeemed is not determined until the close of probation.** We all agree that God knows the past,

## The Sealing and the Redeemed 165

present, and future. Yet, in relation to who will be saved, we are told that His Spirit consistently appeals to each soul to accept Christ; and Inspiration tells us that **it is not until the Investigative Judgment ends that the number in this special group is determined.** Prior to that time, each person makes his own decision; for he has free will.

If the above passage (GC 613-614) shows that the actual number of the saved is not decided until the close of probation, then it does not seem that *the exact number* of a sizeable portion of them (those who go through the final crisis at the end; GC 649, quoted earlier) would be decided thousands of years earlier.

It is also significant that, during this final gathering in, which occurs during the loud cry, “the sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought,” “hundreds and thousands [of God’s people] were seen visiting families and opening before them the Word of God.” “The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence” (9T 126). As soon as the loud cry ends, probation forever closes. **Yet, before it closes, “hundreds of thousands” are giving the loud cry and bringing many more into the truth. “Hundreds of thousands” include far more than 150,000.**

At that time, **large numbers** will accept the truth (7bc 979; Ev 692; 2SM 16) and help to spread the message (Ev 692-693). **Many backsliders** will return (6T 401).

We know that everyone is elected to be saved. God does not want anyone to be lost, and He gives each of us a lifetime in which make our decision. **But He does not predecide for any of us!**

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.”—*Titus 2:11.*

“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth . . . Who gave Himself a ransom for all.”—*1 Timothy 2:4, 6.*

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”—*2 Peter 3:9.*

“Every one God has predestinated to be ‘conformed to the image of His Son.’ Romans 8:29.”—*Desire of Ages*, 827.

If that is so, then it would seem that God will not disclose, in advance, how many (or any other group in history) will be saved until the final close of probation! Only then will the exact number of this symbolic number, 144,000 (composed of 12,000 symbolic ones from each symbolic tribe of Israel; Revelation 7:5-8), be made up.

Another factor is that, **if it were a literal number, this would be an extremely small number saved from all over the world during the loud cry.** Several decades ago, someone showed me a picture of a football stadium with almost exactly 144,000 people in it. That is not, really, very many people, compared to the 7 billion on Planet Earth today.

Checking on this just now, I find that the largest football stadium in America is the Michigan Stadium in Ann Arbor, which holds 109,901 spectators. The May Day Stadium in Pyongyang, North Korea, holds 150,000.

**“In number”**—All are agreed that “144,000 *in number*” represents a number. But **does the phrase, “in number,” represent an exact number?** For example, **in several passages, “in number” obviously refers to an undetermined, rounded, or uncountable number. Here are several of them:**

**1 - Here are two that are uncountable:**

“And holy angels, as ministers and witnesses, **in number** ‘ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands’ (Rev. 5:11), attend this great tribunal.”—*Great Controversy*, 479 (*uncountable*).

“They are **in number** like the sand upon the sea shore.”—*3 Spiritual Gifts*, 84 (*uncountable*).

**2 - Here are two that are undetermined:**

“The oftener we are mown down by you, the more **in number** we grow; the blood of Christians is seed.”—*Ibid.*, 42 (*undetermined*).

“The other class, who were but few **in number.**”—*I*

*Testimonies, 223 (undetermined).*

### 3 - **Here is one that cannot be determined:**

“As Noah’s descendants increased **in number**, apostasy soon manifested itself.”—*Pacific Union Recorder, November 19, 1903 (undetermined).*

### 4 - **The following two refer to actual historical events; yet both are rounded:**

“Nebuchadnezzar ‘carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king’s mother, and the king’s wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land,’ several thousand **in number**, together with ‘craftsmen and smiths a thousand.’”—*Prophets and Kings, 438 (rounded).*

“And the half, which was the portion of them that went out to war, was **in number** three hundred thousand and seven and thirty thousand and five hundred sheep.”—*Numbers 31:36.*

Keep in mind that **Revelation 7:4 (“144,000”)** is **directly connected with—and the total of—Revelation 7:5-8 (“12,000” of each of the 12 Jewish tribes).** Because they are thus connected, they both would appear to be symbolic. It would seem that, if the 144,000 is a literal number, then only literal Jews would be saved.

**We are told to “strive to be among the 144,000.”**

“Let us strive with all the power that God has given us to be among the hundred and forty-four thousand.”—*7 Bible Commentary, 970 (Review, March 9, 1905).*

This is because **we are to strive to have perfect characters, ready to represent God’s truth in any crisis which might develop**,—even though we may die before that final crisis of the National Sunday Law and loud cry arrives. It is striving for likeness to Christ that counts, not being part of a certain final group.

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**“Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe**



**of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.” Revelation 7:5-8.**

*“Of the tribe”*: In the last verse of the preceding chapter (only five verses earlier), we were told, “For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” (6:17). After that, here in chapter 7, we are told about a large number of people who, in that final crisis, will in the strength of Christ actually be able to stand.

**This listing of 12 tribes emphasizes the fact that common folk will be in that special group. This is an encouragement; you and I can overcome, just as much as anyone else!**

*The list of the tribes given here is somewhat different than that found in the Old Testament* (Num. 1:5-15; Deut. 27:12-13; cf. Gen. 35:22-26; 49:3-28; 1 Chron. 2:1-2).

In this present list, Judah is first (Rev. 5:5), instead of Reuben. Levi is included and Dan is omitted (probably because of the idolatry of that tribe; Judges 18:30-31). Manasseh and Joseph are included and Ephraim is omitted, because he also was “joined to his idols” (Hosea 4:17).

The redeemed Christian church is spiritual Israel (Rom. 2:28-29; 9:6-7; Gal. 3:28-29; 6:16; cf. Gal. 4:28; 1 Peter 1:1; Phil. 3:3).

**This final group will have had a special experience.** All who are saved in heaven will have passed through trials and been overcomers; but these faithful ones, down at the very end of time, will see the whole world given over to Satan. **They will be alive when human probation closes**, when the mercy of God is totally removed from the wicked and Satan has full control of them. **They will witness, but will not experience, the terrible seven last plagues of God’s anger**, as it falls on the wicked. **They will cling to**

Jesus through the time of Jacob's trouble (GC chap 39).

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

**“The great multitude”:** This immense group is separate from the 144,000; and, if we are faithful, we will be included in it,—if we die before the final crisis occurs (since only those who go through that final crisis will be among the 144,000; GC 649:0). People have mentioned to me that they are concerned that they might not be among the 144,000. Yet we are told that many will be laid to rest before the final crisis.

“Many will be laid away to sleep before the fiery ordeal of the time of trouble shall come upon our world.”—*Counsels on Health*, 375.

**The “great multitude” will include all the redeemed of all the ages who are not among the 144,000.** They, with the 144,000, will inherit the eternal home and dwell there happily together, with no one preferred above the other.

It is true that the 144,000 will have a special song of experience. But then the great multitude will have one also! Each will have a song of endurance and faithful service for Jesus.

**None of the redeemed will mourn over the fact that they are not counted among the 144,000. When they arrive in heaven, everyone will rejoice! Eternal life with Jesus is theirs—forever!**

“There the redeemed greet those who led them to the Saviour, and all unite in praising Him who died that human beings might have the life that measures with the life of God. The conflict is over. Tribulation and strife are at an end. Songs of victory fill all heaven

as the ransomed ones take up the joyful strain, Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again, a triumphant conqueror.”—*Acts of the Apostles*, 602.

“When the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, with healing in His wings, **that song will be re-echoed by the voice of a great multitude**, as the voice of many waters, saying, ‘Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.’ Revelation 19:6.”—*Desire of Ages*, 48.

**And right now, before we reach heaven, let us all begin singing one of these songs of victory in Christ!**

“Let us tell of the matchless power of Christ, and speak of His glory, thus **magnifying and lifting up the Lord God of hosts and training ourselves to sing the song of victory in the kingdom of glory**. By beginning to sing songs of triumph and thanksgiving now, we may prepare ourselves to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb when we meet on the sea of glass.”—*Upward Look*, 306.

We are told of one individual who loved the Lord and will, with the 144,000 (although not part of them), be able to serve God and travel to other worlds after the Second Advent. That experience will apply to all of us who are laid to rest before the final crisis begins!

“If you are faithful, **you, with the 144,000**, shall have the privilege of visiting all the worlds and viewing the handiwork of God.”—*Early Writings*, 40 (cf. 2SM 263).

It is true that the 144,000 will undergo a special experience of trial; but we should keep in mind that having a part in that group is not dependent on character development; for all who are redeemed will, through the grace of Christ, have attained it. —But, according to *Great Controversy*, 649:0 (quoted earlier), to be one of the 144,000 depends whether or not they will be alive at a certain time in history.

**“The Lamb”**: Jesus conquered Satan and the forces of evil by being willing to be offered up as a sacrifice. While Satan relied on deception and force, Jesus won by kindness and submission to God:

“In the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had

been slain.”—*Revelation 5:6.*

**“Palms”**: These are symbols of rejoicing and victory (John 12:13; AA 153; also compare Revelation 7:9 and Mark 14:65).

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**“And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen.” Revelation 7:11, 12.**

**“Angels”**: And then all the angels will join the redeemed in praising God! What a happy time they will have together! And it will continue on for eternity!

**“Amen”**: From the Hebrew, *amen*, meaning **“firmly established, sure, indeed, verily.”** Also see Numbers 5:22; Deuteronomy 27:15-16; 1 Corinthians 14:16; Romans 1:25; Galatians 1:5. It is also used at the close of doxologies.

Matthew 5:18; 6:2, 5, 16 (and frequently in John 3:3, 5, 11, etc.), Jesus used it in the sense of “verily.” This usage of the word, to confirm and strengthen His own spoken words in Scripture, is peculiar to Him. No one else used it in this way.

**“Blessing”**: This is a sevenfold blessing, similar to the one found in Matthew 5:12. These seven are given triumphantly in vindication of the character and ways of God and of Christ.

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**“And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Revelation 7:13-14.**

**“What are these?”**: The answer is both the 144,000 and the great multitude. All have experienced tribula-

tion, washed their robes, and made them white through the enabling sacrifice of Christ their Lord. Day by day, they chose God's ways, and they had gotten the victory. **All are overcomers in the battle against sin. All—both the 144,000 and the great multitude—will share equally in the joys of eternity.**

**“Made them white”**: There is a close connection between moral victory over sin and white garments. **Instead of defiling their garments, they have cleansed them.**

“[They] have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy.”—*Revelation 3:4*.

But, as Revelation 7:14 reveals, **it was only through Christ that they were able to purify their lives.**

**“Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”**—*Revelation 1:5-6*.

**“Washed their robes”**: A variant reading of the Greek is “loosed us from our sins.” **Along with the washing of their robes, the faithful had separated from their sins.** To be loosed from sin is to cast it out of the life, and thus be separated from its power and penalty (John 3:16; Matt. 18:27; Luke 13:16).

**“Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.”**—*Revelation 1:5*.

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**“Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”** Revelation 7:15-17.

**“Feed them”**: The Lamb shall “feed them.” Actually, the meaning here is **“the Lamb shall shepherd them.”** He

will lead His flock to the water of life, and they will drink deeply and be satisfied.

“These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men.”—*Revelation 14:4*.

## **Revelation 8**

# *The Seventh Seal and the First Four Trumpets*

*Brief overview*—In this chapter, the seventh seal is opened; and then, as each war trumpet is sounded, the first four periods of barbarian attacks on the Pagan Roman Empire are viewed.

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### **7B - THE SEVENTH SEAL - JESUS RETURNING**

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

*“Seventh seal”*: The first six of the seven seals were explained in chapter 6. Chapter 7 briefly interrupted the sequence in order to show the final victory of those who overcome. We now come to the seventh seal.

*“Silence in heaven”*: In contrast with the remarkable events in the six seals, **the seventh mentions only one, but it is very important.**

**When probation for the human race forever closes and Christ ends His mediation in the heavenly Sanctuary, He arises and leaves, preparatory to returning to our world to deliver His faithful ones, both alive and dead, and take them to heaven. (Read GC 613-614.) When Jesus leaves heaven to come to earth, all the angels accompany Him (Matt. 25:31). At that time, there will be “silence in heaven” (Rev. 8:1).**

“Jesus is coming . . . in the glory of the Father and with all the retinue of holy angels to escort Him on His way to earth. **All heaven will be emptied of the angels.**”—*Early Writings*, 110.

“**Half an hour**”: Based on the formula of a day for a year (Num. 14:34; Eze. 4:6; cf. Rev. 8:1), this would be equal to about one literal week.

It is of interest that one writer mentions that the redeemed are caught up in the clouds at the Second Coming, and their return to heaven with Jesus takes a full week (cf. EW 16).

*As we conclude 8:1, an entirely new prophetic scene is shown to the prophet John. We begin the seven trumpets:*

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**“And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand.”**  
**Revelation 8:2-4.**

“**With the prayers**”: We here learn that, in spite of all the terrible persecutions and martyrdoms of the Dark Ages, **the prayers of God’s people** (“which are the prayers of the saints” in Revelation 5:8) **are heard by Jesus in heaven.**

“**Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.**”—*Psalms* 141:2.

“**As the saints’ prayers came up to Him, the incense in the censer would smoke, and He [Jesus] would offer up their prayers with the smoke of the incense to His Father.**”—*Early Writings*, 32.

“As the prayers of the saints in faith came up to Jesus, and He offered them to His Father, **a sweet fragrance arose from the incense. It looked like smoke of most**

**beautiful colors . . .** As the incense ascended up to the Father, the excellent glory came from the Father's throne to Jesus, and **from Jesus it was shed upon those whose prayers had come up like sweet incense.**"—*I Spiritual Gifts*, 160.

Standing in the Sanctuary as our great High Priest, He symbolically offers incense with the prayers of the saints being presented to God. **What a precious promise is this!** Every cry for help, every plea for forgiveness and empowerment to put away sin from our lives will be heard and receive a reply.

"It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, **who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"—*Romans 8:34-35 (1 John 2:1)*.

"Christ at His ascension appeared in the presence of God to plead His blood in behalf of penitent believers."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 357.

**But it is urgent that we keep in mind that the incense is only offered with our prayers.** If we do not ask for what we need, we may not receive it. We need to take all those needs and each of our problems to the Father through Jesus. Especially should we pray for overcoming strength to avoid the sins with which Satan tempts us. And we should also continually send up our praise to the Father and the Son (Heb. 13:15).

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**"And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake."**  
**Revelation 8:5.**

**"Cast it into the earth":** This verse symbolically summarizes the events immediately following the close of probation, when great crises occur on earth as the plagues are poured out on the wicked. (*Read Great Controversy*,



*chapter 39. More on this when we view Revelation 16.)*

When Jesus declares “It is done” (Rev. 16:17) and pronounces the words, “He that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is unjust, let him be unjust still” (22:11), human probation will have forever closed.

**“Earthquake”**: In the midst of all this turmoil after probation ends, **an immense earthquake occurs** (GC 637, 657). It destroys buildings all over the world and is mentioned as an important part of the seventh plague, just prior to the Second Advent.

**This massive earthquake**, which is mentioned in Revelation (Rev. 8:5; 16:17-20), **is worldwide in scope** (GC 636-637, 657) and occurs just before Christ returns for His people. This is not the Lisbon earthquake mentioned in Revelation 6:12. *(More information about this earthquake will be given when we come to Revelation 11:19.)*

“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.”—*Revelation 16:18.*

*Now the scene changes to the first of the seven trumpets. We are now returning to an earlier period in church history. (This section will continue throughout chapters 8 and 9.)*

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### 1 - FIRST TRUMPET - A.D. 395-419

**“And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.”** Revelation 8:6-7.

**“Seven trumpets”**: This is the third special set of “sevens” in the book of Revelation—the letters to the seven churches, the seven seals, and now the seven trumpets. The letters to the churches reveal events about God’s

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people; the seals show God's professed people interacting with the world; the trumpets will show events in the world as they affect God's people.

**Trumpets are sounded in time of warfare; and these trumpets are about warfare!** We will here learn about events of history from a different angle,—this time from the main wars and persecutions that had varying effects on God's people. **We will learn of forces that attacked Rome. The first four trumpets are about Pagan Rome as it was breaking up; the last three are about events after that.**

**“First angel sounded”:** This time period covers A.D. 395 to 419. Barbarian tribes from the north had begun to invade various parts of the Roman Empire.

**“Hail”:** Just as hail comes from the cold upper sky, so these savage groups invaded from the colder parts of northern Europe; and they were just as destructive as a hailstorm.

**The first to arrive were the Goths, under Alaric (king of the Visigoths** from A.D. 395–410). Arriving from the mouth of the Danube in present day Romania, he was the first Germanic leader to take the city of Rome. Having originally desired to settle his people in the Roman Empire, **Alaric finally sacked the city on August 24, 410, marking the decline of imperial power in the West.**

This was the first time, in almost 800 years, that Rome had fallen to an enemy. (The previous sack of Rome had been accomplished by the Gauls, under Brennus, in 387 B.C.) The sacking of 410 is seen as a major landmark in the decline and fall of the Western Roman Empire. But Alaric died that same year; and so, in 412, the Goths headed back north.

**“Fire and blood”:** These pagan tribes unmercifully slaughtered in the areas that they ravaged. Entire towns were destroyed and good farming land desolated.

**“Third part”:** This fraction occurs at least nine times in the book of Revelation (Rev. 8:7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12; 9:15, 18; 12:4).

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## 2 - SECOND TRUMPET - A.D. 420-460

**“And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.” Revelation 8:8-9.**

**“Second angel sounded”:** The *Vandals* were an East Germanic tribe that entered the late Roman Empire during the 5th century. They were best known for their **sack of Rome in 455**. Their leader was **Genseric** (Gaiseric).

**“Fire into the sea”:** At about the same time, an invasion came from the sea. **Using warships, Genseric successfully raided various southern portions of the Empire.**

This continued for thirty-five years (420-455). With a large fleet, Genseric first looted the coasts of the Eastern and Western Empires. After Attila the Hun’s death, however, the Romans could afford to turn their attention back to the Vandals, who were in control of some of the richest lands of their former empire.

**On June 2, 455**, Pope Leo the Great received Genseric and begged him to abstain from murder and destruction by fire, and to be satisfied with pillage. He agreed, and the gates of the city were thrown open to him. **The Vandals then plundered the wealth of Rome**—including the furnishings from the Temple at Jerusalem which, after destroying the city, Titus had carried to Rome in A.D. 70.

The Romans were determined to destroy the Vandal kingdom; their first retaliation was in 460, when both Western and Eastern empires sent fleets against the Vandals. The Vandals captured the Western fleet and destroyed the Eastern through the use of fire ships.

In the 470s, the Romans abandoned their policy of war against the Vandals. Instead, the Western general, Ricimer, reached a treaty with the Vandals; and, **in 476, Genseric was able to conclude a peace treaty with Constantinople.** Now in full control of the islands of the western Mediter-

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ranian, he was twice heavily defeated by the Berbers from North Africa in 496–530.

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### 3 - THIRD TRUMPET - A.D. 434-453

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

**“Fell a great star”:** The *Huns* entered Europe from central Asia, about A.D. 372, and first settled along the lower Danube. Under their new leader, *Attila the Hun* (ruled the Huns from 434 until his death in 453), they moved west. He became one of the most fearsome enemies of the Western and Eastern Roman Empires. Attila invaded the Balkans twice and then marched through Gaul (modern France) as far as Orléans before being defeated at the Battle of Châlons. **The forces of Theodoric (king of the Visigoths; 418-451) contributed decisively to the victory of the Romans over those of Attila the Hun in June 451, but Theodoric himself was killed during the battle.** Attila retreated in disarray. But it was a victory that the Romans came close to losing. Attila decided not to attack either Constantinople or Rome. After a short period of marauding in Italy, Attila died in 453. Almost immediately, the Huns disappeared from history.

**“Wormwood”:** This is *Artemisia absinthium*, a very bitter herb that is mentioned nine times in the Bible. Here it indicates that the waters (representing people; Rev. 17:15) became very bitter. **It denotes the bitter consequences of Attila’s attacks.** The whole breadth of Europe, from the Volga to the Danube, was invaded, occupied, and desolated by the hordes of Attila.

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### 4 - FOURTH TRUMPET - A.D. 476-538

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

**“Sun, moon, and stars”**: These were the final leaders of the Roman Empire. **With the end of Western Rome in 476, the last of its emperors ceased to reign.** One puppet emperor after another had been crowned, until at last a mere boy, Romulus Augustulus, was given the Roman purple. Then in 476, Odoacer (433-493), head of the Heruli, declared that the name and office of the Roman emperor of the West should be abolished—and the Senate bowed in submission. From that time till his death, Odoacer was king of Italy.

The Roman senate and consulship were no longer ruling powers, but they were permitted to continue for a time. —Yet 476 was only about 159 years after the time of Constantine, who had tried so hard to use Sunday sacredness as the way to unite the Empire so it could withstand the heathen tribes.

**“Was darkened”**: The Ostrogoths were a branch of the Goths (the other branch being the Visigoths). **The Ostrogoths, an East Germanic tribe, played a major role in political events of the last decades of the Roman Empire.** The Ostrogoths established the Kingdom of Italy, a relatively short-lived successor state of the Western Roman Empire. **Their power reached its greatest height under Theodoric the Great, king of the Ostrogoths and regent of the Visigoths.** He was allied by marriage with the Vandals as well as with the Burgundians and the Franks under Clovis I.

He liked the Roman way of life, ruled peacefully, and was not a problem. But the pope of Rome wanted him eliminated—in order to gain full control of the western half of the Empire for himself. *This is how it happened:*

The greatest of all Ostrogothic rulers, the childhood

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of Theodoric the Great (454-526; ruled Italy 493-526) was spent at Constantinople as a diplomatic hostage, where he was carefully educated.

**Theodoric the Great was sometimes the friend, sometimes the enemy, of the Empire.** In the former case he was clothed with various Roman titles and offices, as patrician and consul; but in all cases alike he remained the national Ostrogothic king. Theodoric is also known for his attainment of support from the Catholic Church, which he gained by appeasing Pope Hormisdas (514-523) in 520. **During his reign, Theodoric, who was an Arian, allowed “freedom of religion,” which had not occurred previously in Italy.** However, he did try to appease the Pope and to keep his alliance with the Church strong. He saw the Pope as an authority not only in the Church but also over Rome.

Theodoric sought to revive Roman culture and government; and, in doing so, he greatly helped the Italian people. **So he set out in 488, by commission from the Byzantine emperor, Zeno, to recover Italy from Odoacer (head of the Heruli).**

By 493 Ravenna was taken, where Theodoric set up his capital. **It was also in that year that Odoacer was killed by Theodoric’s own hand. Ostrogothic power was now fully established over Italy,** Sicily, Dalmatia, and the lands to the north of Italy. In this war the Ostrogoths and Visigoths made peace. The power of Theodoric was practically extended over a large part of Gaul and over nearly the whole of the Iberian Peninsula. Theodoric also attempted to forge an alliance with the Frankish and Burgundian kingdoms by means of a series of diplomatic marriages. This strengthening of power eventually led the Byzantine emperor, Justinian (483-565; ruled 527-565), to fear that Theodoric would become too strong. **So Justinian entered into an alliance with the Frankish king, Clovis I, to ultimately overthrow the Ostrogoths.**

In 535, Justinian commissioned his leading general, Belisarius (505-565), to attack the Ostrogoths. Belisarius quickly captured Sicily and then crossed into Italy, where he

captured Naples and Rome in 536. He then marched north, taking Mediolanum (Milan) and the Ostrogoth capital of Ravenna in 540.

**Belisarius attacked and defeated the Ostrogoths in 552. The Roman consulate came to its end; and, soon after, the senate did also.**

*Justinian then agreed to transfer the entire control of the western part of the Empire to the pope* (Pope Vigilius; 537-555), who immediately set to work to increase his power. This fulfilled a prophecy in Daniel 7 and Revelation 13:

“And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.”—*Daniel 7:24*.

“And the Dragon [Pagan Rome] gave him [the papacy] his power, and his seat [the city of Rome] and great authority.”—*Revelation 13:2*.

**The decree of Justinian, transferring control of the western half of the Empire to the pope, was written in 532, but not announced until 538. This date marked the beginning of the 1260 years of papal domination.**

**“In the preamble to the decree, Justinian declared that he had been diligent both in subjecting and in uniting to the Roman See all the clergy of the entire region of the East, and expressed a firm resolve never to permit any matter affecting the general state of the church to be transacted without notifying the head of all the churches [the pope].”**—*A.H. Newman, Manual of Church History, Vol. 1, p. 403.* (Note: *The pope already controlled the clergy in the West.*)

**The prophecy of Daniel 2 had declared that Rome would be divided into ten parts, while Daniel 7 said it would develop ten horns. —Yet the prophecies had predicted that Rome would not be conquered by another world empire, but would be handed over to the papacy.**

It had also been predicted that ten kings would try to overcome it. By A.D. 476, there were the ten separate pow-

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ers which had gained control of what had formerly been part of the Roman Empire. But **by 538, as predicted, three of them had been “plucked up by the roots.”**

*Here are the three that were eliminated, so the papacy could gain control:*

1. The **Heruli** in Italy (*uprooted in 512*)
2. The **Vandals** in North Africa, with their capital at Carthage (*uprooted in 533*)
3. The **Ostrogoths**, originally in what is now Austria (*uprooted from the city of Rome in 538; and entirely blotted out in 552*)

*Here are the seven which remained:*

4. The **Lombards** (Lombardy)
5. The **Visigoths** (southwest Gaul and Spain)
6. The **Suevi** (western Spain; now Portugal)
7. The **Burgundians** (in west Switzerland and south-east Gaul)
8. The **Alemanni** (North Switzerland)
9. The **Franks** (Gaul; modern France)
10. The **Angles** and Saxons (Britain)

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

**“Woe, woe, woe”:** This word, *woe* (in the Greek) means a cry of deepest sorrow. This last verse of Revelation 8 introduces chapter 9 and the remaining trumpets. The next two woes (the fifth and sixth trumpets) would bring devastating horrors, unmatched by those of the first four trumpets in chapter 8. The seventh trumpet (the third woe) would bring a crisis upon the entire world.

**A new, non-Christian power was to arise** and would eventually form itself into a major, dynamic power—until another prophecy would cause it to collapse. *All this is covered in chapter 9.*



## Revelation 9

# *The Fifth and Sixth Trumpets*

**Brief overview**—This chapter provides an entirely different survey of history; this one is of the Muslim conquests, divided into two periods, from A.D. 632 to 1840.

**Introduction:** The last three trumpets are called the “three woes,” because they were even more terrible than the four trumpets preceding them. They are also different because **a new non-Christian religion is here introduced into the world, a religion of darkness, almost the exact opposite to the teachings of Jesus.**

The rise of the Muslims, and the desolations they were responsible for, are fearfully described in this chapter. **At the time indicated in this chapter, while the pope ruled in the city of Rome, the fifth and sixth trumpets tell of attacks on the eastern portions of the former Roman Empire.** The Emperor of the eastern half of the Roman Empire came to his end, with the fall of Constantinople in 1453.

**Islam begins**—*Here is a brief overview of how it started:*

**For the last 22 years of his life, beginning at age 40 in 610, Muhammad started receiving spirit communications.** Having married a wealthy widow, **he would spend many hours in a quiet place outside the city of Mecca. While meditating, he would experience convulsions and receive communications from a spirit.** Unable to read or write, the information given him, known as the *Qur'an* (*Koran*), was later recited by him to helpers, who recorded them on palm leaves. (Muhammad was never able to read or write.)

After 12 years of preaching his message in Mecca, in 622, Muhammad and the Muslims performed the Hijra (“emigration”) 210 miles south to the city of Medina (formerly known as Yathrib). Muhammad there established his political and religious authority. Two battles were then fought against Meccan forces: the Battle of Badr in 624, which was a Muslim victory, and the Battle of Uhud in 625, which ended inconclusively. Meccan trade routes were cut off as Muhammad brought surrounding desert tribes under his control. **By 629 Muhammad was victorious in the conquest of Mecca; and, by the time of his death in 632 (at the age of 62), he ruled over the Arabian Peninsula.**

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### 5 - FIFTH TRUMPET - A.D. 632-1449

**“And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.” Revelation 9:1-2.**

**“A star fell”**: Literally “a star already fallen.” The seven stars, in Revelation one, were messengers sent by Jesus to the churches. But here we find a star already fallen. **This may be Muhammad** (c. 570–June 8, 632), the author of the *Koran* and prophet of Islam. He claimed to have journeyed to heaven and back. **In his hand is a key of circumstance, enabling him to arouse the peoples of the desert to invade one territory after another**, while the nations of Europe were preoccupied with fighting one another.

Others suggest that this “star already fallen” was Satan, who earlier fell from heaven and encouraged the Arabs to start this new religion.

**“The bottomless pit”**: Literally the “pit of the bottomless place.” A place utterly desolate is opened by **this strange, new leader**. From out of it, a flood of attacks and takeovers occurred.

**“Sun and air darkened”**: This is not a kingdom of light, but one of darkness, which expanded by terrible conquests. Its adherents were taught that to die in battle provided them with immediate entrance into a heaven of sensual delights.

**“Darkening smoke”**: This new teaching made it difficult for people to discover the Christian faith.

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**“And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.” Revelation 9:3.**

**“Locusts”**: This is speaking about an invasion of people who were like desolating locusts. The six-inch desert locusts, *Schistocerca gregaria*, are the most destructive of locust species. Under favorable environmental conditions, a few solitary individuals can dramatically multiply, form large swarms able to migrate great distances, and threaten agriculture over a large part of Africa, the Middle East, and Southwest Asia. One of the plagues of Egypt was an invasion of locusts (Ex 10:13-15).

**“Scorpions”**: These have eight legs and are easily recognized by the pair of grasping claws and the narrow, segmented tail, carried in a characteristic forward curve over the back, ending with a venomous stinger. Though they have a fearsome reputation as venomous, only 25 species (out of 1,400 worldwide) have venom capable of killing a human being. Scorpions are known for their hostility toward people (Eze. 2:6; Luke 10:19; 11:12).

**Thus two of the most feared common insects—locusts and scorpions—are mentioned here to symbolize this strange, marauding, conquering power.**

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**“And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.” Revelation 9:4.**

**“Not hurt the grass”**: Arab conquerors would not kill Christians and Jews as long as they submitted to the payment of tribute.

**“Only those men”**: Locusts normally destroy vegetation, not men. But these were a different kind of “locusts,” destroying not growing plants,—but those people who were not God’s faithful ones.

**“Those men which have not the seal”**: This could include papal Rome and the nations of Europe submitting to its dominion; this is because they did not have God’s “seal,” which is His true Sabbath. They had set up a false sabbath and were enforcing it.

“Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples.”—*Isaiah 8:16*.

**The seal of God’s authority**—The seal of a lawgiver must show three things: (1) his name; (2) his official position, title, or authority, and so his right to rule; and (3) the extent of his dominion and jurisdiction. **You will find all three identifiers in the fourth of the Ten Commandments** (Ex. 20:8-11): “In six days, (1) the Lord (name); (2) made (office, Creator); (3) heaven and earth (dominion).” **This commandment alone, therefore, contains “the seal of the living God”** and shows God’s authority to enact all the commandments. His requirement that we obey them is clear evidence that He, the Creator God, is above all other gods—who are therefore false gods.

**“It [the Sabbath] is to be remembered and observed as the memorial of the Creator’s work. Pointing to God as the Maker of the heavens and the earth, it distinguishes the true God from all false gods.** All who keep the seventh day signify by this act that they are worshipers of Jehovah. Thus the Sabbath is the sign of man’s allegiance to God as long as there are any upon the earth to serve Him. The fourth commandment is the only one of all the ten in which are found both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It is the only one that shows by whose authority the law is given. **Thus it contains**

the seal of God, affixed to His law as evidence of its authenticity and binding force.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 307.

“The living righteous will receive the seal of God prior to the close of probation.”—*Maranatha*, 211.

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**“And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.” Revelation 9:5-6.**

**“Not kill, but torment”**: Both locusts and scorpions torment people, but seldom kill them. Conquered peoples were not slain, as long as they paid tribute.

**“Shall seek death”**: Life under Muslim rule was often far from pleasant.

While this power attacked the Eastern Roman empire, it did not manage to destroy it completely.

**“Five months”**: In prophetic time, with a day equaling a year (Num. 14:34; Eze. 4:6), five prophetic months would equal 150 literal years. **For 150 years this strange power would emerge from its desert areas—and attack the eastern part of what was once the Roman Empire.**

The dating of this is July 27, 1299, to 1449 (150 years). While Islam began about 622 in Medina, it was during this later 150 years that the Muslims had “a king over them” (Rev. 9:11).

Osman (Othman) I (1259-1326) was the traditional founder of the Ottoman Empire. **His first attack upon the Greek Empire, which, according to the historian Gibbon, took place on July 27, 1299, marks the beginning of the five-month (150 year) period of torment,** described in Revelation 9:7-10. Repeated attacks were made during this period on the eastern Roman Empire.

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**“And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.” Revelation 9:7-10.**

**“Shapes like horses”**: This would be a reference to the fact that the Muslims would furiously attack on horses. Arabian horses are known to be strong, powerful animals.

**“Five months”**: A second mention of this prophetic number, in order to emphasize it as something to be studied out.

**“Crowns of gold”**: These were the yellow turbans which these raiders wore. Their long hair was either braided up or loose.

**“Teeth of lions”**: These indicate the fierceness of these men in the midst of battle.

**“Many horses running to battle”**: Arab warriors did not march in battle formation as did regular soldiers, but speedily rode into battle, suddenly appearing to the view of their enemies.

**“Stings in their tails”**: Isaiah describes the power of false teachers in these significant words: “The ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail” (Isa. 9:15).

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**“And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.” Revelation 9:11.**

**“Had a king”**: The rise of Othman to power and the beginning of the Ottoman Empire was discussed earlier in

comments for 9:5-6.

**“*Abaddon and Apollyon*”**: The Latin and Greek words are given here: *Abaddon* means “the destroyer” and *Apollyon* is “one that exterminates.” This is the only time that either word is found in the Bible.

***This first woe ended in the year 1449, and now the second woe begins.***

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#### 6 - SIXTH TRUMPET - A.D. 1449-1840

**“And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.” Revelation 9:13-16.**

**“*Four horns of the golden altar*”**: The golden altar (the altar of incense in the first apartment of the earthly tabernacle) had four horns, one on each corner (Ex. 37:25-26). **We are here shown the golden altar in the heavenly Sanctuary** (also mentioned in Revelation 8:3-5).

It is of interest that Muslims do not directly “pray” to Allah. Instead, when they kneel with their faces on their rugs, they are told to silently recite portions of the Koran. Indeed, they are taught that it is not possible to pray directly to him.

**“*River Euphrates*”**: It was from the region of the Euphrates that the Turks entered the Byzantine Empire. However, it may be that the name should be used symbolically.

In ancient Israel, the Euphrates constituted the northern boundary of the land which ideally they were to occupy (Deut. 1:7-8; 11:24; Joshua 1:4), and which, at the height of their power, they dominated, at least to some extent (1 Kgs. 4:21).

Beyond the Euphrates were the heathen nations of the north which repeatedly swept down and engulfed Israel (Jer. 1:14).

**“Loose the four”:** While the fifth trumpet referred to the Saracens, the sixth trumpet describes the Turks (Ottomans). The Turkish Empire had four sultanates: Aleppo, Iconium, Damascus, and Baghdad.

**“For an hour, day, month, and year”:** This prophetic number equals 391 years and 15 days; and it is a remarkable Bible prophecy which reached its fulfillment on August 11, 1840:

“In the year 1840, another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, **Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman Empire.** According to his calculations, this power was to be overthrown ‘in A.D. 1840, sometime in the month of August;’ and only a few days previous to its accomplishment he wrote: ‘Allowing the first period, 150 years, to have been exactly fulfilled before Deacozes ascended the throne by permission of the Turks, and that the 391 years, fifteen days, commenced at the close of the first period, **it will end on the 11th of August, 1840, when the Ottoman power in Constantinople may be expected to be broken.** And this, I believe, will be found to be the case.’ ”—*Great Controversy, 334-335 (Josiah Litch, in Signs of the Times, and Expositor of Prophecy, August 1, 1840).*

**“At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations.** The event exactly fulfilled the prediction.”—*Great Controversy, 334-335.*

This prophetic period extended from July 27, 1449, to August 11, 1840. On the 11th of August 1840, on board a ship, the Turkish sultan signed a document which forever ended the power of the Turkish Sultan. **This authority over**



the domains of the former Ottoman Empire (including modern Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt) had been transferred to four European nations (England, Austria, Prussia, and Russia).

Prior to that time, the Ottomans had continued attacks on the eastern portions of the former Roman Empire.

The exact date that this remarkable prophecy would end was announced and published by Josiah Litch (of Philadelphia), in American newspapers of the Eastern States, two years prior to its fulfillment. A short time before its fulfillment, Litch said it would occur on August 11.

Within a few months, Litch reported that he had “received letters from more than one thousand prominent infidels, some of them leaders of infidel clubs, in which they stated that they had given up the battle against the Bible and had accepted it as God’s revelation to man.”

“In 1840 . . . Great Britain, Russia, and Austria agreed to present an ultimatum to the pasha and force its acceptance by arms, and the next year all the powers agreed that the Straits be closed to the war vessels of all nations, and Turkey passed . . . to the collective tutelage of the powers.”—*Wilbur W. White, The Process of Change in the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 242-243.

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**“And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.” Revelation 9:17-19.**

*“Having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone”*: Red, yellow and blue were the colors that these Turkish warriors wore.

**“Heads of horses as lions”:** The Arabian war horses were trained to ride to the attack. They appeared very fierce as they suddenly appeared in the camps of their enemies with warriors brandishing long, curved swords.

**“Out of their mouths issued fire and smoke”:** The horses of the Arabian marauders seemed to breathe out fire and smoke. This was because the use of gunpowder had finally been developed, and guns and cannons had been invented. It is said that, as Arabs’ pistols were fired, it almost seemed as if fire were coming from the horses.

Gunpowder, reportedly produced from saltpeter, sulphur, and charcoal is a Chinese invention. **Earliest records of the formula date to the 800s.** By 1350, however, Petrarch was able to make the observation that guns had become “as common and familiar as any other kind of arms.” **The Ottoman Turks embraced gunpowder with enthusiasm,** using it with spectacular effect during their assault on Constantinople in 1453 (*Jack Kelly Gunpowder: The History of the Explosive that Changed the World*).

**No longer were spears and swords the major weapons in battle.** By this time, the Europeans also used less body armor in warfare; this was because the body armor they wore could frequently be penetrated by bullets.

**“Third part of men killed”:** Whereas their enemies had formerly only been tormented, now they were being slain in large numbers by the Arabs. This gunpower brought the Eastern Roman Empire finally to its political end. In this woe, we see the forces of Islam again attacking suddenly without warning, but now with explosives.

It was by the use of great cannons that the Arabs were at last able to breach the walls of Constantinople (May 29, 1453). In preparation for the attack, Mehmet II (1432-1481) hired a European craftsman to manufacture seven huge cannons, including one 25-ton monster that could fire stone balls almost a mile.

“Quite an agreement exists among the commentators in applying the prophecy concerning the fire, smoke,

and brimstone to the use of gunpowder by the Turks in their warfare against the Eastern Empire.”—*Uriah Smith, Daniel and the Revelation, p. 510.*

**“Mouth and tails”**: Regarding the men directing the terrible battles, who claim to be prophets and religious leaders, as mentioned earlier, “the prophet that teacheth lies . . . is the tail” (Isa. 9:15).

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**“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.” Revelation 9:20-21.**

**“Repented not”**: In spite of these judgments, the papacy and the nations of Europe which adhered to an apostate Christianity refused to repent and return to Christ and obedience to the truths of the Bible.

**The fall of Constantinople**—It was during this period that the capital of the Eastern Empire finally fell. Along with it, the eastern half of the Empire also ceased to exist.

*This was an important event in history; for, because of its strong walls, the city had held out against the Muslims and other attackers for centuries.*

Constantinople had been founded, by the Roman emperor, Constantine, on the site of the already existing city of Byzantium.

**In November of A.D. 324, Constantine led his aides and engineers back from the harbor and plotted out his future capital.** He brought in thousands of workmen to raise city walls, fortifications, administrative buildings, palaces, and homes. It was dedicated as the capital of the Eastern Empire on May 11, 330.

**In later centuries, the eastern half of the former Roman Empire became known as the Byzantine Empire;**

and the name of the capital was given its earlier name, **Byzantium**. (But many continued to call it “Constantinople.”) Because Constantinople dominated the overland trade routes from Europe to Asia and controlled the Straits between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean throughout the Dark Ages, **it was the wealthiest city in Europe for over a thousand years**. The city controlled the land routes from Europe to Asia; and the seaway, from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, had an excellent spacious harbor which was called “the golden horn.” In A.D. 337, Constantinople contained some 50,000 people; in 500, there were almost a million.

In the 1,123 years of the existence of the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople had been besieged many times by the Muslims, but had been captured only once, during the Fourth Crusade in 1204. The crusaders had most likely not intended to conquer it in the beginning, and an unstable Latin state was established for a time in Constantinople. The Nicaean Greeks were the first to reconquer Constantinople from the Latins in 1261. In the following two centuries, the greatly weakened Byzantine Empire faced attacks from many forces.

“Constantinople, which had defied the power of Chosroes, the Chagan, and the caliphs, was irretrievably subdued by the arms of Mahomet the Second. Her empire only had been subverted by the Latins; her religion was trampled in the dust by the Moslem conquerors.”—*James Gibbon, History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Chap. 68.*

By 1453 the Empire was exhausted, consisting of a few square miles outside the city of Constantinople itself, plus some coastal islands.

As mentioned earlier, **the Fall of Constantinople occurred after a siege by the Ottoman Empire**, under the command of Sultan Mehmed II, against the defending army commanded by Emperor Constantine XI. The siege lasted from Friday, April 6, 1453, until Tuesday, May 29, 1453 (according to the Julian Calendar), when the city was

conquered by the Ottoman Turks.

**The Fall of Constantinople** marked the end of the Byzantine Empire, an empire which had lasted since A.D. 330, and was a massive blow for Christendom. After the conquest, Mehmed made Constantinople the Ottoman Empire's new capital. It is today called Istanbul.

## Revelation 10

# *The Little Book is Opened*

*Brief overview*—This chapter introduces us to facts which God's people need to know, when the Advent Awakening began and the book of Daniel was opened.

*Another major change occurs at this point. We are about to begin some of the most important prophecies in the Bible.*

You may recall that the first six seals were covered in chapter 6. Then there was an interlude for most of chapter 7, as God's people prepared for Christ's Second Advent. Verse 1 of chapter 8 is the seventh seal, marked by a silence during Christ's return for His faithful ones.

The remainder of chapters 8 and 9 tells about the first six trumpets. We now come to another interlude, chapters 10 and most of 11. Then, near the end of chapter 11 (11:15), the seventh trumpet will be sounded, announcing the Second Advent.

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**“And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon His head, and His face was as it were the sun, and His feet as pillars of fire: And He had in His hand a little book open: and He set His right foot upon the sea, and His left foot on the earth.” Revelation 10:1-2.**

*This chapter is best explained in 7 Bible Commentary,*

971-972.

**“A mighty angel”**: The careful description of this “angel” clearly reveals that **this is Jesus Christ Himself, coming with an important message** (7BC 971). Here are several passages which corroborate this fact:

**“Clothed with a cloud”**: A cloud of glory is about Him. Nearly every post-ascension view of Christ shows Him amid “clouds.” **“He came with the clouds”** (Dan. 7:13; cf. Acts 1:9). “He cometh with clouds” (Rev. 1:7). “Him that sat on the cloud” (Rev. 14:15). “Upon the cloud One sat like unto the Son of Man” (Rev. 14:14). “Who maketh the clouds His chariot” (Ps. 104:3).

**“A rainbow upon His head”**: A rainbow encircles the throne of God (Eze. 1:26-28; Rev. 4:2-3; cf. DA 834; Ed 115; MH 94).

“In heaven the semblance of a rainbow encircles the throne and **overarches the head of Christ.**”—*Patriarchs and Prophets* 107.

“The bow of promise encircles our Substitute and Surety.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 21.

**“Face as it were the sun”**: “His eyes were as a flame of fire” (Rev. 1:14; 19:12). “His countenance was **as the sun shineth in His strength**” (Rev. 1:16).

**“His feet as pillars of fire”**: Or “legs and feet as pillars of fire.” “His feet like unto fine brass, **as if they burned in a furnace**” (Rev. 1:15).

**“His right foot on the sea and His left foot upon the earth”**: This shows that **He is in charge of the whole world** and has a message for us. The sea and earth together designate the world as a whole (Ex. 20:4; Ps. 69:34). **This position denotes His supreme power and authority** over the whole earth.

**“Little book open”**: Christ has a “little book” (“little scroll”; *biblaridion*) **in His hand—and it is open. Part of the book of Daniel’s prophecies had been closed till the last days. Daniel was told to “seal the book”** he had finished

writing until “the time of the end” (Dan. 12:4). All of it was to be understood *at the end of the 1260 year prophecy*.

“In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end. Here is the complement of the book of Daniel. One is a prophecy; the other a revelation. **The book that was sealed is not the Revelation**, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel relating to the last days. The angel commanded, ‘But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.’ Daniel 12:4.”—*Acts of the Apostles*, 585.

**“But since 1798 the book of Daniel has been unsealed, knowledge of the prophecies has increased, and many have proclaimed the solemn message of the judgment near.”**—*Great Controversy*, 356.

“The book that was sealed was not the book of Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel which related to the last days . . . **The book of Daniel is now unsealed**, and the revelation made by Christ to John is to come to all the inhabitants of the earth. By the increase of knowledge a people is to be prepared to stand in the latter days.”—*2 Selected Messages*, 105.

“The prediction of Daniel, ‘**Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased**’ (Daniel 12:4), **is to be fulfilled in our giving of the warning message; many are to be enlightened regarding the sure word of prophecy.**”—*Upward Look*, 37.

**“The unsealing of the little book was the message in relation to time.”**—*7 Bible Commentary*, 971.

**It was at that time, 1798 onward, that Bible students really began understanding the prophecies of Daniel and telling others what they had learned.**

**The 1260 year prophecy ended shortly before the termination of the 2300 year prophecy in 1844**—which was the “longest and last” time prophecy in the Bible (GC 351). No more genuine time prophecies of any kind—short or long—were to occur after that date. (*For additional information on this, see comments for Revelation 10:5.*)

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**“And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when He had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.” Revelation 10:3-4.**

**“He cried with a loud voice”:** This is another description of Christ. His voice is not unpleasant, but it is powerful. (1 Thess. 4:16). “His voice as the sound of many waters” (Rev. 1:15).

What an urgent message this is! It was given with the “roar” of a lion. The Lion of Judah—Christ—is announcing something important.

**“Seven thunders”:** Some kind of message is then given, but they pertain to events in the last days which would be revealed in their time. So John was told to seal them. If they had been revealed earlier, the events could not have happened the way they needed to.

“The special light given to John, which was expressed in the seven thunders, was **a delineation of events that would transpire under the first and second angels’ messages** . . . The first and second angels’ messages were to be proclaimed, **but no further light was to be revealed before these messages had done their specific work.**”—*Christ Triumphant*, 344.

The first angel’s message began in 1831; the second angel’s message began on July 26, 1843 when, for the first time, Charles Fitch published the light on the second angel’s message. The “seven thunders,” therefore, would refer to the light given under the first two angels. (*See special clarifying note at the end of this chapter.*)

“It was not best for the people to know these things; for their faith must necessarily be tested. In the order of God most wonderful and advanced truths would be proclaimed. The first and second angels’ messages were to be proclaimed, **but no further light was to be revealed before these messages had done their specific work.**”—*7 Bible Commentary* 971.



**“Seal up those things”**: The seven thunders told of specific events which would occur during the Advent Awakening as the 2300 year prophecy was closing. This information was “a delineation of events which would transpire under the first and second angels’ messages. It was not best for the people to know these things; for their faith must necessarily be tested” (7BC 971). “It is the glory of God to conceal a thing” (Prov. 25:2) for a time.

“The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”—*Deuteronomy 29:29*.

Some of those events and Bible discoveries are clearly discussed in several different prophecies in Daniel, Revelation, and the parables of Jesus (examples would include the start of the Investigative Judgment in 1844, Daniel 7:13-14; the special truths in Revelation 13; the messages of the Three Angels in Revelation 14). These special truths were not to be understood until the last days. This present book contains part of this information. (*For much more information, read Great Controversy.*)

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**“And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up His hand to heaven, and sware by Him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer.” Revelation 10:5-6.**

**“Lifted up His hand”**: Christ uttered a judicial oath which made this a very solemn statement (Deut. 32:40; Eze. 20:5; 36:7; Heb. 6:13, 17). —The fact that there would be no more time prophecies of any kind after 1844 is stated as a solemn judicial oath!

**“Time no longer”**: Prophetic time had ended with the end of the last time prophecy, that of the 2300 years in 1844. *The 1260 year prophecy ended shortly before that.*

*The 2300 year prophecy was the “longest and last” time prophecy in the Bible. According to the following statement, even William Miller recognized that the 2300 year prophecy was both the longest and the last prophecy. No other valid Bible prophecy was longer.*

“As the disciples went out preaching, ‘The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand,’ so **Miller and his associates proclaimed that the longest and last prophetic period brought to view in the Bible was about to expire**, that the judgment was at hand, and the everlasting kingdom was to be ushered in. The preaching of the disciples in regard to time was based on the seventy weeks of Daniel 9 [9:24-27]. **The message given by Miller and his associates announced the termination of the 2300 days** of Daniel 8:14, of which the seventy weeks [Dan. 9:24-27] form a part. The preaching of each was based upon the fulfillment of a different portion of the same great prophetic period.”—*Great Controversy*, 351.

In the quotation below, we are told that “the longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844.” That is another clear statement that only one “reckoning” (singular: “reckoning,” not two or more “reckonings”) is the longest, and that it ended in 1844.

“This time, which the angel declares with a solemn oath, is not the end of this world’s history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time, which should precede the advent of our Lord. That is, **the people will not have another message upon definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844, there can be no definite tracing of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844.**”—7 *Bible Commentary*, 971.

**2300 Year Prophecy is the longest**—From the above statements, we know two facts: (1) **There are no time prophecies in the Bible that are longer than the 2300 year prophecy**; that one is the “longest and last” (GC 351). Others have been suggested (including one for 2520 years),

but none of these are applicable. (*For much more on this, write us for a special report on the 2520 Prophecy.*)

(2) **There are no new time prophecies—long or short—which will occur after 1844.** A solemn pledge has been made by Christ, that there will be no more time prophecies after that time! After that year, there was to be no further messages bearing on a definite time period, or time span. **The expression is general, all inclusive, and therefore includes both “prophetic time” (day/year prophecies), and “literal time prophecies” (day/day, etc.). All time spans which are said to apply after the year 1844 are in error and should be rejected.**

“This time, which the angel declares with a solemn oath, is not the end of this world’s history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time, which should precede the advent of our Lord. **That is, the people will not have another message upon definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844, there can be no definite tracing of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844.**”—7 *Bible Commentary, 971.*

All kinds of time: **After 1844, there is no definite time** (GC 456-457), no specific time (FE, 335), no exact time (GC 456), no days or hours (DA 632-633), no dates (2SM 84), no seasons (TM 55), no approximate year (2SM 113-114), and no exact year (1SM 188-189). For a large number of other statements on the termination of time setting in 1844, see the appendix at the back of the present author’s book, *The End of Time.*

**Time setting**—*Here, briefly, is a summary of what is included and what to avoid:*

In Revelation 10:6, Christ has solemnly declared that, after the end of the 2300 year prophecy in 1844, there shall be “time no longer” *chronos ouketi estai*—**no more time prophecies.** It might be said that, since 1844, we are living on “borrowed time.”

**Some have tried to get around this by saying that**

there would be new applications of previous ones. With Numbers 14:34 in mind (“40 years”), 1884 and 1928 were set as terminal dates; but nothing happened. Then, based on 120 years as a “generation” (Gen. 6:3), 1964 and 2008 were two other well-known hoped-for dates for Christ’s return. But, once again, nothing happened; because **Revelation 10:6 guarantees that no past time prophecies would extend past 1844, and no future time setting would be fulfilled.** It is a waste of precious probationary time (which, for each of us, is none too long) to spend fruitless hours considering them.

**Others have decided to apply the 1260, 1290, 2300 as day/day time setting periods,** which they claim are not “time prophecies”; for they are theorizing that these time spans can be changed. But that claim is absurd; nowhere in the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy do we find authority to do that.” All such predictions fail, one after another. Yet every year or two, another elaborate chart of time settings is presented.

**Then there are those who do not “set dates,” but only time spans.** “When a certain event occurs, 1260 days later this will occur,” etc. **But that is still time setting**—and each one always fails.

At this time in history, when Satan has come down “as a roaring lion” (1 Peter 5:8), for “he knoweth that he hath but a short time” (Rev. 12:12), you and I are safe only as we remain with the historic truths confirmed by Inspiration.

A significant problem with all these diversions is the fact that, through articles, books, and public meetings, some keep people’s attention focused on ever-new, imagined time spans and date settings. **Yet this is being done at this crucial time in history, when God’s people should be warning the world about the issues in the final crisis, putting away sin, the importance of keeping God’s law, and preparing to meet Christ when He returns!**

*History, not time prophecies, will be repeated*—This is an important truth!

**“History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image at Babylon. All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath. This is Satan’s plan to make of no account the day instituted by God, and given to the world as a memorial of creation. The decree enforcing the worship of this day is to go forth to all the world.”—7 Bible Commentary, 976.**

**“Study Revelation in connection with Daniel, for history will be repeated . . . We, with all our religious advantages, ought to know far more today than we do know.”—Testimonies to Ministers, 116.**

**“Past history will be repeated. A determined conflict is to be waged in the Christian world. People who are disloyal to the commandments of the living God will, in their supposed self-importance, be inspired by Satan to war against those who follow the Lamb of God.”—Church Triumphant, 271.**

**“In mercy God repeats His past dealings. He has given us a record of His dealings in the past. This we need to study carefully; for history is repeating itself. We are more accountable than were those whose experience is recorded in the Old Testament; for their mistakes, and the results of those mistakes, have been chronicled for our benefit.”—Review, April 20, 1897.**

***Signs of the End*—Are there no clear markers that the end is near? There surely are! But none of them are time prophecies. Here are some examples; many more could be cited:**

Prophecy indicates that **the U.S. will dominate world politics in the final crisis; yet China is rapidly rising.** And, if the end does not occur soon, it will become the world leader in every economic, political, and military field.

In addition, **there is a rapidly increasing number of man-made and natural disasters which make certain the fact that Christ’s return is near!** *At the present time there*

*are massive amounts of each of the following:* droughts, heat waves, water crises, storms, rain, floods, food crises, extremely high and low temperatures, elimination of water-holding glaciers, animal and human diseases, moral decline, gambling, pornography, reduction in natural marriages, rapid increase in crime and all types of addictions, massive numbers of worldwide abortions, every type of killing and warfare. On and on the list goes.

**Each of the above is so catastrophic in size and impact, that even worldlings are calling them “biblical in proportions.” All of them are now rapidly increasing! —We are close to the end!**

What are you and I going to do to prepare our lives for what is soon to come on the earth? What are we doing to warn others? It is urgent that we share these truths with others; purchase lowest-cost copies of this and other missionary paperbacks; and hand them out. Get ready, get ready, get ready!

“Ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?”—*Matthew 16:3.*

*Here is one more example:* Without honeybees, bumblebees, and bats—all of which are rapidly disappearing—fruit and vegetable plant pollination cannot occur. There is no way that man can successfully pollinate them all. Fully 80% of our food comes from pollination. This one alone is a very real crisis.

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**“But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when He shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets.” Revelation 10:7.**

**“*The mystery of God*”:** In Revelation 10:7, Jesus then continues speaking, and presents yet another important message: **In the days of the seventh angel, when He starts to sound His trumpet, the “mystery of God should be finished.”**

**The seventh angel sounds His trumpet in Revelation**

**11:15.** The messages given from that point onward in the book of Revelation, especially in chapters 12, 13, and 14, are of *extreme importance* to us today.

Through Christ's sacrifice on Calvary and intercession in the heavenly Sanctuary, the mystery of God is the marvelous way in which our Lord Jesus Christ has offered salvation from sin to everyone on earth. **The Bible mentions this "mystery" of salvation which is offered** (Mark 4:11; Col. 2:2; 4:3); **yet most people want to remain in their sins.** The concluding events in earth's history are an important part of this plan of redemption. The next chapters in Revelation, which we are about to study, are very important.

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**"And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto Him, Give me the little book. And He said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And He said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." Revelation 10:8-11.**

**"Take the book":** Beginning back about the time of the end of the 2300 year prophecy, God's people began studying the book of Daniel in earnest. (*See comments for Revelation 10:1-2.*)

**"Belly bitter":** John was symbolically told to take the little book and "eat it up." When he did this, **it tasted sweet but brought bitterness later.** This means that, just before 1844, God's faithful children studied deeply into the book of Daniel and learned many important truths. The discoveries in it were like honey to them, because **they found in it additional evidence that the coming of Christ was near.**

**But then they were disappointed when He did not return in 1844.** Their “belly was bitter.” This is because they still held to the error that it was the cleansing of the earth by fire that was to occur in 1844 at the return of Christ.

**That which they discovered was the fact that Jesus had entered the Most Holy Place of the heavenly Sanctuary** in 1844, to begin the work of Investigative Judgment (Dan. 7:9-10, 13-14), and to “cleanse the Sanctuary” (Dan. 8:14) in heaven of the records of sin. This was the antitypical fulfillment of the ancient yearly cleansing of the earthly sanctuary (Lev. 16). *For a more complete explanation, read Great Controversy, 409-432 and 479-491.*

**When that Judgment ends, probation will forever close—and Jesus will return to earth for His own.**

As they studied and by faith gazed into the Most Holy Place, where Jesus had gone to complete His mediation, **they discovered**, within the ark of the covenant, **the great truth about the Bible Sabbath. And they learned of the importance of obeying God’s moral law of Ten Commandments through the enabling grace of Christ.** (*For more about this, see comments on Revelation 11:19.*)

***The importance of the hour in which we live should not be underestimated!*** **Jesus is coming soon; and we must be ready to meet Him in peace.** Those who do not choose to repent and obey will perish with the disloyal. **There will be no second probation.** The gospel that is to be preached to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples presents the truth in clear lines, showing that obedience is the condition of gaining eternal life. Christ imparts His righteousness to those who consent to let Him take away their sins.

The heart of Jesus is saddened as He sees so many choosing the foolish pleasures of this world, instead of coming to Him in repentance; dedicating their lives to Him; and becoming His humble, obedient children.

This chapter concludes with the message that we must proclaim these special truths in Daniel and Revelation to everyone we meet. Indeed, some among us must carry these



messages to far places all over the world.

**Special Note on Revelation 10:** *Manuscript 59, 1900* (now in *7 Bible Commentary, 971*) provides additional, very crucial information on Revelation 10. In addition to the fact that **there will be no more valid time prophecies after 1844** (MS 59, 1900, 7BC 791, *para. 4*), let us briefly consider some of the other key point in MS 59, 1900:

**Para. 1 - “The mighty angel” (Rev. 10:1) is “Jesus Christ.”** It is emphasized that He “cries with a loud voice,” “showing His power and authority.” This is significantly linked to the first and third angels, who also cry with a “loud voice” (Rev. 14:7, 9).

**Para. 2 - The message of the seven thunders was about events, future to John, which would be disclosed in their order.** Just as Daniel’s prophecies were not to be understood till the time of the end, it was the same with the message of the seven thunders.

**When the little book (the book of Daniel) would be unsealed, it would be at that time that the first, second, and third angel’s messages were to be given to the world, messages “which would be disclosed in their order.”**

**Para. 3 - The books of Daniel and Revelation are to be studied together;** for they cast light upon one another. At the time that John wrote, he was not to reveal what the thunders said.

**Para. 4 - But exactly what was the information that was given by the seven thunders?** *The only statement that directly gives the answer is this: It is “a delineation of events which would transpire under the first and second angels’ messages.”* This was not to be known by the Millerites in advance; for their faith must be tested. Once again, later in para. 4, it is stated again: **“The first and second angels’ messages were to be proclaimed, but no further light was to be revealed before these messages had done their specific work.”** *But what was the “further light” which would come after the second angel’s message?*

**Para. 2 again -** What were the “future events” after the

first and second angels' messages; messages which would be "disclosed in their order" later? **They would be the events which would "have their proper place in the . . . third angel's message** to be given to the world."

*Para. 4 again* - So the "further light" to be given after the second angel had sounded—was the various aspects of the third angel's message. "In the order of God most wonderful and advanced truths would be proclaimed." **What were these "wonderful and advanced truths" under the third angel's message?** Read chapters 23 to 26, and 28 in *Great Controversy*. Here they are:

(1) **The full truth about the Sanctuary Message** (chap. 23-24) which "**opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious**, showing that God's hand had directed the great advent movement and revealing present duty as it brought to light the position and work of His people." "Light from the sanctuary illumined the past, the present, and the future." (Especially read *Great Controversy*, pp. 423-426.)

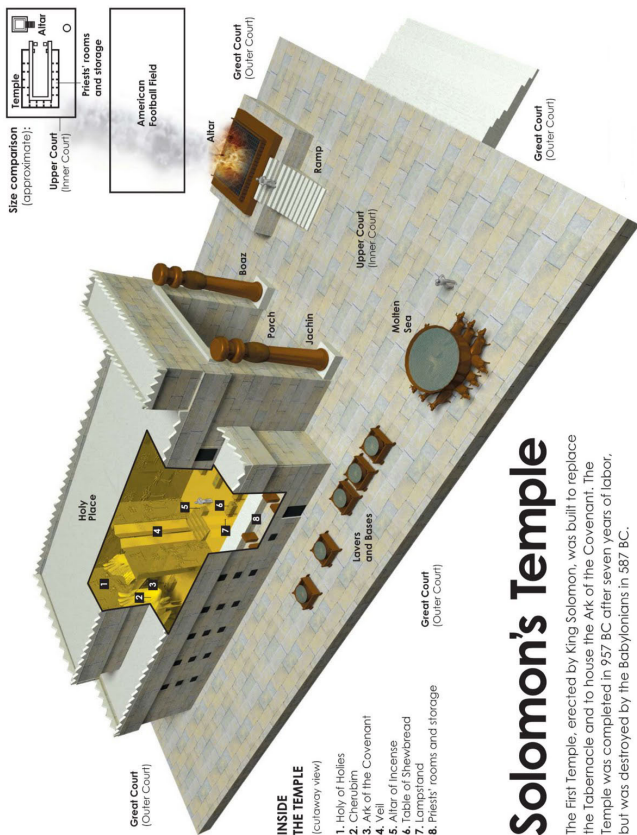
(2) **The truth about the law and the Sabbath** (GC, chap. 25-26; the discovery which had been predicted in Rev. 11:19; especially read *Great Controversy*, 433-434.)

(3) **The truth about the Investigative Judgment** (GC, chap. 28; especially read pp. 479-480.)

—So now we have verified the "future events" and the "wonderful and advanced truths" which, in the providence of God, were given to us—to be shared with the world—under the third angel's message.

In conclusion then, what is the meaning of the "seven thunders"? We have learned that it was the urgent cry given by the Millerite preachers in the first and second angels' messages prior to October 22, 1844; after which the additional new light was to be given under the third angel. So the "thunders" refers to the strong, widespread proclamation made by the Millerites at that time; and the "seven" refers to the perfect way in which they did their very best to present those messages to as many as possible.

Are we today sharing our historic messages to the world



## Solomon's Temple

The First Temple, erected by King Solomon, was built to replace the Tabernacle and to house the Ark of the Covenant. The Temple was completed in 957 BC after seven years of labor, but was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 BC.

**SOLOMON'S TEMPLE (1 Kgs. 6:37-38) WAS ERECTED ON THE TEMPLE MOUNT IN JERUSALEM IN SEVEN YEARS. REPAIRED SEVERAL TIMES (2 Kgs. 12, 22), IT STOOD FOR 400 YEARS, AND WAS DESTROYED BY NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S ARMY IN 586 B.C. (2 Kgs. 25:8-17). THE SECOND TEMPLE (Ezra 3), LATER REBUILT BY HEROD, WAS DESTROYED IN A.D. 70 BY THE ROMAN GENERAL TITUS. THE TEMPLE DESCRIBED BY EZEKIEL IN VISION (Eze. 40-43) HAD SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT PROPORTIONS.**

as widely as they did back then, or are some of us spending too much time and energy trying to search for “new light” instead of sharing what we have with the lost?

**Revelation 11**

*Temple Measured,  
the Two Witnesses,  
the Seventh Trumpet*

*Brief overview*—This chapter surveys the Investigative Judgment (symbolized by measuring the temple); efforts to stifle the witness of the Old and New Testaments, all of which have failed; and the seventh trumpet, which briefly views some final events.

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**“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.” Revelation 11:1-2.**

**“Given a reed”**: Here is the Old Testament equivalent of this passage:

“I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in His hand. Then said I, Whither goest Thou? And He said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof.”—*Zechariah 2:1-2*.

**“Measure the temple”**: John is handed a measuring stick, and told to measure something. **Measuring in prophecy refers to judgment.** We know that Jesus started a special judgment on October 22, 1844, which is called

the Investigative Judgment.

**Revelation 11:1** reveals who is being “measured,” or **judged**: It is not the “Gentiles” outside who are being measured; but it is “the Temple of God.” **The Temple of God symbolizes all those who have ever claimed to belong to God. They have had their names written in the Book of Life.** But it was not until the Investigative Judgment began, in 1844, that it was determined which names are to be retained and which are to be removed. **When this judgement ends, human probation will forever end.**

For example, both Cain and Abel claimed to belong to God. Both were at a special sacrificial service; but Abel was a genuine worshiper. He was faithful and obedient to God; but Cain became rebellious and unrepentant (Gen. 4:1-11).

When the Investigative Judgment began (Dan. 7:9-10, 13-14), Abel’s name was retained in the book of life and Cain’s name was taken out. Cain’s name entered into the book of death; and his sins remain on record in the book of sin.

Gradually, the process has continued. Soon, none know how soon, the Judgment will pass to our names.

“The grand judgment is taking place, and has been going on for some time. Now the Lord says, Measure the temple and the worshipers thereof. **Remember when you are walking the streets about your business, God is measuring you; when you are attending your household duties, when you engage in conversation, God is measuring you . . .** Here is the work going on, measuring the temple and its worshipers to see who will stand in the last day. **Those who stand fast shall have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.**”—7 *Bible Commentary*, 972.

The book, *Great Controversy*, chapters 23, 24, and 28 clearly explains all of this in thorough detail.

**“The court without”**: But the “court,” representing those who have never professed faith in Jesus or in God, are not included in the Investigative Judgment. They have chosen to be lost and remain lost. Instead, their

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names will come up in the Sentencing Judgment. More on that event when we study Revelation 20.

**“Given unto the Gentiles”:** The holy city (Jerusalem; Dan. 9:24; Luke 21:20) represents its inhabitants—God’s people who, from creation to Christ’s coming, received persecution from unbelievers in this world during the probation time here on earth.

**“Forty and two months”:** This is another of the seven mentions of the 1260 year prophecy in the Bible (Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5). Once again, it predicts the persecutions of God’s people which did occur during the Dark Ages. (*This time prophecy is carefully discussed in Revelation 12:6.*)

**“Treading under foot”:** This is parallel to the description given in Daniel (Dan. 7:7, 23), where the faithful are oppressed by the fourth beast and its little horn (pagan and then papal Rome).

“Behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it.”—*Daniel 7:7.*

“The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.”—*Daniel 7:23.*

**The activities of the little horn (papacy; Dan. 7:8, 11, 20-22) are directed against God’s faithful ones, especially those who refuse to break God’s commandments.**

“And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”—*Daniel 7:25.*

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**“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees,**

and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.” Revelation 11:3-6.

**“A thousand two hundred and threescore days”**: This is another passage in the Bible about the 1260 Year Prophecy. *This time period is so important that it is given twice in two verses!* (Rev. 11:2 and 3). For 1260 years, the religious authorities did not want the people to have Bibles or read them. *(The 1260 Year Prophecy will be more fully covered when we study Revelation 12:6.)*

**“Clothed in sackcloth”**: During that time, these witnesses to God’s truth were clothed in “sackcloth.” **In ancient times, this is something that people wore when they were grieving** (2 Sam. 3:31; Ps. 69:9-11). Millions died because they refused to abandon their trust in God and obedience to Him. **Reading the Bible gave them the courage to continue; and it will do the same for us as we also read and obey it.**

**“My two witnesses”**: The subject is now changed, and we are told about God’s two special “witnesses” on earth. These are the “two olive trees” and “two candlesticks.” These symbols are drawn from Zechariah 4:1-6, 11-14 and symbolize **the Old and New Testament writings, which are God’s special witnesses in this world. Those sacred writings reveal the character of God, His requirements, and His promises to all those willing to give attention to them.**

**“Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. And [yet] ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life.”—John 5:39-40.**

**“The two witnesses represent the Scriptures of**

**the Old and the New Testaments.** Both are important testimonies to the origin and perpetuity of the law of God. Both are witnesses also to the plan of salvation. The types, sacrifices, and prophecies of the Old Testament point forward to a Saviour to come. The Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament tell of a Saviour who has come in the exact manner foretold by type and prophecy.”—*Great Controversy*, 267.

**“Two olive trees and the two candlesticks”:** In Zechariah 4:12, we are told that **the olive branches supply oil for the lamps of the sanctuary.** In a similar manner, **from the throne of God, the Holy Spirit is imparted to men** (Zech. 4:6, 14). **We are directed to the importance of the truths in the Old and New Testaments.**

**“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path . . .** The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.”—*Psalms* 119:105, 130.

**“For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.”**—*Proverbs* 6:23.

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**“And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.”** Revelation 11:7-8.

**“Have finished”:** The series of events predicted in 11:7-8 began at about the time that the 1260 year prophecy would end.

**“Beast out of the bottomless pit”:** This is a new power. **Arising at a time of utter immorality, it tried to destroy the Bible and its influence.**

We are told that, about the year 1798, a “beast” came out of “the bottomless pit.” Out from the “bottomless pit” of wickedness and spiritual darkness in this world arose a



new ruling power. After overthrowing the French monarchy, this totally different governmental system began **during the French Revolution**.

**“Egypt”**: In 1793, the power of atheism arose in France; and they enacted a law totally outlawing the Bible and Christianity. In ancient times, Pharaoh in “Egypt” declared to Moses that he knew not God (Ex. 5:2). **This was atheism**. During the early years of the French Revolution, the same thing was declared.

**“Dead bodies in the street”**: This was the land where, symbolically, Jesus “was crucified.” **For centuries, God’s faithful ones were slain in France**, culminating in the St. Bartholomew’s Massacre of 1572. On orders from Charles IX, the murders of about 30,000 Huguenots began in Paris, and continued for weeks throughout the nation.

**During the “Reign of Terror,” in the French Revolution, the atheist leaders killed even their own people; the people killed some of their leaders, and new leaders killed other leaders** and still more people. Vast numbers were slain.

**“Sodom”**: **Total immorality reigned**. Not only was the Bible banished, but also marriage!

“Intimately connected with these laws affecting religion, was that which reduced the union of marriage—the most sacred engagement which human beings can form, and the permanence of which leads most strongly to the consolidation of society—to the state of a mere civil contract of a transitory character, which any two persons might engage in and cast loose at pleasure . . .

“If fiends had set themselves to work to discover a mode of most effectually destroying whatever is venerable, graceful, or permanent in domestic life, and of obtaining at the same time an assurance that the mischief which it was their object to create should be perpetuated from one generation to another, they could not have invented a more effectual plan than the degradation of marriage.”—*Great Controversy*, 270-271.

The land became a “Sodom.”

“For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.”—*Deuteronomy 32:31-33*.

**Here are more passages about the dangers of turning the land into a Sodom:** Isaiah 1:9-10; 3:9; 13:19; Jeremiah 49:18; 50:40; Amos 4:11. Regarding the first Sodom, we are given this information: Gen. 13:10-13; 18:16-26; 19:1-28; 2 Peter 2:6; Jude 7. **Another sign of the end is the fact that the modern world is becoming a Sodom!**

The lessons from the French Revolution are obvious: Those who refuse to obey God become captives to Satan.

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**“And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.” Revelation 11:9-10.**

**“Their dead bodies”:** The other nations saw the terrible events that were occurring, when, by a decree, France enacted a law doing away with the Bible, all religion, and belief in God.

“The dead bodies of Thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven.”—*Psalms 79:2*.

**“Three days and an half”:** For exactly three and a half years, as was predicted, the law was in effect.

**“Shall rejoice”:** At first, wicked people celebrated; but soon terror took the place of merrymaking, as vast multitudes were slain by one another.

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**“And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet;**

**and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.” Revelation 11:11-12.**

**“After three days and an half”:** This decree, abolishing religion, was issued at Paris on November 26, 1793. Exactly three and a half years later on June 17, 1797, that government rescinded the decree against God, the Bible, and religion. People recognized how dangerous it is to so openly oppose God and His Word.

**“They ascended up”:** A great missionary movement began soon after and Bible Societies were started. (The British Bible Society began in 1804; and the American Bible Society in 1816.) Copies of the Bible in various languages were carried all over the world to people by missionaries.

**As of 2011, at least one book of the Bible has been translated into 3,168 of the 6,900 languages.** The United Bible Societies are presently assisting in over 600 Bible translation projects. **The Bible is available, in whole or in part, to 98 percent of the world’s population** in a language in which they are fluent. (According to *Wycliffe Bible Translators*, there are now 340 million people in the world who do not have the Bible in their own language.)

The United Bible Societies (UBS) is the collective name for the fellowship of 145 individual Bible Societies working in over 200 countries and territories. By 2009, they had distributed 57 million Bibles or Bible portions.

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**“And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.” Revelation 11:13.**

**“Earthquake”:** This is a symbolic earthquake of violence and immorality that shook France during the French Revolution.

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“France was shaken as if by an earthquake. Religion, law, social order, the family, the state, and the church—all were smitten down by the impious hand that had been lifted against the law of God.”—*Great Controversy*, 286.

All of Europe ultimately became entangled in a war with France.

It should be mentioned that this is not the Lisbon Earthquake of 1755 (Rev. 6:12); nor is it the massive earthquake which will shake the entire world just before Christ’s return for His people. That literal worldwide earthquake is mentioned in Revelation 8:5 during the seventh seal; in Revelation 11:19 during the seventh trumpet; and in Revelation 16:17-20 during the seventh plague. (*For more on this final earthquake, see comments on Revelation 11:19*).

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### SEVENTH TRUMPET - 1844 - SECOND ADVENT

**“The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned.” Revelation 11:14-17.**

*There is a parallel, in several respects, to the events in the seventh trumpet. It is the seventh plague, found in Revelation 16:17-20.*

**“Second woe . . . third woe”:** The second woe consisted of the judgments under the sixth trumpet, which ended in 1840 (Rev. 8:13; 9:12). We are now presented with the seventh trumpet, also called “the third woe,” which consists of just five verses (Rev. 11:15-19). *It mentions several events just prior to Christ’s return.*

**“Great voices”:** These are special messages which

are preached in the last days and are carried into all the world. We will learn about them when we study Revelation 14:6-12.

**“Kingdoms of this world”**: Christ receives His kingdom a short time prior to His return to this earth (Dan. 7:14). At the time of His coming, all earthly opposition is crushed (Rev. 17:14).

“And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one.”—*Zechariah 14:9*.

**“We give Thee thanks”**: The twenty-four elders are happy that the end of earth’s terrible history, with all its wars and tragedies, is soon to occur, and Jesus will finally receive His Kingdom.

**“Lord God Almighty”**: This is a particularly fitting title for God as victor. In Revelation 1:8, Christ is also called “the Almighty.”

**“Which art, and wast, and art to come”**: The I AM of Exodus 3:14. This emphasizes the eternal, timeless self-existence of God, His utter unchangeableness.

“From Him [Christ] which is, and which was, and which is to come.”—*Revelation 1:4*.

**“Taken to Thee Thy great power”**: The Investigative Judgment began in 1844, and is still in progress. The books have been opened in the courtroom in heaven; the records of all the people who have ever claimed to belong to God in the past are being examined. Soon the Judgment will end and Jesus will return to take His people home.

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**“And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.”** Revelation 11:18.

**“Nations were angry”**: This will be the condition of

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the nations prior to the coming of Christ. Not only will they be angry with one another, but **they will especially band together to oppose the work and people of Christ** (Rev. 13:12; 14:8).

**“Thy wrath is come.”** In these last days, **the wrath of God will be poured out in the seven last plagues** (Rev. 15-16) on those who are intent on destroying God’s people.

**“And the time”:** The word here is *kairos*, a particular time with a definite purpose, a time designated in advance for some special event. This type of time is also found in Revelation 1:3 and Mark 1:15. **This is the time of judgment.**

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”—*2 Corinthians 5:10*.

**“Reward Thy servants . . . the saints”:** When the Investigative Judgment has ended, Christ returns to earth for His own and takes them to heaven.

**The rewards**—We are specifically told in Scripture on what basis the redeemed will be rewarded. It repeatedly states that it is according to their works. They are saved through Christ’s atoning sacrifice; as they yield their lives to His control, their *reward* in heaven is determined by their words, conduct, and actions while on earth. Many passages attest to this: Matthew 16:27; John 8:39; Acts 28:20; 1 Timothy 2:10; 5:10; 6:17-18; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Titus 1:16; 2:7, 14; 3:8; Hebrews 10:24; James 2:14, 17, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26; 1 Peter 2:12; Revelation 2:5, 13, 19, 26; 14:13; 20:12-13.

“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.**”—*Matthew 16:27*.

“Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.”—*1 Corinthians 3:8*.

“Behold, I come quickly; and **My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall**

be.”—*Revelation 22:12*.

The “reward” given to the faithful will be the broad extent of their ability to serve God in heaven, and will be in accordance with their dedication on earth. That is the extent of the “reward.” *The rewards do not include the idea that some of the redeemed will be superior to or over others!* As the Last Supper began, the disciples were angry with each other; for each wanted a higher place in the kingdom than that of the others (DA 643:644). There will be none of that in heaven or in the New Earth!

**“Not one who complies with the conditions will be disappointed at the end of the race.** Not one who is earnest and persevering will fail of success. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. **The weakest saint, as well as the strongest, may wear the crown of immortal glory.** All may win who, through the power of divine grace, bring their lives into conformity to the will of Christ. The practice, in the details of life, of the principles laid down in God’s Word, is too often looked upon as unimportant—a matter too trivial to demand attention. But, in view of the issue at stake, nothing is small that will help or hinder. Every act casts its weight into the scale that determines life’s victory or defeat. **And the reward given to those who win will be in proportion to the energy and earnestness with which they have striven.**”  
—*Acts of the Apostles, 313-314*.

“The reward, the glories of heaven, bestowed upon the overcomers, **will be proportionate to the degree in which they have represented the character of Christ** to the world. ‘He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly.’ Thank God that it is our privilege to sow on earth the seed that will be harvested in eternity. The crown of life will be bright or dim, will glitter with many stars, or be lighted by few gems, in accordance with our own course of action.”—*6 Bible Commentary, 1104-1105*.

“Those who, under the education of Christ, make it possible to reach the highest attainments **will take**

every divine improvement with them to the higher school.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 315.

“When God’s redeemed ones are called to heaven, **they will not leave behind the advancement they have made in this life** by beholding Christ. They will go on, learning more and still more of God. They will carry their spiritual attainments into the courts above, leaving nothing of heavenly origin in this world. As the books of heaven are opened, **each overcomer is assigned his lot and place in heaven, in accordance with the advancement he has made in this life.**”—*Upward Look*, 248.

Here is how Joseph did it:

“He [Joseph] fully believed that the divine hand had directed his steps, and in constant reliance upon God he faithfully discharged the duties of his position . . . **Faithful attention to duty in every station, from the lowliest to the most exalted, had been training every power for its highest service.** He who lives in accordance with the Creator’s will is securing to himself the truest and noblest development of character.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 222.

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**“And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament.”**  
**Revelation 11:19a.**

*We now come to Revelation 11:19. This is a very important passage.*

**“Temple in heaven”:** The sanctuary (tabernacle) on earth was a copy of the Sanctuary which is in heaven, where God and Christ are located (Heb. 8:2, 5; 9:8-11).

“Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the Sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.”—*Hebrews 8:1-2*.

**“Temple was opened”:** When Christ ascended to heaven, He entered into the heavenly Sanctuary. As in the earthly tabernacle, the Sanctuary in heaven has two



rooms or apartments: the holy and the most holy.

**“The ark seen in His Temple”:** In the second apartment (Most Holy Place) of that Sanctuary is a small golden chest called the ark of the covenant. It contains the moral law of God, which is also called the “covenant.” We are told, in Deuteronomy 5:1-24, that the Ten Commandments is the basis of God’s covenant with us. A covenant is an agreement between two parties. We agree to accept Christ and, by His enabling grace, obey His moral law. He agrees to save us. In this sense, the covenant is a mutual contract. In Deuteronomy 5:7-21, the Ten Commandments are repeated a second time. (The first time is in Exodus 20:3-17.)

**“The ark of His testament”:** The ark of the covenant, in the second apartment of the Sanctuary, is also called the ark of the testimony. This is because it contains the law of God which is also called the testimony (Ex. 25:16; Joshua 4:16). A testament or testimony is a statement of fact. In these ten moral precepts, God tells us the requirements we must obey.

In another sense, this covenant is also called a “testament”; because, **in order to provide us with the enabling grace to keep it, Christ had to die for our sins.** (See Hebrews 9:15-17.)

“And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and **in the ark thou shalt put the testimony** that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon **the ark of the testimony.**”—*Exodus 25:21-22.*

“And he [Moses] took and **put the testimony** [the two tables of stone, the Ten Commandments] **into the ark**, and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy seat above upon the ark.”—*Exodus 40:20.*

**As the Israelites journeyed through the wilderness, this ark went before them. The law of God must guide us throughout all the experiences of life.**

“And they departed from the mount of the Lord three days’ journey: and **the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them** in the three days’ journey, to search out a resting place for them.”—*Numbers 10:33*.

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**“And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament.” Revelation 11:19a.**

*(The first half of this important verse is here repeated a second time because of the important facts given below.)*

**“Opened in heaven”:** The prophecy of Daniel 8:14 (“Unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed”) **started in the fall of 1844. Shortly afterward**, when the faithful studied more carefully the truth about this cleansing, they not only learned more about the day of atonement, when the earthly sanctuary was to be cleansed (Lev. 16), **but they also discovered the great truth that nowhere in the Bible had the law of God ever been changed!** Of course, as the basis of God’s governmental authority, it would not have been changed. Christ died on Calvary to forgive and empower us to stop sinning; He did not die to get rid of the standard of godly living!

**By this discovery, the faithful realized that they needed to keep the Fourth Commandment—the Bible Sabbath, the seventh-day Sabbath!**

*The following quotation is a remarkably clear explanation of this first half of Revelation 11:19:*

“ ‘The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament.’ Revelation 11:19. **The ark of God’s testament is in the Holy of Holies, the second apartment of the Sanctuary.** In the ministration of the earthly tabernacle, which served ‘unto the example and shadow of heavenly things,’ **this apartment was opened only [once a year] upon the great Day of Atonement, for the cleansing of the sanctuary.** Therefore the announcement that the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of

His testament was seen, **points to the opening of the Most Holy Place of the heavenly Sanctuary, in 1844, as Christ entered there to perform the closing work of the atonement.** Those who by faith followed their great High Priest, as He entered upon His ministry in the Most Holy Place, beheld the ark of His testament. As they had studied the subject of the Sanctuary, they had come to understand the Saviour's change of ministration, and they saw that He was now officiating before the ark of God, pleading His blood in behalf of sinners.

**“The ark in the tabernacle on earth contained the two tables of stone, upon which were inscribed the precepts of the law of God. The ark was merely a receptacle for the tables of the law, and the presence of these divine precepts gave to it its value and sacredness. When the temple of God was opened in heaven, the ark of His testament was seen.**

“Within the Holy of Holies, in the Sanctuary in heaven, the divine law is sacredly enshrined—the law that was spoken by God Himself amid the thunders of Sinai and written with His own finger on the tables of stone.

**“The law of God in the Sanctuary in heaven is the great original, of which the precepts inscribed upon the tables of stone and recorded by Moses in the Pentateuch were an unerring transcript. Those who arrived at an understanding of this important point were thus led to see the sacred, unchanging character of the divine law.** They saw, as never before, the force of the Saviour's words: ‘Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law.’ Matthew 5:18. **The law of God, being a revelation of His will, a transcript of His character, must forever endure** ‘as a faithful witness in heaven.’ Not one command has been annulled; not a jot or tittle has been changed. Says the psalmist: ‘Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven.’ ‘All His commandments are sure. They stand fast forever and ever.’” Psalm 119:89; 111:7, 8.

**“In the very bosom of the Decalogue is the fourth commandment, as it was first proclaimed: ‘Remember**

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the Sabbath day, to keep it holy . . . Exodus 20:8-11.”—  
*Great Controversy, 433-434.*

—*Much more information about the 2300 Year Prophecy, in connection with Daniel 8:14, will be found in this book.*

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**“And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.” Revelation 11:19b.**

*These are events just prior to the Second Advent.*

Special note: Revelation 11:19 is extremely important! It is divided into two sections. The first part (11:19a), discussed just above, is about the **first opening** of the second apartment in the heavenly Sanctuary on October 22, 1844, and the discovery of the law of God (including the fourth commandment—the Bible Sabbath), which occurred shortly afterward.

The second part of Revelation 11:19 (11:19b) is about events which would occur after the **second opening** of the Most Holy Place—at the close of probation, when Christ will leave that apartment, preparatory to returning to earth.

**“And there were”:** The lightning (Rev. 16:18), an earthquake (16:18-20), and great hail (16:21) are all part of the seventh plague, just prior to the return of Christ. This links Revelation 11:19 with Revelation 16:17-21. Both passages are about events just prior to the Second Advent.

In addition, the **lightnings** represent a variety of messages urgently given. The **hail** indicates the terrible destructions during the plagues in Revelation 16.

Since 1844, the message about the Sanctuary and God’s Law, including the truth about the Bible Sabbath, has been preached in the world. As the Judgment prepares to pass to the cases of the living, these things will be proclaimed with a “loud cry.” Then people will choose to obey God and be sealed for His kingdom *or* they will obey man’s laws, honor Rome, and accept the mark of the Roman Beast. (*More on this when we study*

*Revelation 13 and 14.)*

**“Great earthquake”:** This massive earthquake, which is mentioned three times in Revelation (Revelation 8:5 in the seventh seal; Revelation 11:19 in the seventh trumpet; and Revelation 16:18-20 in the seventh plague), will be worldwide in scope and will occur just before Christ returns for His people. It will be greater than any earthquake that has ever occurred on the planet! It will shake down buildings all over the globe—and will leave the world in a total desolation. —This earthquake is triggered by the Voice of God!

“In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying: ‘It is done.’ *Revelation 16:17. That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. There is a mighty earthquake, ‘such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.’*”—*Great Controversy, 636-637 (EW 285).*

**The effects of this worldwide earthquake are so severe, that, at the beginning of the millennium, the entire planet is still in a desolate condition.**

“The whole earth appears like a desolate wilderness. The ruins of cities and villages destroyed by the earthquake, uprooted trees, ragged rocks thrown out by the sea or torn out of the earth itself, are scattered over its surface, while vast caverns mark the spot where the mountains have been rent from their foundations.”—*Great Controversy, 657.*

**Can you imagine an earthquake of such magnitude that it will shake *the entire world*?** Think of the gigantic waves that it would generate! The 9.0 earthquake that struck northern Japan on March 11, 2011, produced a tsunami wave that was 70 feet high.

“The 9.0 quake that hit Japan on March 11 was powerful enough to shift the earth on its axis and make it spin a little faster, shortening the day by 1.8 millionths of a second. It shoved the island nation one parking space

to the east.”—*Time magazine, March 28, 2011, p. 26.*

**This final earthquake will shake down every building,—this means that, at that time, every nuclear reactor in the world will be cracked open, leak its radiation, and explode from lack of cooling water!**

“While at Loma Linda, California, April 16, 1906, there passed before me a most wonderful representation. During a vision of the night, I stood on an eminence, from which I could see houses shaken like a reed in the wind. Buildings, great and small, were falling to the ground. Pleasure resorts, theaters, hotels, and the homes of the wealthy were shaken and shattered. Many lives were blotted out of existence, and the air was filled with the shrieks of the injured and the terrified.

“The destroying angels of God were at work. One touch, and buildings, so thoroughly constructed that men regarded them as secure against every danger, quickly became heaps of rubbish.”—*9 Testimonies, 92-93.*

**This final, mammoth earthquake may occur within a day or so before the return of Christ in the heavens to redeem His people.** God’s people will be protected and will suffer no harm from this worldwide earthquake (GC 654:3).

(This is not the Lisbon Earthquake of 1755, mentioned in Revelation 6:12.)

## Revelation 12

# *The Birth of Christ, the Dark Ages, Identifying the Remnant*

*Brief overview*—The timing of this chapter includes both the casting out of Satan and his angels from heaven and the period from 4 B.C. on down to just before the Second Advent. It symbolically shows us how Satan tried to slay Christ at His birth; the casting out of Satan from

heaven; the persecution of God's people during the Dark Ages; and the identification of the remnant people of God down at the end of time, just before Christ returns.

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

*An entirely new line of prophecy begins here.*

**“Great wonder”**: The word, *semion*, means a sign or symbol. We are here being told of a **great event that is about to take place.**

**“A woman”**: The true church is at times represented as a woman (Isa. 54:5-6; Jer. 6:2). When the church apostatized, it was compared with a corrupt woman (Jer. 3:20; Eze. 23:2-4). The same figures appear in the New Testament (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-32; Rev. 17:1-3).

**“Clothed with the sun”**: This represents the heavenly glory and approval given to the true church. In contrast, the woman represented as the false church (Rev. 17:4) is arrayed in gaudy garments and is carrying a cup filled with abominations.

**“Moon”**: The moon is under the feet of this pure woman. This means that she is standing on the promises of the Old Testament, which reflect the light of Jesus.

**“Crown”**: This is the *stephanos*, the victor's crown (Rev. 2:10); this is not the *diadema*, the crown of a ruling king (Rev. 12:3). This crown of 12 stars is symbolic of the 12 apostles and all of God's people who faithfully share the truths about Jesus.

**“Being with child”**: The pure church is expecting the birth of a child. **For centuries, the faithful awaited the coming of the Messiah. —And now, He was about to be born!**

“Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.”—*Isaiah 7:14*.

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**“And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.” Revelation 12:3.**

**“Red dragon”:** “Red” is a symbol of persecution and bloodshed. In verse 9, this dragon is identified as “that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan.”

**“Seven heads . . . ten horns”:** This is like the beast of Revelation 13:1 and 17:5. In Revelation 17:9, the “seven horns” are called “seven mountains.” We have here a picture of Rome—pagan Rome in chapter 12; papal Rome in chapter 13 and 17. The “ten horns” represent political powers supporting Rome.

**In the final Judgment, God will slay this evil serpent** that for centuries, with a wicked world supporting him, was trying to bite the faithful:

“In that day the Lord with His . . . strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and He shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.”—*Isaiah 27:1*.

**“Crowns”:** *Diademata* means **royal crowns**. The word occurs only here and in Revelation 13:1 and 19:12. These symbolize rulership. Elsewhere, the word, translated “crown,” is *stephanos*, which is a wreath given to victors in a race (1 Cor. 9:25; 2 Tim. 4:8; etc.).

### **Special note on the heads, horns, and crowns**

**Seven heads:** Symbol of perfect diabolical organization; entire dedication with his demons in trying to destroy God’s people.

**Ten horns:** Symbol of fullness of ultimate territorial authority—over the entire planet.

**Seven crowns:** Symbol of totality of final control over





evil earthly powers. (*Also see Revelation 13:1.*)

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**“And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth.” Revelation 12:4a.**

**“Third part”:** When Satan was cast out of heaven, one-third of the angels chose to follow him in his rebellion. They are the demons which here on earth tempt mankind.

“All the heavenly host were summoned to appear before the Father to have each case decided. **It was there determined that Satan should be expelled from heaven, with all the angels who had joined him in the rebellion.** Then there was war in heaven.”—*Early Writings, 146.*

“When Satan became disaffected in heaven, he did not lay his complaint before God and Christ; but he went among the angels who thought him perfect and represented that God had done him injustice in preferring Christ to himself. **The result of this misrepresentation was that through their sympathy with him one third of the angels lost their innocence,** their high estate, and their happy home.”—*5 Testimonies, 291.*

“The evil continued to work until the spirit of disaffection ripened into active revolt. **Then there was war in heaven, and Satan, with all who sympathized with him, was cast out.** Satan had warred for the mastery in heaven, and had lost the battle. God could no longer trust him with honor and supremacy, and these, with the part he had taken in the government of heaven, were taken from him.”—*7 Bible Commentary, 973.*

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**“And the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.” Revelation 12:4b.**

**“To devour”:** Next, we are shown Satan standing nearby, preparing to destroy Christ when He should be born. This symbol of a “dragon” represents Satan as

working through an official of pagan Rome (Herod the Great; 73 B.C.-A.D. 4)—the ruling power when Jesus was born—who sought to slay the Child (Matt. 2:7-8, 12, 16).

“The dragon that sought to destroy Christ at His birth . . . is said to be Satan; he it was that moved upon Herod to put the Saviour to death. But the chief agent of Satan in making war upon Christ and His people during the first centuries of the Christian Era was the Roman Empire, in which paganism was the prevailing religion. **Thus while the dragon primarily represents Satan, it is, in a secondary sense, a symbol of pagan Rome.**”—*Great Controversy*, 438.

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**“And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne.” Revelation 12:5.**

We can rejoice that Satan, the dragon, was not able to tempt Christ to sin during His earthly life. Jesus defeated the evil one and, by His death on Calvary, made it possible for us to be saved. **Following His ascension, Christ is now with God the Father, on the throne of the universe.**

The character of God is fully revealed in the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. We learn that both are totally self-sacrificing.

“In carrying out his enmity to Christ until He hung upon the cross of Calvary, with wounded, bruised body and broken heart, Satan completely uprooted himself from the affections of the universe. It was then seen that God had in His Son denied Himself, giving Himself for the sins of the world, because He loved mankind. The Creator was revealed in the Son of the infinite God. Here the question, ‘Can there be self-denial with God?’ was forever answered. Christ was God, and condescending to be made flesh, He assumed humanity and became obedient unto death, that He might undergo infinite sacrifice.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 974.

**“Rod of iron”:** In the final Executive Judgment, Christ will punish the wicked with eternal death. In

ancient times, in order to destroy a pot which had not been formed properly, the potter would smash it with a metal rod.

“Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”—*Psalm 2:9*.

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**“And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” Revelation 12:6.**

**“Feed her there”:** Even when the church is persecuted and driven into exile, God nourishes it. Wherever we may be, regardless of the hardship and persecution we may experience, our heavenly Father will help us if we will humbly cling to Him.

**“A thousand . . .”:** Once again we are told about the **1260 year prophecy**. This is that terrible span of time, during which millions of true believers died for their faith in the Dark Ages of Rome’s persecution. But throughout this period, God’s hand was over His church, preserving it from extinction.

**This time prophecy was considered so important for the people of God to understand this, that Jesus gave it seven times** in the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation (Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5). This Bible prophecy reveals that the persecutions would eventually come to an end. It is also a deeply significant fact that there was only one power in Europe—the papacy—which, for over a thousand years, persecuted the people of God.

**Doing the Math**—This period is dated from A.D. 538 to 1798.

**In symbolic prophecy, a “day” stands for a year.**

“After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, **each day for a year.**”—*Numbers 14:34*.

“I have appointed thee **each day for a year.**”—*Ezekiel 4:6*.

*First:* This important prophecy (“1260 days”) is described as “*a thousand two hundred and threescore days*” in Revelation 11:3 and 12:6.

*Second:* It is “*3½ times*” (“a time and times, and the dividing of time”) in Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 12:14.

*Third:* It is “*42 months*” (“forty and two months”) in Revelation 11:2 and 13:5. A “**time,**” in prophecy, is the same as a year. Three and a half times would be three and a half years. This is obviously the same as 42 months (42 months = 3½ years). But this is **not true of every instance, in the Bible, in which the words, “time” or “times,” occurs in a time prophecy!** (*For more information on this, see comments for Revelation 12:14-16.*)

As each of these prophetic time periods are identified as equivalent to 1260 days, it is evident that a **prophetic year is composed of 360 days, or 12 months of 30 days each.** That was the standard pattern for reckoning the yearly cycle in ancient times.

In prophecy, a day represents a year. **This period, which was to mark the time of the supremacy of the papacy, would therefore be 1260 prophetic days, which is 1260 actual years.**

*The beginning and end of this prophecy*—The decree of Emperor Justinian, issued in A.D. 533, recognized the pope as “**head of all the holy churches**” (*Justinian’s Code, Bk 1, title 1, sec. 4*). The overwhelming defeat of the Ostrogoths in the siege of Rome, five years later (538) was the year that Justinian’s decree went into effect.

**This prophecy, which started in A.D. 538, then continued for 1260 years and ended in 1798.**

1793 was the year of the Reign of Terror, in the French Revolution, and the year when the Roman Catholic religion was set aside in France. **As a direct result of the revolt, a French army, under General Berthier, entered Rome and took Pope Pius VI prisoner on February 10, 1798;** he then died in exile, in Valence, France, the following year (Aug. 29, 1799). This year, 1798, during which a death

stroke was inflicted upon the papacy itself, clearly marks the close of this long prophetic period.

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**“And there was war in heaven: Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Revelation 12:7-9.**

**“War in heaven”**: These verses go with the first part of verse 4. “And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth” (Rev. 12:4). **These verses tell how Satan deceived many angels and was then cast out of heaven by Michael.**

**“Michael”**: This word is found five times in the Bible (Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7), and means “the One who is [exactly] like God;” that is, “the One who is God.” **Michael always refers to Christ; and the name consistently occurs in a scene in which He is vigorously opposing Satan and protecting His people.**

The word, “Archangel,” only occurs in Jude 9 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16; and it does not mean “first of the angels, but *originator* (Creator) of the angels. Jude 9 calls Michael the archangel, and says that He called Moses from the dead; this shows that He is God. **The one who will raise the dead at the Second Advent is Michael, or Christ** (1 Thess. 4:16).

**“Cast out”**: These verses provide additional information about Satan. After Lucifer rebelled, he became Satan and was cast down to this world.

**“The Devil, or Satan”**: Six names of the devil are found in Revelation 12:9: “**Dragon**,” *drakon*, the large snake which tries to bite and poison us (Isa. 27:1). “**Serpent**,” *ophis*, recalls the sneaky way by which Satan captivated Eve (Gen 3:1). “**Devil**,” *diabolos*, which means “slanderer”

(Luke 9:42). “**Satan**,” *satanas*, means “**adversary**” (Zech. 3:1). “**Deceiver**,” *planao*, is to lead astray” (2 Peter 2:13-15).

“The dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan.”—*Revelation 20:2*.

***The fall of Lucifer***—In heaven, before sin entered the universe, Lucifer was an important angel and perfect in character. But then he chose to sin; and he will finally be destroyed. Here are several Bible texts about this:

“Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty . . . Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. **Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.**”—*Ezekiel 28:12, 14-15*.

“He that committeth sin is of the devil; for **the devil sinneth from the beginning**. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”—*1 John 3:8*.

“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. **He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth**, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”—*John 8:44*.

“**Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground**, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.”—*Ezekiel 28:17*.

“Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into **everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.**”—*Matthew 25:41*.

“**How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!** [how] art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, **I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:** I will sit also upon the

mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?"—*Isaiah 14:12-17*.

"All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: **thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be anymore.**"—*Ezekiel 28:19*.

*In remarkable contrast to the selfishness of Satan and his followers, is Christ, who experienced terrible difficulties so that He could redeem us!* God the Father shared in this sacrifice, for our sakes. While Satan is utterly selfish; the Godhead are totally unselfish.

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: **But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant,** and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, **He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death,** even the death of the cross."—*Philippians 2:6-8*.

"**For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son,** that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—*John 3:16*.

"**God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.**"—*2 Corinthians 5:19*.

*The nature of sin*—Sin is the transgression of the law; but, through the sacrifice of Christ, we can be enabled to obey it.

"And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure. **Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.** And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin."—*1 John 3:3-5*.

"**But every man is tempted, when he is drawn**



away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”—*James 1:14-15*.

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”—*Romans 6:23*.

“Wherefore, as by one man [Adam], sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”—*Romans 5:12*.

“Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life.”—*John 5:40*.

“Cast away from you all your transgressions . . . for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.”—*Ezekiel 18:31-32*.

“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.”—*Jeremiah 13:23*.

“Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”—*Revelation 22:17*.

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

**“Now is come salvation”:** The loyal angels in heaven were amazed when they saw the terrible cruelty of Satan in how he treated Jesus. The depth of his wickedness was obvious to all. But they rejoiced that Jesus had come to earth to bring salvation to all who desired it.

“The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.”—*Romans 16:20*.

**“The accuser”:** Satan is not only deceitful, he is also an accuser. When anyone, claiming to be a Christian, does

selfish, sinful deeds,—Satan accuses him to Jesus and the holy angels, declaring that he is evil. But, in Zechariah 3, we are shown that, **even though Satan accuses them, Jesus accepts His faithful ones as they truly repent.** *Christ tells Satan*, “I paid, with My blood, the price for their souls. Unlike so many others, they are sorry for what they have done wrong, and have chosen to let Me forgive their sins—and empower them to obey My commandments. Because they submit and cooperate with Me, I will be able to purify their lives so they can live with Me in glory forever.”

“Satan accused Joshua and his people, **so in all ages he accuses those who are seeking the mercy and favor of God** . . . The controversy is repeated over every soul that is rescued from the power of evil and whose name is registered in the Lamb’s book of life. **Never is one received from the family of Satan into the family of God without exciting the determined resistance of the wicked one.**”—*5 Testimonies*, 470.

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

**“Overcame him”**: The redeemed are overcomers. This is a special message repeatedly mentioned in the book of Revelation (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 21:7). An “overcomer” is one who overcomes sin in his life.

**“We must reveal that we possess a faith that lays hold upon the living God and a righteousness that overcomes sin.”**—*Sermons and Talks*, Vol. 2, p. 319.

**Just as Christ resisted the temptations of Satan, we too may overcome as we rely on Him for help.**

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

**Through the enabling grace of Christ, it is God’s plan that we actively resist temptation and overcome sin!**

“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with

good.”—*Romans 12:21*.

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world.”—*1 John 5:4*.

“By resisting or enduring temptation, circumstances are controlled by the might of the will in the name of Jesus. **This is overcoming as Christ overcame.**”—*4 Testimonies, 346*.

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

“**We are to exert every energy of the soul in the work of overcoming** . . . By repentance and faith we are enabled to render obedience to all the commandments of God, and are found without blame before Him.”—*5 Testimonies, 472*.

“**Let no man present the idea that man has little or nothing to do in the great work of overcoming;** for God does nothing for man without his cooperation. Neither say that after you have done all you can on your part, Jesus will help you. Christ has said, “Without Me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5). From first to last man is to be a laborer together with God . . . **Man’s efforts alone are nothing but worthlessness; but cooperation with Christ means a victory.**”—*1 Selected Messages, 381*.

**By resisting sin, God’s faithful ones are conquering in the battle against evil.** Day by day, the battle continues; but, clinging to Christ, they are continually victorious. If they fall, they quickly return to Jesus—and continue the ongoing path to the Eternal City.

“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, **be ye steadfast, unmoveable.**”—*1 Corinthians 15:57-58*.

“**In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.** For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able

to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”—*Romans 8:37-39*.

**“In order to inherit all things, we must resist and overcome sin.”**—*Great Controversy, 540*.

**“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”**—*Romans 12:21*.

**“Ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.”**—*1 John 2:14*.

**“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.”**—*1 John 4:4*.

**“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world.”**—*1 John 5:4*.

**Beware! Satan wants to capture you!** Here is a warning from Jesus:

“When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: **But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him**, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.”—*Luke 11:21-22*.

**“Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.”**—*2 Peter 2:19*. (*Read verse 20!*)

And here is the last “overcoming verse” in the Bible. It can lead you into eternity beyond!

“I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.”—*Revelation 21:6-7*.

**“By the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony”:** This is how the redeemed overcome Satan—“by the blood of the Lamb” and the fact that they are not ashamed to tell others what Jesus has done for them. In Christ’s strength, they determine to remain true to Him.

**“Loved not their lives unto the death”:** This is a martyr’s death. **Down through the centuries, millions would not deny Jesus in order to save their lives.**

It is the power of Jesus' grace, the enabling strength that is obtained by relying on Him for help, by which God's faithful ones can overcome sin in their lives; through His enabling grace they have the courage to stand firmly for the truth—even though it may cost them their lives.

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**“Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.”**  
Revelation 12:12-13.

**“*Woe to the inhabitants*”**: In this chapter, we are given a brief presentation of the great controversy between Christ and Satan in heaven, and then on earth,—extending down to the last days. The remaining chapters in Revelation will reveal the closing scenes in this conflict in more detail.

**“The fallen world is the battle-field for the greatest conflict the heavenly universe and earthly powers have ever witnessed.** It was appointed as the theater on which would be fought out the grand struggle between good and evil, between heaven and hell.

**“Every human being acts a part in this conflict. No one can stand on neutral ground.** Men must either accept or reject the world's Redeemer. All are witnesses, either for or against Christ. Christ calls upon those who stand under His banner to engage in the conflict with Him as faithful soldiers, that they may inherit the crown of life. They have been adopted as sons and daughters of God. **Christ has left them His assured promise that great will be the reward in the kingdom of heaven of those who partake of His humiliation and suffering for the truth's sake.**”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 242.

**“*Devil is come down*”**: Satan has great wrath because he was defeated while Christ was on earth. Now he seeks

to destroy as many as he can.

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary **the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour**: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren.”—*1 Peter 5:8-9*.

**“But a short time”**: “He knoweth that he hath but a short time.” Ever since **Satan incited the people to kill Christ on the cross, he has known that his time is short**. *We truly live in the days when the “devil has great wrath.”* He works feverishly to capture and destroy as many as possible—before he is finally destroyed, along with those he has conquered. His greatest delight is in cruelty and seeking to deceive and persecute anyone who truly belongs to Jesus and seeks to obey His commandments.

**When Christ came forth from the grave at His resurrection, Satan knew that he must someday die.**

“Satan and his hosts had exulted that their power over fallen man had caused the Lord of life to be laid in the grave, but short was their hellish triumph. For as Jesus walked forth from His prison house a majestic conqueror, **Satan knew that after a season he must die, and his kingdom pass unto Him whose right it was**. He lamented and raged that, notwithstanding all his efforts, Jesus had not been overcome, but had opened a way of salvation for man and whosoever would might walk in it and be saved.”—*Early Writings, 182*.

**“Persecuted the woman”**: Satan knows that the world has chosen him; so he especially focuses his efforts on trying to overcome the people of God. But, if faithful in resisting the devil through the enabling grace of Christ, great will be their reward in heaven.

**“The cross of Calvary challenges, and will finally vanquish every earthly and hellish power.** In the cross all influence centers, and from it all influence goes forth. It is the great center of attraction; for on it Christ gave up His life for the human race. This sacrifice was offered for the purpose of restoring man to his original

perfection. Yea, more, it was offered to give him an entire transformation of character, making him more than a conqueror. **Those who in the strength of Christ overcome the great enemy of God and man will occupy a position in the heavenly courts above angels who have never fallen.**”—*Lift Him Up*, 230.

*What had been removed*—In the remaining verses, we will discover that **the pure church had to flee into the wilderness in order to worship God in peace. This was done amid great suffering. Why was it necessary?**

*The papacy had stripped everything out of the heart of Christianity!* It is a diabolical fact that Satan had worked with apostate church leaders to remove every basic belief and practice of Christian living and experience!

Why did Satan arrange for these changes to be made? He wanted to take all the avenues of faith and obedience by which seekers after God might come to Him. **This was done so that the empty husks that remained were pagan rites and beliefs which placed the people, ignorant of the Word of God, in captive obedience to the pope and his priests. Here are several examples:**

*Prayer* - Changed from talking to Jesus to repeating words over and over on beads, often while kneeling before a statue.

*Confession of sin* - Changed from going to God to telling them to a man.

*Faith in Jesus* - Changed from trustful looking to Christ to faith in the priests and the pope.

*Reading the Bible and obeying it* - Changed from carefully studying God's Word to reading the catechism, the decrees of the popes, and the lives of the saints.

*Baptism* - Changed from full immersion to three drops of water on the forehead of an infant who does not know what is happening (the command: Matt. 28:19; only one type: Eph. 4:5; into the water: Acts 8:38-39; and do as Christ did: 1 Peter 2:21).

*Ordinance of humility (foot washing)* - Totally removed. This was instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper,

when He told His followers, three times, to do it at each communion service (three commands: John 13:14, 15, and 17).

***The death of Christ at Calvary*** - This is made of none effect by the substitution of thousands of blasphemous sacrifices of Him every 24 hours in masses around the world.

***The mediation of Christ in the Sanctuary above*** - The intercession of Christ, our High Priest, is exchanged for the confessional, the mass, the beads, and the statues.

***The Ten Commandments*** - They exchanged the commandments of God for “commandments and doctrines of men” (Col. 2:20-22).

***The Sabbath*** - **The Fourth Commandment was changed from the seventh to the first day of the week, thus destroying the memorial of Creation, which we are to observe.** This made it impossible to properly obey the other nine.

**“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”—James 2:10.**

Refuse to step into the path with “the commandments of men that turn from the truth” (Titus 1:14). They will lead you to perdition.

**“In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”—Matthew 15:9.**

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**“And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.” Revelation 12:14-16.**

***“Two wings”:*** We now continue where the story of the true church paused in verse 6. Persecuted by the papal church and the rulers who did its bidding, the faithful



**found it necessary to flee into secluded places** in wilderness areas, mountains, and distant lands. During this period of the 1260 year prophecy, Satan repeatedly poured water like a flood through his agents, to destroy them. (Those “waters” symbolize people in Revelation 17:15.) **Stirred on by papal edicts and anathemas, time after time, armies were sent to attack God’s faithful ones.**

Paul describes God’s meek, humble, obedient children in earlier centuries:

**“And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:** They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; **being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy).** They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” *Hebrews 11:36-40.*

**“Into the wilderness”:** During the Dark Ages, the true church fled into the most remote areas and to distant lands. They went into North Africa, the Middle East, Eastern and Northern Europe. Back in those early centuries, Ireland, Scotland, Britain, and Poland were Christian until the Catholics arrived and, through gifts and bribes, won the loyalty of the civil leaders.

**“Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.** For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.”—*Isaiah 26:20-21.*

***The Waldensians***—An excellent example of this flight into the wilderness and the suffering received there for so many centuries is found in the history of the Waldensians (*Vaudes*; the word came from the valleys in which they lived), also called Vaudois (“dense valleys,” *vallis densa*”).

The papacy claims that Peter Waldo (Peter the Valdo), a French preacher, gave them their name in 1177; and it was not until then that they originated. But Waldo was actually one of their converts and adopted their name. In reality, **the Waldensians were living in northern Italy before the time of Constantine and suffered intense persecution for centuries.**

Two of their leading enemies, Claude Seyssel of Turin (1517), and Reynerius the Inquisitor (1250), have admitted their great antiquity, and stigmatized them as “the most dangerous of all heretics, because the most ancient.”

**The Waldensians believed in the Bible as the sole rule of faith.** In 1179, upon learning of their existence, Pope Alexander III forbade them from preaching without authorization from Catholic authorities. **Because they disobeyed and continued to preach from God’s Word, persecution intensified.** Pope Lucius III declared them to be heretics at the Synod of Verona, in 1184, and the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. In 1211, more than 80 were burned as heretics at Strasbourg.

Their book, *Nobla Leycon* (The Noble Lesson), though a poem, is in reality a confession of their faith. Composed after considerable Bible study, it unveiled many papal errors.

**The Waldensians were most successful in Dauphiné and Piedmont, and had permanent communities in the Cottian Alps, southwest of Turin.** In 1487, at the insistence of Pope Innocent VIII, a persecution overwhelmed the Dauphiné Waldensians; but those in Piedmont defended themselves successfully. A crusade against the Waldensians in the Dauphiné region of France was declared in 1487; and **Papal representatives continued to devastate towns and villages into the mid-16th century,** as the Waldensians became absorbed into the wider Protestant Reformation.

**When the news of the Reformation reached the Waldensian Valleys, the Tavola Valdese decided to seek fellowship with the Protestants.** A synod was held, in 1526, in Laus, a town in the Chisone valley; and it was decided to send envoys to examine the new movement. In



1532, they met with German and Swiss Protestants

**As mentioned earlier, the Waldensians first lived in northern Italy before the time of Constantine; however, the Catholic version is that they did not arise until the late Middle Ages. They had the Bible in their own language quite early; and, under persecution, they moved up into the valleys of the southern (Italian) Alps. Some Catholic persecution of the Waldensians in the Italian Alps continued until 1850.**

When Sir Samuel Morland was sent by Sir Oliver Cromwell (ruled England 1654-1658) to investigate the papal massacre of the Waldensians, he returned from the Piedmont Alps with the tragic story; so the blind poet, John Milton (1608-1674), secretary of state under Cromwell, wrote these lines:

**Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughtered saints,  
whose bones**

**Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;**  
Even them who kept Thy truth so pure of old,  
When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones,

**Forget not: in Thy book record their groans**

Who were Thy sheep, and in their ancient fold  
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese that rolled  
Mother with infant down the rocks, their moans

The vales redoubled to the hills, and they to heaven,

**Their martyred blood and ashes sow**  
**O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway**  
The triple tyrant; **that from these may grow**  
**A hundredfold, who, having learnt Thy way,**  
**Early may fly the Babylonian woe.**

***“The earth helped”***: But **“the earth helped the woman.”**  
**The less populated areas were a refuge, so that many managed to survive the persecution. It also referred to the unpopulated American colonies which eventually provided a haven of protection, where they could be safe to practice their Bible faith. How encouraging it is to us**

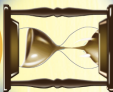
1 260 DAYS (YEARS)  
PAPAL SUPREMACY

TIME OF CHRIST



PAPACY RISES TO POWER

A.D.  
**538**



DECREE OF JUSTINIAN

DANIEL 7:25

DANIEL 12:7

REVELATION 11:2

REVELATION 11:3

REVELATION 12:5

REVELATION 12:14

REVELATION 13:5

A time, times, and the dividing of time

A time, times, and an half

Forty and two months

Twelve hundred and sixty days

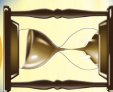
Twelve hundred and sixty days

A time, and times, and half a time

Forty and two months

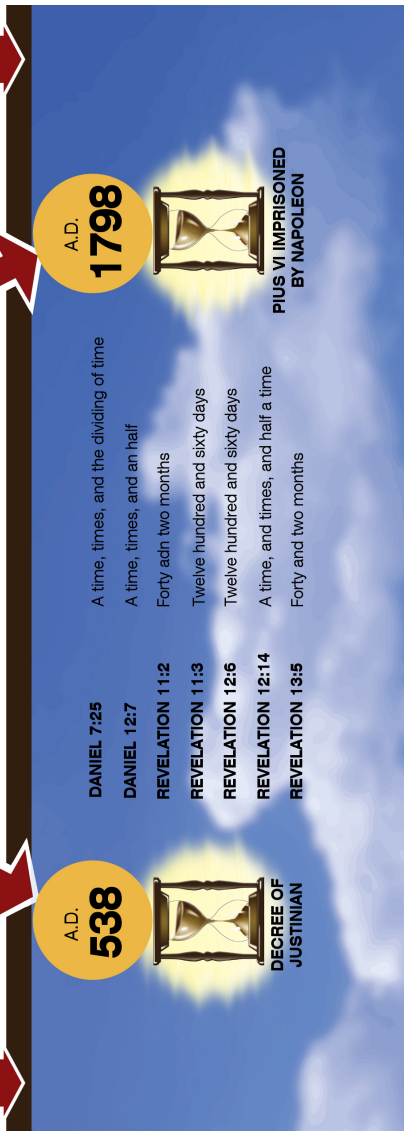
PAPACY WOUNDED

A.D.  
**1798**



PIUS VI IMPRISONED BY NAPOLEON

OUR DAY



today, to see all this history written down before any of it occurred!

**“Time, times, and half a time”**: Once again the length of time (the 1260 year prophecy of Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; and 13:5) is mentioned. *This prophecy is explained in detail in Revelation 12:6.*

**“Time” and “times” in prophecy**—In the Bible, the words, “time” and “times,” should be taken literally, unless a predictive time factor is clearly indicated in the passage.

When that occurs, each “time” should be interpreted as one year of 360 days (ancient reckoning).

Daniel 4:16 is the only instance in which an actual time span for the phrase, “seven times,” is implied, “Let seven times pass over him.” That was obviously a short time prophecy. The meaning is obvious: “Let seven years pass over him.”

It would be an error to interpret it as 7 years x 360, or 2,520 years that Nebuchadnezzar needed to eat grass out in the field. When a time span is indicated, as it surely is in Daniel 4:16, then the “time” means “one year,” and only one year. (*See comments on Daniel 4:16.*)

**Although the phrase, “seven times,” occurs 34 times in Scripture, there is only one prophecy in which an obviously predicted time span is indicated for that phrase. It is Daniel 4:16** (repeated in verses 23, 25, and 32); and it is about Nebuchadnezzar.

**But there is also one other time prophecy connected with the words, “time” and “times,” in the Bible.** It is found among the multiple statements (seven of them!) about a single prophecy: **the 1260 year prophecy.** *Here they are:*

“A time, and times, and the dividing of time” (Dan. 7:25).

“A time, times, and half a time” (Rev. 12:14).

“A time, times, and an half” (Dan. 12:7).

“Forty and two months” (Rev. 11:2 and 13:5).

“A thousand two hundred and threescore days” (Rev. 11:3 and 12:6).

As you can see from the above, **the 1260 year prophecy is not as clearly stated in Daniel** because the book was to be sealed until the last days (Dan. 12:4). In Daniel, the prophecy is only phrased as “time” and “times” (Dan. 7:25).

But **Revelation unseals the prophecy by stating these time phrases of prophecy in three different ways**,—not only repeating some of them, but consistently placing them so close together that there can be no question about the fact that they all apply to the same 1260 year prophecy. Indeed, all five in Revelation are located within a few pages of each other! (Rev. 11:2; 11:3; 12:6; 12:14; 13:5). It is clear that God wants our attention drawn to it. *The 1260 year prophecy will be explained in detail when we come to Revelation 12:6.*

***The error of the 2520 time prophecy***—While we are on this subject, it should be mentioned that **it is being said that, in Leviticus 26, Moses also gave a time prophecy about “seven times;” and that it should be interpreted as 7 years x 360 = 2,520 years!** “Seven times,” therefore equaling 2,520 years.

Yet, **if we carefully read what Moses actually said, we find that each mention of “seven times,” in Leviticus 26, is not referring to a period of time,—but is only referring to the repeated mention of a very intense punishment that would come to Israel if it refused to obey God.** So that they would not misunderstand, Moses said it four different ways in that chapter, clearly showing that no time prophecy is indicated.

Here are the four instances in which “seven times” is used by Moses in Leviticus, chapter 26: “I will punish you seven times more for your sins” (Lev. 26:18). “I will bring seven times more plagues upon you” (Lev. 26:21). “Then will I also walk contrary unto you and will punish you yet seven times for your sins” (Lev. 26:24). “I will chastise you seven times for your sins” (Lev. 26:28).

Moses said that, each time they disobeyed, God would send them “seven times more” punishments (Lev. 26:18); that is, **each one would be worse than the previous one.**

**The certainty of punishment, in Leviticus 26, is shown by the repetition:** If they sinned against Him, He would definitely punish them; and it would be intensified. **There is nothing here about “seven years” or any other length of time. And surely, there is nothing here about 2,520 years of punishments** being meted out to the Israelite nation!

It is well known that, about 1,570 years after Moses spoke these words,—Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jewish nation came to its end! **The Jewish nation did not even exist for 2,520 years!** Abraham, the first Jew, is dated 2000 B.C. The nation began in 1500 B.C.; and it ended in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem.

**This strange theory teaches that, in Leviticus 26, Moses did not predict just one 2,520 time span, but two!** In one of them, a terrible 2,520-year curse was supposed to have fallen on the Hebrew nation. **Beginning in 677 B.C., King Manasseh repented of his sins, was genuinely converted, and then spent the rest of his life trying to lead the Jewish nation back to God. Therefore, according to the 2520 theory, a 2,520-year curse fell on the Jewish nation!** Why would an extremely long curse begin at such a time as that? God does not curse a nation for trying to do what is right!

**Beware of strange theories which have no basis in Scripture.** Such inventions divert the attention of the people from the special truths and important prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, which they should be studying and sharing with others. *(For a remarkably detailed analysis of the oddities in the 2,520-year theory, request a copy of our report: **The 2520 Time Prophecy.**)*

*(For more on time prophecies, see comments for Daniel 4:16 and Revelation 10:7).*

**Christendom in the last days—For over a thousand years, Satan sought to destroy the Christian church by persecution.** But now, as we near the end of time, he has changed to a different method: **Make life so easy and**



Christians so popular that they decide to live like the world. That is our danger today.

**“Satan and his angels decided that there was a more successful way to destroy souls, one that would be more certain in the end.** Although Christians were made to suffer, their steadfastness, and the bright hope that cheered them, caused the weakest to grow strong and enabled them to approach the rack and the flames undaunted. They imitated the noble bearing of Christ when before His murderers, and by their constancy and the glory of God which rested upon them, they convinced many others of the truth.

**“Satan therefore decided that he must come in a milder form.** He had already corrupted the doctrines of the Bible, and traditions which were to ruin millions were taking deep root. Restraining his hate, he decided not to urge on his subjects to such bitter persecution, but lead the church to contend for various traditions, instead of for the faith once delivered to the saints. **As he prevailed on the church to receive favors and honors from the world, under the pretense of receiving benefits, she began to lose favor with God.** Shunning to declare the straight truths which shut out the lovers of pleasure and friends of the world, she gradually lost her power. **The church is not now the separate and peculiar people she was when the fires of persecution were kindled against her.**”—*Early Writings, 226-227.*

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**“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 12:17.**

*“The remnant”:* This is an extremely important verse; for it briefly tells the experience of the faithful down at the end of time. In addition, it identifies who they are!

Many different Christian denominations and churches claim to be this final “remnant” of Revelation 12:17. So exactly who is this final group of people? Here

are the Bible specifications. Now you will know exactly who they are.

Just as a “remnant” is the last part of a bolt of cloth, **the end-time group of people who remain obediently true to Christ are, in this verse, called “the remnant.”**

Satan is determined to capture and destroy as many as possible before Christ returns. In these last days, Satan’s “great wrath” is especially directed against the remnant. **This small group is identified as “those who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”**

**“Which keep the commandments”**: By faith in the empowering grace of Christ—and by that alone,—this final generation remnant “keep the commandments of God.” And they obey *all ten of God’s Commandments—including the Bible Sabbath*. Down through the ages there have always been individuals and small groups who, determined to remain true and faithful to God’s Word, have faithfully kept all of God’s Commandments.

**“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments.** For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world.”—*1 John 5:2-4*.

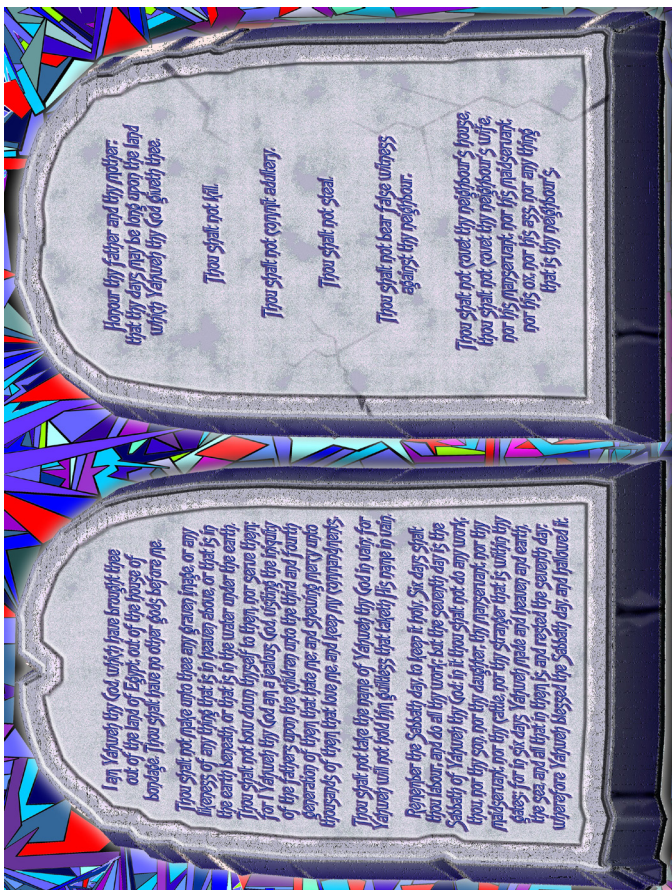
**There are actually three end-time verses, in Revelation, which help us identify this final remnant.** The first is Revelation 12:17, quoted below:

“The remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”—*Revelation 12:17*.

This verse, at the end of Chapter 12, identifies God’s faithful ones at the end of time.

**The second verse comes at the end of the final three-fold warning of Revelation 14, and identifies those who do not receive the mark of the beast:**

“Here is the patience of the saints: **here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith**



**THE TEN COMMANDMENTS (Ex. 20:2-17), ALSO CALLED THE DECALOGUE, SUM UP WHAT GOD REQUIRES OF MANKIND. THESE ARE THE ONLY WORDS AUDIBLY SPOKEN BY GOD TO THE ENTIRE CONGREGATION (Ex. 20:1, 18, 19; Deut. 4:10-13; 5:22). AFTER WRITING THEM ON TWO TABLES OF STONE, HE GAVE THEM TO MOSES TO PLACE IN THE ARK WITHIN THE MOST HOLY PLACE (Ex. 31:18; 32:19; 34:1-4; Deut. 5:22; 10:1-5).**

of Jesus.”—*Revelation 14:12*.

**The third identifies those who will enter the city of God in heaven:**

**“Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”—*Revelation 22:14*.**

**There are a number of definite promises in the Bible, telling us that God will care for the remnant who love and obey Him, in spite of opposition, and that He will deliver them. Here are several of these encouragements:**

“And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, **and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.**”—*Joel 2:32*.

“Grace hath been showed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape.”—*Ezra 9:8*.

“**And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people** as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass.”—*Micah 5:7*.

“**The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.**”—*Zephaniah 3:13*.

“But now I will not be unto the residue of this people as in the former days, saith the Lord of hosts. For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and **I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things.**”—*Zechariah 8:11-12*.

“And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward: **For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant**, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this.”—*Isaiah 37:31-32* (*2 Kgs. 19:30-31*).

“Though the number of the children of Israel be as



THESE ARE SYMBOLS OF THE VARIOUS CREATURES MENTIONED IN REVELATION 13. THE LEOPARD-LIKE BEAST WITH SEVEN HEADS, HORNS, AND CROWNS (Rev. 13:1-8). THE GREAT RED DRAGON (Rev. 13:2, 4). THE LAMB SLAIN (Rev. 13:8). THE SECOND, OR LAMBLIKE, BEAST (Rev. 13:11-17).

the sand of the sea, **a remnant shall be saved**: For He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.”—*Romans 9:27-28*.

**“The Testimony of Jesus”**: Clinging to Christ’s promises and trusting in the power of His blood for victory over every sin, **this final remnant are led, step by step, by the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy**, as they journey toward heaven.

In the Greek, **this phrase, “testimony of Jesus,” is the testimony that originates with Jesus. It is revealed to His church through an Inspired messenger.** Revelation 19:10 clearly defines this phrase as “the Spirit of Prophecy.”

**“For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”**—*Revelation 19:10*.

**Down at the very end of time, the “remnant” are the last portion of the faithful ones of all ages.** Like those who went before them, they choose to cling to Christ and obey His Written Word. *And, by the blood of the Lamb, they will come off “more than victorious.”*

**“Satan is at war with the remnant who are endeavoring to keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus . . . He will employ everyone who will engage in his service to hinder the chosen people of God from showing forth the praises of Him who has called them from darkness into His marvelous light.”**—*2 Testimonies, 105*.

### Revelation 13

## *The Two Beasts, the Image, the Mark*

**Brief overview**—This chapter symbolically presents the transition from pagan to papal Rome, the persecutions by papal Rome, the rise of the second beast, the

formation and worship of the image of the first beast, and the Mark of the Beast. It covers a period of time from A.D. 321 to the close of the Second Advent.

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**“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.” Revelation 13:1.**

**“Sea”:** This represents peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. In Daniel 7:2-3, beasts also arise out of the sea.

“The waters which thou sawest . . . are **peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.**”—*Revelation 17:15.*

**“Beasts”:** The beasts represent kings or kingdoms.

“These great beasts, which are four, are **four kings.**”—*Daniel 7:17* “The fourth beast shall be the fourth **kingdom.**”—*Daniel 7:23.*

**“Out of the sea”:** This beast arises from an area where there are many people. This great beast (an earthly government) comes up out of the water, which means out of a well-populated area (Rev. 17:15). You may recall that, in Daniel 7:2-8, Daniel also saw beasts arising out of the sea. **Revelation 13 is remarkably parallel to several portions of Daniel 7.**

In contrast, in **Revelation 13:11**, another beast is shown arising “out of earth,” where there were originally few people.

**“Heads and horns”:** Standing on the seashore, John sees this horrible appearing beast arise out of the ocean. **Like the fourth beast in Daniel 7, this one also has ten horns. So we know it is in the area that was once ruled by the Roman Empire, which was broken up into ten parts.** In addition, **it has seven heads.** In Daniel 7:8, three of the original ten nations that took over the Roman Empire were destroyed, with seven heads remaining, when the little

horn arose and gained great power. So this first beast of Revelation 13 is the same as the fourth beast of Daniel 7:7-8, 19-20, 25, after that little horn arose to power.

**“Ten horned beast”:** Guinness, an influential historian, makes this comment:

“The beasts of Daniel and John are empires. **The ten-horned beast is the Roman power** . . . The head is the governing power in the body.”—*H. Grattan Guinness, Romanism and the Reformation, pp. 144-145.*

### Special note on the heads, horns, and crowns

**Seven heads:** Symbol of perfect diabolical organization by its leader, the pope, over his subordinates.

**Seven horns:** Symbol of territorial extension of his influence, at first beginning in the territory of the western Roman Empire.

**Seven crowns:** He would ultimately reign over the kings of the earth.

**“Name of blasphemy”:** This identifies this beast as the little horn power in Daniel 7:20-21, 25.

“That horn that had eyes, and a mouth that **spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.** I beheld, and **the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.**”—*Daniel 7:20-21.*

“And he shall **speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints** of the most High, and **think to change times and laws:** and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”—*Daniel 7:25.*

**Blasphemy**—What is included in this “name of blasphemy”?

*First:* It represents blasphemous titles, and claims to be God on earth. *Second:* It claims to have the power to forgive sin,—which only God can do. *Third:* It attempts to change God’s Ten Commandment law. *Fourth:* It dares to bring pagan rituals, rites, holy days, and errors into the church. *Fifth:* It persecutes and slays God’s



faithful children.

Another identifying fact is that it would continue to do this for well over a thousand years.

**This is the same 1260 years** mentioned in Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; and 13:5. The prophecy reveals that the persecutions would eventually come to an end; *this is explained, in detail, in Revelation 12:6.*

**There is only one earthly power in history which fits this entire description of an organization which ruled Europe for over a thousand years and did all those terrible things.**

**Claims to be God—Regarding its claim to be God on earth, we are told:**

**“We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty.”**—*Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter, June 20, 1894.*

“The Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but **he is Jesus Christ Himself**, hidden under veil of flesh.”—*The Catholic National, July 1895.*

**“We define that the Holy Apostolic See [the Vatican] and the Roman Pontiff hold the primacy over the whole world.”**—*Council of Trent, Decree, quoted in Philippe Labbe and Gabriel Cossart, The Most Holy Councils, Vol. 13, col. 1167.*

**“The pope is of so great authority and power that He can modify, explain, or interpret even divine laws . . . Petrus de Ancharano [d. 1416] very clearly asserts this in *Consil. 373, no. 3 verso*: “The pope can modify divine law, since his power is not of man, but of God, and he acts in the place of God upon earth, with the fullest power of binding and loosing his sheep.”**—*Lucius Ferraris, “Papa,” art. 2, in his Prompta Bibliotheca, Vol. 6, p. 29.*

“Christ entrusted His office to the chief pontiff . . . but all power in heaven and in earth has been given to Christ; . . . **therefore the chief pontiff, who is His vicar, will have this power.**”—*Corpus Juris Canonici, 1555 ed., Vol. 3, Extravagantes Communes, Book 1, Chap.*

*I, col. 29.*

“Hence the Pope is crowned with a triple crown, as **king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions** [*infernorum*; the fiery place].”—*Lucius Ferraris, Prompta Bibliotheca, “Papa” (the Pope), art. 2, 1772-1777 ed., Vol. 6, p. 29.*

“For thou art the shepherd, thou art the physician, thou art the director, thou art the husbandman; finally, **thou art another God on Earth.**”—*Christopher Marcellus, Oration in the fifth Lateran Council, session IV (1512), in J.D. Mansi (ed.), Sacrorum Conciliorum, Vol. 32, col. 761.*

“**The priests are the parents of God.**”—*St. Bernard (fifth century archbishop).*

“**The priest holds the place of the Saviour Himself,** when, by saying, ‘*Ego te absolvo,*’ he absolves from sin . . . **To pardon a single sin requires all the omnipotence of God . . .** But what only God can do by omnipotence, the priest can also do by saying ‘*Ego te absolvo a peccatis tuis*’ [I absolve you from your sin] . . . [Pope] Innocent III has written: ‘Indeed, it is not too much to say that in view of the sublimity of their offices **the priests are so many gods.**’”—*Alphonsus de Liguori, Dignity and Duties of the Priest, pp. 34-36. (He so flattered the pope and priests that he was afterward canonized as a saint.)*

“The pope himself is the keybearer and the door-keeper, therefore **no one can appeal from the pope to God.**”—*Augustinus Triumphus, Summa de Potestate.*

Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621) was an Italian Jesuit and a Cardinal of the Catholic Church. One of the most important and influential figures in the Counter-Reformation, he was canonized in 1930; therefore all that he wrote is considered to be infallible (that is, without error).

“All the names which in the Scriptures are applied to Christ, by virtue of which it is established that He is over the church, **all the same names are applied to the Pope.**”—*Robert Bellarmine, On the Authority of the Councils.*

While Peter prohibited Cornelius from prostrating himself before him in worship, each of Peter's claimed successors, the popes (including the current one), requires that their new bishops and cardinals prostrate themselves before him in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome (above the alleged tomb of Peter) during their ordination ceremony.

**Transubstantiation**—Jesus told His followers to keep the Lord's Supper, and eat and drink "all of it" (Matt. 26:26-27). By this He meant that all of them were to partake of the grape juice.

The Roman Catholic Church has changed this into the sacrifice of the mass, which uses alcoholic wine. It is declared that Jesus Himself is in the bread and the fermented wine; and, while some bread (called "wafers") is given to the audience, the part of the bread (the "host") and wine that is consecrated is only to be eaten by the officiating priest. (The word, "host," is derived from the error that Christ is held hostage to the power of the priest in the bread.)

"Host (*L. hostia*, hostage). 1. The consecrated bread used in the Eucharistic Liturgy. 2. The unconsecrated wafer."—*Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary*, p. 278.

"**The doctrine of transubstantiation** was first rather clearly stated by the monk Radbertus in the ninth century, and the word was coined in the twelfth. It meant that **the real substance of the bread and wine was changed into the substance of the body and blood of Christ** while their qualities (or 'accidents') are known to the senses, remained unchanged . . . and has a definite value whether or not any communicants received the elements. Three results of this view were: [1] infrequent communion; [2] **the giving of only the bread to the laity**, since the entire substance of the body and blood was declared to be present in the smallest particle of either the bread or wine when duly consecrated, and [3] the reservation of the consecrated bread and wine for worship by the priest in the 'adoration of the Host.'"—*Paul Hutchinson and Winfred E. Garrison, 20 Centuries of Christianity: A Concise History*, pp. 146-147.

*“When do the bishops and priests change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ? The bishops and priests change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ in the holy sacrifice of Mass . . .*

*“Which is the perfect sacrifice? The perfect sacrifice is the sacrifice on the Cross, in which Jesus Christ offered Himself to His heavenly Father.*

*“Is the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross still offered? The sacrifice of Christ on the Cross is still offered in every Mass.”—W. Faerber, Catechism for the Catholic Parochial Schools of the United States, 16th ed., p. 72.*

The mass is the center of Catholicism and the Eucharist (that little round wafer) is the center of the mass. “Eucharistic worship is the center and goal of all sacramental life.” (Pope John Paul II, *Dominicae Cenaes; On the Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist*, February 24, 1980).

An official source says that the host “has been the object of a great many miracles,” including the bread being turned to stone and hosts which have bled and continued to bleed (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, art. “Host,” Vol. 7, p. 492).

**When Jesus instituted the memorial supper, He simply took bread and broke it.** Bread does not break into round pieces! But **the host (the bread used in the mass) is round because, from ancient times, it symbolizes the Sun god.**

*“The ‘round’ wafer, whose ‘roundness’ is so important an element in the Romish Mystery, is only another symbol of Baal, or the sun.”—Alexander Hislop, The Two Babylons, p. 163.*

**Round cakes were used in the ancient mysteries of Egypt.** “The thin round cake occurs on all altars” (*Wilkinson, Egyptians*, Vol. 5, p. 353).

In 1854, an ancient temple was discovered in Egypt with inscriptions that show little round cakes on an altar. Above the altar is a large image of the sun (*Thomas Inman, Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism*, p. 34).

**Every Catholic must believe in this teaching about the bread and wine, or he is cursed.**

“Canon I—If any one denieth, that, in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist, are contained truly, really, and substantially, **the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ**, and consequently the whole Christ; but saith that he is only therein as in a sign, or in figure, or virtue: let him be anathema [accursed].”—*Council of Trent, Sessio XIII, October 11, 1551. On the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, canons 1-4, trans. in Philip Schaff, The Creeds of Christendom, Vol. 2, p. 136.*

“The Middle Ages had decided, from the thirteenth century onwards, that **the Consecrated Host must be adored with exactly the same adoration which would be given to the God-Christ if He appeared visibly before His worshipers.**”—*G.G. Coulton, Five Centuries of Religion, Vol. 1, p. 104.*

Alphonsus Maria de Liguori (1696–1787) was an Italian Catholic Bishop. Because his writings repeatedly praised the priests and pope, he was canonized in 1839 by Pope Gregory XVI; therefore his writings are declared to be infallibly true.

In regard to the host (the wafer, or bread, in the mass which is said to be God Himself), de Liguori wrote:

“But our wonder should be far greater when we find that in obedience to the words of His priest, ‘*Hoc est corpus meum*’ [This is My body]—**God Himself descends on the altar, that He comes wherever they call Him, and as often as they call Him, and places Himself in their hands**, even though they should be His enemies. And after having come, **He remains, entirely at their disposal**; they move Him as they please, from one place to another . . .”—*De Liguori, ibid., pp. 26-27.*

“Thus the priest may, in a certain manner, be called the creator of his Creator . . . ‘The power of the priest,’ says St. Bernardine of Sienna, ‘is **the power of the divine person**; for the transubstantiation of the bread **requires as much power as the creation of the world.**’”—*Ibid., pp. 32-33.*

*The Monstrance a “Sun image”*—Closely involved

with the host is the monstrance. This is actually a “sun image.”

At the high point of the mass, the priest raises the host high, so the people can adore it; then **he places the round piece of consecrated bread (the host) into a lunette, which is then slid into the monstrance** and (usually while still elevated) is shown to the people, so they can worship it.

**This monstrance is raised; and metallic, golden sun rays radiate from the center**, where the round host has been placed. The symbolism here is that the Sun god has been placed in a radiating sunburst, **with the moon (lunette) next to it**. The ancients frequently portrayed the Sun god with the moon goddess close to it or within it in closest embrace.

*“Monstrance (L. monstrare, to show). A tall vessel, generally silver- or gold-plated, used to expose [show] the Blessed Sacrament [host]. **The top is usually circular with simulated sun rays coming from the center, where the lunette is inserted** so that the Host can be seen by the people. Below the circular part is a handle for carrying and lifting the monstrance, and at the bottom is a base on which it stands.”—*Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary*, p. 384.*

*“Lunette (L. luna, moon). A thin circular receptacle, having a glass face which holds the consecrated Host used at Benediction. It slides into the monstrance on a track.”—*Ibid.*, p. 347.*

*“Elevation, the. At the Consecration of the Mass, the priest, identifying himself with Christ, pronounces slowly over the bread the words of Christ at the Last Supper [Matt. 26:26-28]. **At this instant, transubstantiation takes place.** The celebrant [priest] genuflects [partially kneels], rises, lifts the Host so that the faithful can see it, lowers the Host and places it on the corporal [a white cloth], then genuflects again. This action is repeated with the chalice [cup of wine]. **Both Host and chalice are raised for the silent adoration [worship] of the faithful.** As members of the Mystical Body, the faithful should unite in the sacrifice.”—*Ibid.*, p. 207.*

Another sun symbol was engraved above the altar of a temple in the Egyptian town of Babain, in upper (southern) Egypt. **Two priests are standing with raised hands to the sun, and a pile of round cakes are on the altar below the sun image.** A very similar rock engraving was found in Peru (*F.S. Dobbins, Story of the World's Worship, p. 383*).

**The Bible mentions sun images above the altar in the temple at Jerusalem during apostate times.** Josiah had them torn down.

“And they brake down the altars of Baalim in his [Josiah’s] presence; and the images [*margin, sun images*] that were on high above them.”—*2 Chronicles 34:4*.

In the center of St. Peter’s is the altar and the huge canopy (the *baldachinum*). Each of its four corners has an enormous black pillar, **curving like a gigantic snake. At the top of each pillar is a round sun image with rays coming out of it.** Historians tell us that **the great temple at Babylon also had a golden sun image above the central altar** (*Alexander Hislop, The Two Babylons, p. 162*).

In the great cathedrals of Europe (and much copied in America), high above and behind the central altar or speaker’s podium, is **an immense, circular, stained glass window.** These are sometimes called “wheeled windows,” because the spokes radiate out from a central circle. **The round wafers in the mass are often pictured as round circles with a four-spoked X in the center.**

*A spectacular paganism*—Adding to this complicated ritualism is the use of **highly colored robes, candles, bells, incense, music, and the showy pageantry** for which Romanism is well known. *Great Controversy, chapter 35, pp. 563* onward, explains what is involved in this. The papacy has become a spectacular reenactment of ancient heathen worship.

“We need not shrink from admitting that **candles, like incense and lustral water, were commonly employed in pagan worship and in the rites paid to the dead.** But the Church from a very early period took them into her service, **just as she adopted many other**

**things** . . . like music, lights, perfumes, absolutions, floral decorations, canopies, fans, screens, bells, vestments, etc., **which were common to almost all cults.**—*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, art. "Candles," Vol. 3, p. 246.

**"Incense, procession, prostration, decoration of altars, vestments of priests come from ancient paganism** . . . Even pagan feasts may be 'baptized': certainly our processions of April 25 are [from] the *Robigalia*; the Rogation days may replace the *Ambarualia*; **the date of Christmas Day . . . placed on December 25 the *Natalis Invicti* of the solar cult.**"—*Ibid.*, art. "Paganism," Vol. 11, p. 90.

**"The temples, incense, oil lamps, votive offerings, holy water, holidays, and seasons of devotion, processions, blessings of the fields, sacerdotal vestments, the tonsure (of priests, monks and nuns), images, and statues . . . are all of pagan origin."**—*Cardinal J.H. Newman, The Development of the Christian Religion*, p. 359.

"The penetration of the religion of Babylon became so general and well known that **Rome was called the 'New Babylon.'**"—*Cardinal Gibbons, Faith of Our Fathers*, 1917 ed., p. 106.

**"In order to recommend the new religion to the heathen . . . the use of temples, and these dedicated to particular saints, and ornamented on occasions with branches of trees; incense, lamps, and candles; holy water; asylums [hermitages, monasteries, and convents]; [pagan] holy-days; processions; sacerdotal vestments; the tonsure; the ring in marriage; turning to the East; images."**—*Cardinal J.H. Newman, An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, 1920 edition, p. 373.

**"The mighty Catholic Church was little more than the Roman Empire baptized."**—*A.C. Flick, The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 1909 edition, p. 148.

"In order to attach to Christianity great attraction in the eyes of the nobility, **the priests adopted the outer garments and adornments which were used in pagan**



**cults.**”—*Life of Constantine, Eusebius, cited in Altai-Nimalaya, p. 94.*

“The popes filled the place of the vacant emperors at Rome, **inheriting their power, their prestige, and their titles from paganism.**”—*Stanley’s History, p. 40.*

“**The belief in miracle-working objects, talismans, amulets, and formulas** was dear to Christianity, and they were received from pagan antiquity . . . **The vestments of the clergy and the papal title of ‘Pontifex Maximus’** were legacies from pagan Rome . . . **Pagan festivals reappeared as Christian feasts, and pagan rites were transformed into Christian liturgy . . .** The Christian **calendar of saints** replaced the Roman ‘fasti’ [gods]; ancient divinities dear to the people were allowed to revive under the names of ‘Christian saints’ . . . Gradually the tenderest features of Astarte, Cybele, Artemis, Diana, and Isis were gathered together **in the worship of Mary.**”—*Will Durant, The Age of Faith, 1950, pp. 745-746.*

Langdon tells us that **Mary worship came from ancient Babylon, where the virgin mother-goddess was worshiped under the name of “Ishtar.”** Elsewhere in the Near East, the mother-goddess was called “Astarte, Ash-toreth, Persephone, Artemis, [Diana] of Ephesus, Venus, and Isis.” **This goddess, considered to be greater than any god,** was called by these heathen **the “virgin mother, merciful mother, Queen of Heaven, and my lady”** [which is what “*Madonna*” means in Italian]. Langdon says she was often sculptured in mother-and-infant images or as a **“mater dolorom” [sorrowful mother] interceding for men with a wrathful god.** And thus ancient paganism was brought into the churches and lives of Christians. (*See S.H. Langdon, Semitic Mythology, 1931 edition, pp. 12-34, 108-111, 341-344.*)

“**The [Catholic] Church took the pagan philosophy and made it the buckler of faith against the heathen.** She took the pagan Roman Pantheon, temple of all the gods, and made it sacred to all the martyrs;

so it stands to this day. She took the pagan Sunday and made it the Christian Sunday. She took the pagan Easter and made it the feast we celebrate during this season . . . The Sun was a foremost god with heathendom . . . The sun has worshipers at this hour in Persia and other lands . . . Hence the Church would seem to say, ‘**Keep that old pagan name [Sunday]. It shall remain consecrated, sanctified.**’ ”—*William L. Gildea, “Paschale Gaudium,” in The Catholic World, 58, March 1894, p. 809.*

“**Christianity is only a sect of the Mithraists.**”—*Sir Samuel Dill, Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius, p. vii.*

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

**“Leopard . . . bear . . . lion”:** This is yet another linking of this beast with the symbols given in Daniel 7. Of the beasts seen by Daniel, the first was like a **lion**, the second like a **bear**, the third like a **leopard** (Dan. 7:4-6). The beast seen here by John had physical characteristics drawn from all three. So **this leopard beast has characteristics prominent in the kingdoms of Babylon, Persia, and Greece. The symbolism here is that papal Rome inherited the beliefs, rites, and practices that came from each of those pagan powers, plus from the dragon of papal Rome.**

Because most of the body of this strange beast is like a leopard, he is usually called either “the first beast of Revelation 13,” or the **“leopard beast of Revelation 13.”**

**“Dragon gave him”:** The dragon of Revelation 12 gave this beast “his power, and his seat, and great authority.” **The dragon, representing pagan Rome, gave papal Rome both its political authority and its capital city.**

***The Capital moved to Constantinople***—In A.D. 330, Constantine moved his capital to Constantinople, which

was over a thousand miles east of Rome. (He did this because he believed that the eastern portion was more likely to survive the increasing attacks of the northern tribes.) **He essentially left the pope in Rome in charge of the western portion of the empire.** Thus Satan, working through pagan Rome, gave great power to the papacy. “The dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority” (Rev. 13:2). The popes ascended the throne of the Caesars.

“The removal of the capital of the Empire from Rome to Constantinople in 330, left the Western Church practically free from imperial power, to develop its own form of organization. **The Bishop of Rome, in the seat of the Caesars, was now the greatest man in the West, and soon became the political as well as the spiritual head.**”—*A.C. Flick, The Rise of the Mediaeval Church, p. 168.*

“From the hour when Constantine . . . moved the seat of empire to Constantinople, from that moment there never reigned in Rome a temporal prince to whom the Bishops of Rome owed a permanent allegiance.”—*Henry Edward Manning, The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, pp. 11-12.*

The capital of the papal system was the same as that occupied by the Roman Empire at its height: the city of Rome. **In 538, Emperor Justinian, headquartered in Constantinople, gave the pope essentially total authority over the western half of what was the full-sized Empire.** The pope was gaining control over the consciences of men—and would eventually gain a remarkable power over nations.

“**Out of the ruins of political Rome arose the great moral Empire in the ‘giant form’ of the Roman Church.**”—*A.C. Flick, The Rise of the Mediaeval Church, p. 150.*

Harnack says that papal Rome was a continuation of the Roman Empire.

“Whatever Roman elements the barbarians and Arians left . . . [came] under the protection of the Bishop of Rome, who was the chief person there after the

Emperor's disappearance . . . **The Roman Church in this way privily pushed itself into the place of the Roman World-Empire, of which it is the actual continuation;** the empire has not perished, but has only undergone a transformation . . . That is no mere 'clever remark,' but the recognition of the true state of the matter historically, and the most appropriate and fruitful way of describing the character of this Church. It still governs the nations . . . **It is a political creation, and as imposing as a World-Empire, because [it is] the continuation of the Roman Empire. The Pope, who calls himself 'King' and 'Pontifex Maximus,' is Caesar's successor.**"—*Adolf Harnack, What Is Christianity? trans. by Thomas Bailey Saunders (2d ed., rev. 1901), pp. 269, 270.*

"And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"—*Revelation 13:4.*

(For more quotations on this, see comments for *Revelation 6:7-8.*)

*A.H. Newman explains that the pope at Rome had several distinct advantages over the Patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox Church in Constantinople:* (1) The legend that Peter was the first pope, and his successors were the popes of Rome. (2) In the East, there were rivalries between the churches at Constantinople, Antioch, and Alexandria. But in the West, no other church dared to oppose the pope. (3) The feebleness thereafter of occasional emperors in Italy. (4) **When the barbarian invasions began, instead of resisting them, the popes would try to craftily make the same deal with each one: You hunt down and kill the heretics which refuse to yield to us, and we will endorse your governmental rule** (*Albert H. Newman, Manual of Church History, Vol. 1, pp. 396-397*). For example:

"Wishing to secure for himself the moral support of the papacy, Pepin [687-714] got himself crowned by Pope Stephen III [752-757] in 753 . . . There was an agreement entered into by the pope on one hand,

*and Pepin on the other, that the latter should aid the former in extirpating heresy, and that the former should use all his influence in favor of Pepin's civil authority.*"—*Ibid.*, p. 407.

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**"And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast." Revelation 13:3.**

***"Wounded to death":*** The deadly wound to this Papal beast was given to it in 1798. *This is how it occurred:*

***The Wound Inflicted***—When, in 1797, Pope Pius VI became very sick, Napoleon gave orders that in the event of his death no successor should be elected to his office, and that the papacy should be discontinued.

But the pope recovered, and a peace treaty with France was soon broken. General Louise Berthier (1753-1815) was sent to Italy with troops. **Entering Rome unopposed on February 10, 1798, he proclaimed it a republic under French authority.**

When Pius VI refused Berthier's demand, that he renounce his temporal authority, **the pope was taken prisoner; and, at 7 a.m. on February 20, he was escorted from the Vatican to Siena, and from there in May to the Certosa near Florence. On March 27, 1799, Pius VI was taken to Parma, and from there to Briancom in France, and then to the citadel of Valence, where he died in captivity six weeks after his arrival on August 29, 1799.**

Although his body was embalmed, it was not buried until January 30, 1800. **For two years there was no pope. It seemed to all Europe that the papacy was dead forever. The original wording for "wounded" (*sphazo*), in Revelation 13:3, actually means "killed." For a time, the papacy had been abolished.**

It is very interesting that the order to remove the pope was given on December 28, 1797; but, somehow, Berthier did not arrive in Rome until early 1798. The reason for this was foretold centuries earlier. **The prophecy said he would**

rule for 1260 years, and this would end in 1798. God's Word never fails. *Revelation 12:6, in this book, provides a detailed explanation of the 1260 years.*

However, this incident marked only the climax of a long series of events. The decline of papal power had started many years earlier. The launching of the Protestant Reformation was a significant event in weakening papal authority in Europe.

“[In 1798] the Papal States, converted into the Roman Republic, were declared to be in perpetual alliance with France, but the French general [Berthier] was the real master at Rome . . . **The territorial possessions of the clergy and monks were declared national property, and the former owners cast into prison. The papacy was extinct; not a vestige of its existence remained; and among all the Roman Catholic powers not a finger was stirred in its defense.** The Eternal City had no longer prince or pontiff. Its bishop was a dying captive in a foreign land; and the decree was already announced that no successor would be allowed in his place.”—*George Trevor; Rome: From the Fall of the Western Empire (1868), p. 440.*

“It is not strange that, in the year 1799, even sagacious observers should have thought that, at length, the hour of the Church of Rome was come. **An infidel power ascendant, the pope dying in captivity,** the most illustrious prelates of France living in a foreign country on Protestant alms, the noblest edifices which munificence [bountiful giving] of former ages had consecrated—had been turned into temples of Victory, or into banqueting houses.”—*Thomas B. Macaulay, Critical and Historical Essays, 1865, Vol. 2, p. 147.*

**When another pope was later returned to the throne in the Vatican, the papacy set to work to “heal its deadly wound.”** The Bible predicted that the wound *would later be healed (Rev. 13:3).*

But, first, several things had to happen.

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**“And they worshipped the dragon which gave power**

**unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" Revelation 13:4.**

**"Which gave power":** These are undisputed facts of history: (1) **The bishops of Rome received rich gifts and great authority** from Constantine and succeeding emperors. (2) **The religion of the Roman government was changed from pagan to papal.** (3) After A.D. 476, **the Bishop of Rome became the most influential power in western Rome.** (4) Justinian, in 533, **declared the pope to be "head of all the holy churches" and "corrector of heretics"** (a decree that went into effect in 538).

**Pontifex Maximus**—The pope was called *Pontifex Maximus*, the **"great Bridge Builder"**—**the only one able to send the soul to heaven.** This strange title of the pope, still in use today, came from paganism through pagan Rome.

The *Pontifex Maximus* (Latin; literally the "greatest bridge maker") **was originally the high priest of the pagan College of Pontiffs (*Collegium Pontificum*)** in ancient Rome.

According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (article, "Papacy"), **Pope Leo I (440–461) was the first Christian bishop to claim the title of *Pontifex Maximus*.** This transference of titles was but another way in which pagan Rome gave its religious authority to the papacy.

"The pope, who calls himself 'King' and 'Pontifex Maximus,' is Caesar's successor."—*Adolf Harnack, What Is Christianity?* p. 270. (Also see pp. 178-179.)

The phrase, *Pontifex Maximus*, means not only "Great Bridge Builder," but also **"Great Bridge Collector" (that is, toll collector),** and declared the owner not only had power over the souls as well as the bodies of his worshippers,—but also where they went after death. **A soul could get to heaven only as he paid money to the pope or his representatives.** The indulgences, and other papal decrees, openly declared that it was only by the payment of such money to the papacy that this passage across to the land of

bliss could be safely achieved.

“A former Roman Catholic bishop, who, prior to his acceptance of the full faith of Jesus, was professor of church history in one of the main theological seminaries in Rome, pointed out that the reason for the acceptance of the title was so that the [pagan] emperor would be able to collect from all who entered the city of Rome.”—*R.A. Anderson, Unfolding the Revelation, p. 125.*

**The name, “Catholic”:** The term, “Catholic,” entered the Christian church in an edict by the Roman Emperor Theodosius on February 27, A.D. 380, in the *Theodosian Code XVI.i.2*. It was accompanied by an order to hunt down and slay all who would not join the Church.

**“We authorize the followers of this law to assume the title Catholic Christians; but as for the others, since in our judgment they are foolish madmen, we decree that they shall be branded with the ignominious name of heretics, and shall not presume to give their conventicles the name of churches . . . They will suffer in the first place the chastisement of divine condemnation and the second the punishment of our authority.”**—*Theodosian Code XVI, i.2, English translation from Henry Bettenson, ed., Documents of the Christian Church.*

**Power of the dragon—Worshiping the beast is, in fact, worshiping the dragon—Satan (Rev. 12:9).** For the beast is but the visible agency of the dragon, carrying out the dragon’s program. **The era of the revived papacy in the last days will also be characterized by a period when spiritualism is especially active.** Behind spiritualism is Satan working “with all deceivableness of unrighteousness” (2 Thess. 2:10). *More on this when we study verse 13.*

**“Who is like unto the beast”?** The kings of Europe during the Dark Ages well knew the power of the papacy, and generally were afraid to oppose it.

**Henry IV—One example of a king who tried to withstand the authority of the papacy was Henry IV**



(1050-1106; reigned 1084-1106). He was King of Germany from 1056 and Holy Roman Emperor from 1084 until his forced abdication in 1106.

**In a synod held in February of 1075, Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand) clearly established the supreme power of the Catholic Church, with the Empire subjected to it. Henry replied with a counter-synod of his own.**

At Worms, on January 24, 1076, a synod of bishops and princes summoned by Henry declared Gregory VII deposed. **Hildebrand replied by excommunicating the king in February.**

When a large number of his citizens rioted, **Henry traveled to Italy in order to do penance and seek Gregory's forgiveness.** Gregory, on his way to the diet of Augsburg, and hearing that Henry was approaching, took refuge in the castle of Canossa.

**Henry stood in the snow outside the gates of the castle of Canossa for three days, from January 25 to 27, 1077, begging the pope to rescind the sentence. Then Pope Gregory lifted the excommunication, imposing a vow to comply with certain conditions.**

“Not until he had continued three days fasting and making confession, did the pontiff condescend to grant him [Henry IV] pardon. Even then it was only upon condition that the emperor should await the sanction of the pope before resuming the insignia or exercising the power of royalty. **And Gregory, elated with his triumph, boasted that it was his duty to pull down the pride of kings.**”—*Great Controversy*, 58.

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**“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.”**  
**Revelation 13:5-6.**

*“Mouth speaking blasphemies”*: The papacy spoke

blasphemies; for it claimed to be second only to God. *Indeed, sometimes it has claimed to be superior to God!* (Several Catholic quotations about the papal claim to divinity here on earth are cited in the comments for Revelation 13:1.)

There was “given unto him . . . a mouth speaking blasphemies.” In Bible prophecy, **to have a “mouth” means to be able to pass laws.** The papal power enacted many evil and blasphemous laws during the time it ruled the nations. It frequently ordered that the Bible and those who loved it must be burned.

**“Forty and two months”:** This is yet another reference to the 1260 year prophecy, the span of time during which the papacy exercised authority over the lives of a vast number of people.

**“Blaspheme His name”:** By teaching men that God burns people in hellfire for millions of years for the sins of a brief lifetime, the papacy has blasphemed the character of God and of Jesus. (*Will hellfire be eternal? For the truth on this, see comments for Revelation 20:14-15.*)

**“Blaspheme His tabernacle”:** This was done by commanding the people to go only to the pope and his priests for forgiveness, instead of to God, and by requiring attendance at the abominable “sacrifice of the mass,” during which God is said to come down to earth into a piece of bread (the host) and “be sacrificed again.” **In all this, the papacy spoke against the mediation of Christ in the heavenly Sanctuary. For over a thousand years, this strange power has tried to cast down the work of this Sanctuary.** It did this by replacing it with a pagan system of priestly mediation, borrowed from Egypt and Babylon (the mass).

“He magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily [sacrifice] was taken away, and the place of his Sanctuary was cast down.”—*Daniel 8:11.*

The heavenly ministry of the sacrifice of Christ in the Sanctuary above is ignored, and the sacrifice of the mass

on earth is substituted. (*For more on this, see comments for Daniel 8:11.*)

**“Them that dwell in heaven”:** Instead of praying to God or to Jesus, the people were taught to pray to statues and dead people (“saints”). In the place of confessing sins to God, they were told to confess them to a priest. Instead of studying the Bible, they were told that this was forbidden; since it was too dangerous to read. (*More on this when we study Revelation 17.*)

**Vatican I and infallibility**—The First Vatican Council was announced by Pope Pius IX (1846-1878) on June 29, 1868; it began on December 8, 1869, and adjourned on October 20, 1870. Unlike the five earlier General Councils held in Rome, all of which met in the Lateran Basilica and are therefore known as the Lateran Councils, Vatican I met within the Vatican Basilica. **Its most important decision was its definition of papal infallibility.**

The doctrine of papal infallibility had been claimed by the pope for centuries, and most recently had been used by Pope Pius IX in defining his 1854 dogma, the *Immaculate Conception of Mary*. This was the theory that the mother of Jesus was born free of sin and never sinned throughout her life.

However, the proposal to define papal infallibility itself as dogma met with resistance; for the bishops, archbishops, and cardinals were well aware of the numerous evil activities and decisions of earlier pontiffs.

Before Vatican Council I could complete the rest of its agenda, on September 20, 1870, the Kingdom of Italy captured Rome and annexed it. One month later, on October 20, 1870, Pope Pius IX suspended the Council indefinitely, and it was never reconvened.

Papal infallibility is the dogma in Roman Catholic theology that, by action of the Holy Spirit, **the Pope is preserved from even the possibility of error when he solemnly declares an official statement to the universal Church.**

**Official Infallible Decisions**—According to that de-

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cree, issued by Vatican I on July 18, 1870, every official statement by all popes—past, present, and future—are infallible. *Here are several of their earlier official statements:*

Pope **Agapetus** (535-536) burned the anathema which Pope **Boniface II** (530-532) had solemnly issued against Pope **Dioscorus** (530).

Pope **Honorius I** (625-638), after his death, was denounced as a heretic by Pope **Leo II** (681-683), which was then confirmed in a decree by the Sixth Council (680-681).

**If popes are infallible, how is it possible for one pope to condemn another?**

Pope **Vigilius** (537-555) reversed his official decisions four times. After condemning certain books, he officially removed that condemnation. Then, afterward, he condemned them again. After this, he retracted his condemnation again. Then, finally, he condemned them again! Where is the infallibility here?

Dueling (in order to kill opponents) was authorized by Pope **Eugene III** (1145-1153). Later Pope **Julius II** (1503-1513) and Pope **Pius IV** (1559-1565) forbade it.

Pope **Adrian II** (also called Hadrian) (867-872) declared civil marriages (not performed by a priest) to be valid, but Pope **Pius VII** (1800-1823) condemned them as invalid.

Pope **Eugene IV** [Eugenius] (1431-1447) condemned Joan of Ark to be burned alive as a witch. Later she was beatified by **Pius X** (1903-1914) in 1909, and canonized as a saint by **Benedict XV** (1914-1922) in 1920.

Today, inside Paris' Cathedral of Notre Dame, is one of the most popular images—that of St. Joan of Arc, France's "national heroine," with large numbers of candles burning before it all the time. Yet she was condemned to death as a witch and heretic by an earlier infallible pope.

**Nicholas V** (1447-1455) voided all of **Eugene IV**'s "documents, processes, decrees, and censures against the Council of Basel . . . to be regarded as having never existed." (*J.H. Ignaz Dollinger, The Pope and the Council, p. 275*).

Pope **Clement XIV** (1769-1774) issued a decree which suppressed the Jesuits on July 21, 1773; that decree was

reversed by a decree restoring them, issued by Pope Pius VII (1800-1823) on August 7, 1814.

**Many popes rejected papal infallibility as heresy.** These included Vigilius (537-555), Clement IV (1265-1268), Gregory XI (1370-1378), Adrian VI (1522-1523), Paul IV (1555-1559), and even Innocent III (1198-1216).  
**—Yet Pope Pius IX (1846-1878) made papal infallibility an official dogma which the believers must accept or be anathema (forever cursed).**

A large number of popes are listed above—yet **every one of the above pontiffs is listed on the official pope lists as allegedly infallible** “successors of Peter.”

Here are remarkable comments about the above back-and-forth reverses by the popes in these statements:

“All dogmatic decrees of the pope, made with or without his general council, are infallible . . . **Once made, no pope or council can reverse them** . . . This is the Catholic principle, that the Church cannot err.”—*The Catholic World*, June 1871, pp. 422-423.

“We have no right to ask reasons of the Church, any more than of Almighty God, as a preliminary to our submission. **We are to take with unquestioning docility, whatever instruction the Church gives us.**”—*The Catholic World*, August 1871, p. 589.

It used to be a mortal sin to eat meat on Friday, but this was changed in the 20th century. One used to see medals and statues of **St. Christopher**, patron saint of travelers, displayed not only on dashboards but even in elevators for protection. But Pope Paul VI removed his feast day from the Roman Catholic calendar of saints in his 1969 *motu proprio Mysterii Paschalis*. Although he is still listed as a martyr in the *Roman Martyrology*, his existence is at the same time considered a myth.

During the Vatican I Council which declared all the official statements of the popes to be infallible, on January 9, 1870, the following astounding proclamation was made by the Council:

**“The Pope is Christ in office, Christ in jurisdic-**

tion and power . . . We bow down before Thy voice, O Pius, as before the voice of Christ, the God of truth; in clinging to Thee, we cling to Christ.”

**Official statements by Catholic Councils are also infallible.** It is of interest that Pope Pius IX, of whom the above statement was made, was the one who convoked Vatican I, supervised all of its proceedings, and helped word its official statements. *Not everyone can call himself god, and make it official!*

Regarding Vatican I, it is of interest that **more than a few members “left the Council in disgust before it ended.”** On July 17, 1870, the day before the vote was to be taken, 55 bishops who were opposed declared that “out of reverence for the Holy Father they did not wish to take part [in the vote]. They then left Rome in protest” (*August Bernhard Hasler, How the Pope Became Infallible, p. 189*). Bishop Georg Strossmayer said that Vatican I had not had “the freedom necessary to make it a true Council and to justify its passing resolutions binding the consciences of the entire Catholic world” (*ibid., p. 133*).

On July 18, 1870, the last day of the Council, **there were only 535 “yes” votes, less than half of the 1084 original members entitled to vote.** Yet the Vatican newspapers deceitfully wrote it up as though the assent had been unanimous.

**“I’m not going to the Council anymore. The violence, the shamelessness, and even more the falsity, vanity, and continual lying force me to keep my distance.”**—*Bishop Dupanloup, diary on June 28, 1870, quoted in ibid., p. 136.*

Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) explained the reason why the words of all the popes are infallible. On June 20, 1894, in an official statement, he declared, **“We hold upon the earth the place of God Almighty.”**

***The papal schism***—The notorious papal schism (1378-1415) was a remarkable test of papal infallibility. First two, and then three, infallible popes quarreled and

frequently raised armies to destroy one another.

In 1309, shortly after his election, in order to please the French king (Philip IV, 1285-1314), Clement V (1305-1314) moved the papacy from Rome to a magnificent palace in Avignon, a town in southern France, where this particular one of the three papacies was to reside until 1376.

In 1376, Pope Gregory XI (1370-1378) moved the papacy back to Rome. However, the violent citizens of Rome, plus the squalid conditions in the city, caused him to decide to return to the splendor of Avignon. But he died before he was able to return. When the College of Cardinals convened to choose the new Pope, the Roman mobs let it be known, to the College of Cardinals, that they would cause violence if an Italian was not elected Pope.

So the Italian, Urban VI (1378-1389), was elected. He displeased the French cardinals; so, when they returned to France, they declared their election of Urban to be void because they had been coerced by the Roman mobs. Then they elected a new Pope, Clement VII (1378-1394, later declared to be an “antipope”), who made his headquarters at Avignon. **So, from 1378 to 1417 the Church had two Popes, each of whom promptly excommunicated the other!**

This resulted in an ongoing crisis; since only the pope could solve Church problems—but **now there were two popes filled with hatred and malice against one another.**

**“Each [pope] called upon the faithful to assist him in making war upon the other,** enforcing his demands by terrible anathemas against his adversaries, and promises of rewards in heaven to his supporters . . . **Anathemas and recriminations were flying from pope to pope, and torrents of blood were poured out to support their conflicting claims.** Crimes and scandals flooded the church.”—*Great Controversy*, 86.

“In a tract which he published, *On the Schism of the Popes*, [John] Wycliffe called upon the people to consider whether these two priests were not speaking the truth in condemning each other as the

**anti-Christ.** ‘God,’ said he, ‘would no longer suffer the fiend to reign in only one such priest, but . . . made division among two, so that men, in Christ’s name, may the more easily overcome them both’ (*R. Vaughan, Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe, Vol. 2, p. 6.*)—*Great Controversy, 86-87.*

Finally, cardinals in both camps decided to convene a general council of the Church. Both Popes insisted that their authority was superior to that of a council (which, it generally was, according to papal tradition).

Nevertheless, in 1409, the cardinals met in council at Pisa. That council deposed both Popes and elected a new one, Alexander V (1409-1410, later called an “antipope”). However, neither of the deposed Popes considered the actions of the council binding. **Therefore, instead of having two Popes in the Church, there were now three.**

History tells us that Alexander was poisoned by Cardinal Baldassare Cossa in his (Cossa’s) residence at Bologna on the night of May 3-4, 1410. Alexander was only 39 when he died, having been a pope less than a year. Immediately, Cossa was elected by the cardinals as Antipope John XXIII (1410–1415). (When Angelo Roncalli—the pope who convened Vatican II—was elected pope in 1958, he again took the name Pope John XXIII, over the objections of his cardinals who remembered Cossa. Although neither the Vatican nor the press ever said so, this actually made him “Pope John XXIII the Second!”)

**In 1415, the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (Sigismund) called the leading churchmen from all of Europe to Constance, where he convened a council that ultimately ended the schism** by installing Martin V (1417-1431) as the new Pope. It was business as usual in Rome, with one pope following another, each in full command of the Church and all of them going even deeper into debauchery and wickedness.

In 1517, the long delayed disgust with the papacy exploded when a young, unassuming monk nailed ninety-five theses to the church door at Wittenburg.



*How the pope's infallibility lost the city of Rome*—A remarkable example of the failure of this arrogant papal claim to “infallibility” is how, **shortly after Pope Pius IX pushed infallibility through Vatican I in 1870, he essentially lost control and ownership of the entire city of Rome—because of a series of “infallible” statements!**

Here, briefly, is how *il Risorgimento*, “the Resurgence,” captured Rome:

The Franco-Prussian War began in July 1870. In early August, the French Emperor Napoleon III recalled his garrison from Rome; thus he no longer provided protection to the Papal State. **Tired of the papal demands and debaucheries, widespread public demonstrations were then made, demanding that the Italian government take control of Rome.** The Italian government took no direct action until the collapse of the Second French Empire at the Battle of Sedan (September 1, 1870). Through Count Gustavo Ponza di San Martino, **King Victor Emmanuel II (1820-1878) sent a personal letter to Pius IX offering a face-saving proposal that would have allowed the peaceful entry of the Italian Army into Rome, which would have permitted the pope to continue to exercise great authority over the city of Rome.**

When San Martino presented this compromise to Pope Pius IX (1846-1878), **the pope went into a violent rage and declared, “You will never enter Rome!”** This official statement from the pope himself in regard to such an important matter was, of course, “infallible”.

Pius IX then placed troops on the walls of the city to guard it. They were charged with defending Rome to the death. The Pope had spoken!

The Italian Army, commanded by General Raffaele Cadorna, crossed the papal frontier on September 11 and advanced slowly toward Rome, hoping that a peaceful entry could be negotiated. The Italian Army reached the Aurelian Walls on September 19, and placed Rome under a state of siege. **Pius IX continued to issue orders to his soldiers and the citizens of Rome, that Italy would never retake**

the city. Although confronted with unavoidable defeat, Pius IX remained intransigent to the bitter end.

The breach of Porta Pia, a very small section of the outer wall of the city, was made on September 20, 1870; and **Italian soldiers entered the city, amid rejoicing from its citizens who disliked the corrupt rule of the papacy.** (If you ever travel to Rome, you can visit the gap in the city walls at Porta Pia. That part of the wall has been left unrepaired as a historical reminder of the foolishness of the pope.) **The city was captured that same day, and was annexed to the Kingdom of Italy** as a result of a plebiscite (a popular vote of the citizens of Rome) in October. Rome became the new capital of Italy on July 2, 1871. **Pope Pius IX issued another infallible decree, in which he refused the offer by King Victor Emmanuel of a liberal acreage of land around the Vatican.**

“At first, the Italian government had offered to let the pope keep an area around the Vatican, but the Pope rejected the offer because acceptance would have been an implied endorsement of the legitimacy of the Italian kingdom’s rule over his former domain. **Pius IX declared himself a prisoner within the Vatican**, although he was not actually restrained from travel . . . Officially, the capital was not moved from Florence to Rome until July 1871.”—*Ibid.*

Victor Emmanuel died in Rome on January 9, 1878, just after the reversal of an infallible excommunication by Pope Pius IX, sent through his envoys. Less than a month later, Pope Pius IX died on February 7.

It is of interest that, **while the pope ended up with nothing but a few buildings, he had earlier (in 1866) been offered a yearly budget of 3.25 million liras. Yet he also rejected that in another infallible encyclical (*Ubi nos*, May 15, 1871).**

Actually, this 1870 takeover of the papacy only deepened the wound made in 1798. First, one pope had died, and now another lost nearly all papal property in Italy. (*For more on that 1798 wound, see comments on Revelation 13:3.*)

Several times during his pontificate, Pope Pius IX considered leaving Rome entirely. One occurrence was in 1862, when Giuseppe Garibaldi was in Sicily gathering volunteers for a campaign to take Rome under the slogan *Roma o Morte* (Rome or Death). On July 26, 1862, before Garibaldi and his volunteers were stopped at Aspromonte, **Pius IX considered fleeing to Britain.**

“Pius IX confided his fears to Lord Odo Russell, the British Minister in Rome, and asked whether he would be granted political asylum in England after the Italian troops had marched in. Odo Russell assured him that he would be granted asylum if the need arose, but said that he was sure that the Pope’s fears were unfounded.”—*Jasper Ridley, Garibaldi, p. 535.*

After the Capture of Rome in 1870 and the suspension of the Council, **Pius IX considered seeking asylum in Germany.**

“As a matter of fact, he [Pius IX] has already asked whether we could grant him asylum. I have no objection to it—Cologne or Fulda. It would be passing strange, but, after all, not so inexplicable, and it would be very useful to us to be recognized by Catholics as what we really are, that is to say, the sole power now existing that is capable of protecting the head of their Church. But the King [William I] will not consent. He is terribly afraid. He thinks all Prussia would be perverted and he himself would be obliged to become a Catholic. I told him, however, that if the Pope begged for asylum he could not refuse it. He would have to grant it as ruler of ten million Catholic subjects who would desire to see the head of their Church protected.”—*Moritz Busch Bismarck: Some secret pages of his history (entry for November 8, 1870), Vol. I, Macmillan, p. 220.*

**For the next 59 years (1870-1929), the popes called themselves “prisoners of the Vatican,” and refused to leave the Vatican** in order to avoid any appearance of accepting the authority wielded by the Italian government. During this period, popes even refused to appear at Saint Peter’s Square or at the balcony of the Vatican Basilica,

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which faced Saint Peter's Square, because the square in front of the Basilica was occupied by Italian troops. During this period, popes granted the *Urbi et Orbi* blessings from a balcony facing a courtyard or from inside the Basilica, and Papal Coronations for new popes were instead held in the Sistine Chapel. **The period ended in 1929, when the Lateran Treaty resulted in Vatican City.** (For more on the Lateran Treaty, see the comments for Revelation 17:9.)

**All the foolish words of Pope Pius IX became doubly sacred and accurate when, on September 3, 2000, Pope John Paul II beatified him.**

However, a leading Catholic theologian, Hans Küng, considered the sainthood of Pius IX to be an evidence of the degeneration of canonizations to "gestures of church politics" (*Hans Küng, The Catholic Church: a Short History, p. 173*).

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**"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear." Revelation 13:7-9.**

**"It was given unto him":** This remarkable passage clearly identifies the leopard beast (the papacy), and closely connects this power with the prophecy of the little horn power of Daniel 7:8, 11, 20-26.

*Here are the three ways in which the specifications of Revelation 13:5-7 clearly identify the power symbolized by the beast with that of the little horn of the fourth beast of Daniel 7:*

(1) The **"mouth speaking great things and blasphemies"** (Rev. 13:5) is like **"the mouth speaking great things"** (Dan. 7:8).

(2) **"Continue forty and two months"** (Rev. 13:5) is the same symbolic time span as **"until a time and times**

and the dividing of time” (Dan. 7:25).

(3) “To make war with the saints, and to overcome them” (Rev. 13:7), is like “made war with the saints and prevailed against them” (Dan. 7:21).

Each of these specifications has been fully and accurately met in the papacy, and identify this beast as representing the same powers of both the little horn phase of the fourth beast of Daniel 7 and the little horn of Daniel 8.

“*Make war with the saints*”: The wording here is almost identical to that of Daniel 7:25: “wear out the saints of the most High.”

*The Right to Persecute*—According to its repeatedly stated principles, the Roman Catholic Church has the right to persecute and even slay those who do not agree with its mandates or bow before its pope in submission.

“And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”  
—Daniel 7:25.

“That the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant who has a competent knowledge of history, . . . It is impossible to form a complete conception of the multitude of her victims, and it quite certain that no powers of imagination can adequately realize their sufferings.”—*W.E.H. Lecky, History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe, Vol. 2, p. 32, 1910 ed.*

An excellent, though lengthy, article describing in detail the right of the Roman Catholic Church to do this, will be found in *The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 12, p. 266.*

“For professing faith contrary to the teachings of the Church of Rome, history records the martyrdom of more than one hundred million people. A million Waldensians and Albigenses [Swiss and French Protestants] perished during a crusade proclaimed by Pope

Innocent III in 1208. Beginning from the establishment of the Jesuits in 1540 to 1580, **nine hundred thousand** were destroyed. **One hundred and fifty thousand** perished by the Inquisition in thirty years. Within the space of thirty-eight years after the edict of Charles V against the Protestants, **fifty thousand** persons were hanged, beheaded, or burned alive for heresy. **Eighteen thousand** more perished during the administration of the Duke of Alva in five and a half years.”—*Brief Bible Readings*, p. 16.

“**The Catholic has some reason on his side when he calls for the temporal punishment of heretics, for he claims the true title of Christian for himself exclusively**, and professes to be taught by the never-failing presence of the Spirit of God . . . It is not more ‘morally’ wrong to put a man to death for heresy than for murder . . . and in many cases **persecution for religious opinions is not only permissible, but highly advisable and necessary.**”—“*The Lawfulness of Persecution*,” in *The Rambler*, June 4, 1849, pp. 119, 126 (*English R.C. journal published from 1848 to 1862*).

“ ‘The church,’ said [Martin] Luther, . . . ‘has never burned a heretic’ . . . I reply that this argument proves not the opinion, but the ignorance or impudence of Luther. Since **almost infinite numbers were either burned or otherwise killed**, Luther either did not know it, and was therefore ignorant, or if he was not ignorant, he is convicted of impudence and falsehood; for that **heretics were often burned by the church** may be proved if we adduce a few examples.”—*Robert Bellarmine, Disputationes de Controversiis Christianae Fidei* (“*Disputations Concerning Controversies of the Christian Faith*”), Tom. II, cap. XXII. (Bellarmine, later canonized, was a leading Jesuit leader and writer in the Church of Rome.)

(Luther had said that sarcastically. His point was that the Church only burned Christians, not Catholics.)

**Power was given him over all nations:** The word is “authority” in the Greek. **In the Dark Ages, the papacy had religious authority over the nations of Europe;** but,

at the end of time, it will seek and acquire such authority over all the world. **This will occur as its power is revived, when the wound is healed.**

*A remarkable power over everyone on earth*—The Catholic Church already claims to have unlimited power over every nation and person on the planet. *Here are statements by several more recent writers who recognized the danger of this claim:*

“The pressure on the government by churches for sectarian privilege is far stronger than any pressure on the churches by government for conformity. **It can be truly said that the state is in need of protection from the church, not the church from the state.**”—*Paul Blanshard, God and Man in Washington, p. 212 (Protestant).*

“A Catholic can never depart from the teachings and directives of the Church. In every sector of his activity, his conflict, both private and public, must be motivated by the laws, orientation and instructions of the hierarchy . . . Consequently, the Church cannot remain indifferent, particularly when politics touch the altar, as Pope Pius XI said. **The Church has the right and the duty to enter also this field to enlighten and aid consciences to make the best choice according to moral principles and those of Christian sociology.**”—*Excerpts from editoria, “Punti Fermi” (Firm Points), in L’Osservatore Romano (Vatican City newspaper), May 18, 1960, p. 1.*

“**Catholics in free societies [as in America] have frequently tried to reserve for their independent judgment the area of ‘politics’ as distinct from ‘morals.’** But only the Roman Catholic court can decide where the line falls, so that in practice the Roman court has the right to demand obedience of any Catholic on any political issue. **As Cardinal Manning said, ‘Politics is a branch of morals,’** meaning, ‘morals is a branch of Church politics.’”—*James Hastings Nichols, Democracy and the Churches, p. 99 (1951).*

“To get the issues quite clearly before us, **here is a statement from the official publication of the Soci-**

ety of Jesus [Jesuits] in Rome, *La Civiltà Cattolica*. It presents a Catholic interpretation of the meaning of religious freedom. The statement was published ten years ago [in 1949] . .

“ ‘The Roman Catholic Church, convinced, through its divine prerogatives, of **being the only true church, must demand the right to freedom for herself alone**, because such a right can only be possessed by truth, never by error . . **The church will require that by legitimate means they [others] shall not be allowed to propagate false doctrine**. Consequently, in a state where the majority of the people are Catholic, **the church will require that legal existence be denied to error** . . If, however, actual circumstances, either due to government hostility or the strength of the dissenting groups, makes the complete application of this principle impossible, then the [Catholic] will require for herself all possible concessions, limiting herself to accept, as a minor evil, the *de jure* toleration of other forms of worship. In some countries, Catholics will be obliged to ask full religious freedom for all, resigned at being forced to cohabit where they alone should rightfully be allowed to live. But in doing this the church does not renounce her thesis, which remains the most imperative of her laws, but merely adapts herself to *de facto* conditions . . **The church cannot blush for her own want of tolerance, as she asserts it in principle and applies it in practice.**’

“Five years later the same kind of position was upheld by Cardinal Ottaviani, and the Vatican found nothing in his comments to which to take exception. To the average Protestant, this all means in effect that **the Catholic Church advocates religious freedom when it is in the minority, but practices religious discrimination when it is in the overwhelming majority.**”—*Robert McAfee Brown, “The Issues Which Divide Us, in American Catholics: A Protestant-Jewish View,” ed. by Philip Scharper, 1959, pp. 82-83 (Protestant book).*

Planning for the future:



**“Error has no divine right to teach; it has no divine right to increase and multiply.** Truth may tolerate error, but when the time comes, when proof has been made and it will be necessary to rebuild the social edifice according to eternal rules, whether it be tomorrow or centuries from now, **Catholics will arrange things to suit themselves.** Without thought for those who would remain in death, they will establish laws of life . . . **They will impose religious observance of Sunday in behalf and for the good of society as a whole.** Those whom this law might inconvenience will be inconvenienced.”—*Louis Francois Veillot, L’Illusion Liberale (“The Liberal Illusion”), first printed in 1866, in his Oeuvres Completes (“complete Works”), 1929 ed., Vol. 10, pp. 347-348.*

**“Strange as it may seem, the State of New York, in passing laws for the due sanctification of Sunday, is unwittingly acknowledging the authority of the Catholic Church, and carrying out more or less faithfully its prescriptions.”**—*John Gilmary Shea, “The Observance of Sunday and Civil Laws for Its Enforcement.” The American Catholic Quarterly Review, January 1883, p. 139.*

**The following excerpts are from an *Encyclical Letter of Pope Leo XIII* (reigned 1878-1903). All of his statements are, according to canon law, infallible:**

**“Hence follows the fatal theory of the need of separation between Church and State.** But the absurdity of such a position is manifest [p. 148] . . .

**“Let us examine that liberty in individuals which is so opposed to the virtue of religion, namely the liberty of worship, as it is called. This is based on the principle that every man is free to profess as he may choose any religion or none [p. 149] . . . A liberty such as we have described . . . is no liberty, but its degradation and the abject submission of the soul to sin [p. 150] . . . Justice therefore forbids, and reason itself forbids, the State to be godless or to adopt a line of action which could end in godlessness—namely, to treat the various**

religions (as they call them) alike and to bestow on them promiscuously equal rights and privileges.

**“Another liberty is widely advocated, namely liberty of conscience.** If by this is meant that every one may, as he chooses, worship God or not, it is sufficiently refuted by the arguments already adduced [p. 155].

**“We must now consider briefly liberty of speech, and liberty of the Press.** It is hardly necessary to say that there can be no such right as this [p. 151] . . .

**“The unrestrained freedom of thinking and of openly making known one’s thoughts** is not inherent in the rights of citizens, and is by no means to be reckoned worthy of favor and support [p. 126] . . .

**“From what has been said, it follows that it is quite unlawful to demand, to defend, or to grant unconditional freedom of thought, of speech, or writing, or of worship,** as if these were so many rights given to nature to man [p. 161] . . .

**“But the supreme teacher in the Church is the Roman Pontiff.** Union of minds, therefore, **requires . . . complete submission and obedience of will** to the Church and to the Roman Pontiff, as to God Himself [p. 193] . . .

**“Now it is evident that he who clings to the doctrines of the Church as to an infallible rule yields his assent to everything the Church teaches** [p. 193] . . .”—*The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII, published in 1903.*

As you can see, from the above excerpts, Pope Leo XIII wrote many *Encyclical Letters* during his 25-year papal reign. Yet **none of the above concepts were questioned by any papal authority; for he was only teaching basic Catholicism.**

**Another pontiff also wrote a set of statements, called the *Syllabus of Errors*.** These were beliefs declared by **Pope Pius IX to be errors and heretical.** But because each one is written in the negative, they are difficult to read. (Here is one example: [It is claimed that] “The Church has not the power of using force, nor has she any temporal power,

direct or indirect” (*Syllabus of Errors, Dogmatic Canons and Decrees*, p. 194).

Pope Pius IX was the longest-reigning elected pope in Church history, serving from 1846 until his death in 1878, a period of nearly 32 years. (John Paul II was the second longest, with 27 years from 1978 to 2005.) During his pontificate, Pius IX convened the *First Vatican Council* in 1869, which decreed papal infallibility. Pius IX also defined the dogma of the *Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, meaning that Mary was conceived without original sin and that she lived a life completely free of sin. In addition, he was the last Pope to rule as the Sovereign of the Papal States, which were absorbed into the newly formed Kingdom of Italy in 1870.

**“All shall worship him”:** This will especially be true of the period of the revived papacy, when its wound is healed (Rev. 13:3). *The manner in which such universal adoration will be achieved will be presented in verses 11 to 18.*

“There is reason to believe, accordingly, that **the old issue of church and state, or of church against state, will soon be upon us in a fury unknown for a thousand years.** Are we ready to face that storm?”—*Paul Hutchinson, The New Leviathan*, p. 19 (1946).

**“Names not in book of life”:** All whose names are not written in the book of life will worship the evil one. This is very solemn; for unless you genuinely give your whole heart to Jesus and serve Him alone, *you will end up worshipping the evil one*—there is no other choice. It is now that we had better decide for the right; for the time will come when it will be too late to do so.

**“Lamb slain from the foundation of the world”:** The concept that the Lamb, Jesus, was slain from the foundation of the world is closely related to Peter’s statement:

**“The slain lamb typified the Lamb that was to take away the sin of the world.”**—*I Selected Messages*, 237.

“Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corrupt-

ible things . . . but with the precious blood of **Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world.**—*1 Peter 1:18-20.*

**“Christ was typified by the slain lamb . . . The gospel was preached to Cain as well as to his brother; but it was to him a savor of death unto death, because he would not recognize, in the blood of the sacrificial lamb, Jesus Christ the only provision made for man’s salvation.”**—*1 Selected Messages, 231.*

**As soon as Adam and Eve sinned, Christ stepped in and became their atonement to die in their place.**

“The fall of man filled all heaven with sorrow . . . The Son of God, heaven’s glorious Commander, was touched with pity for the fallen race. His heart was moved with infinite compassion as the woes of the lost world rose up before Him. **But divine love had conceived a plan whereby man might be redeemed. The broken law of God demanded the life of the sinner. In all the universe there was but one who could, in behalf of man, satisfy its claims.** Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression. None but Christ could redeem fallen man from the curse of the law and bring him again into harmony with Heaven. **Christ would take upon Himself the guilt and shame of sin . . . Christ would reach to the depths of misery to rescue the ruined race . . . The plan of salvation had been laid before the creation of the earth.**”—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 63.*

***The blood of Christ—We are saved by the blood of Christ, our Lord and Saviour!***

“For this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many **for the remission of sins.**”—*Matthew 26:28.*

“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, **purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**”—*Hebrews 9:14.*

“Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as

silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with **the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.**”—*1 Peter 1:18-19.*

“But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son **cleanseth us from all sin** . . . If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”—*1 John 1:7, 9.*

“Unto Him that loved us, and **washed us from our sins in His own blood** . . . to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.”—*Revelation 1:5-6.*

“These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have **washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**”—*Revelation 7:14.*

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

“*If any have an ear*”: This is the eighth time that this is found in Revelation; the others are in chapters 2 and 3, but phrased somewhat differently. **Jesus is saying, “This is important!”**

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“**He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.**” **Revelation 13:10.**

“*Captivity and the sword*”: This is an urgent warning from God. **Terrible retribution will come to those who have led precious souls into captivity to Satan.**

“And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? Then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the Lord; Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity.”—*Jeremiah 15:2.*

**“Patience and faith”**: *Patience*, *hupomone*, means **perseverance**; *Faith*, *pistis*, means **trust, confidence, faithfulness**. Those who have steadfastly resisted the many errors, and have clung to Christ and His holy Word, will, after Christ returns for His own, be wonderfully rewarded.

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

**“Coming up”**: *Anabainon*, in the Greek, means **to grow or spring up as a plant**. After noting the ongoing wars in Europe and the violence spread by Cortez in Mexico, De Soto in the Mississippi, Balboa in the Pacific, and Pizarro in conquering Peru, Townsend wrote:

“The history of the United States was separated by a beneficent Providence far from this wild and cruel history of the rest of the continent, and **like a silent seed we grew into empire.**”—*George Alfred Townsend, The New World Compared with the Old*, p. 635.

**“Another beast coming up”**: **This is the second beast in this chapter which arises.** It is represented by a very large beast which, oddly enough, has two very small horns. Frankly, **it presents the appearance of an American buffalo, or bison—and is frequently pictured as one.**

**“Out of the earth”**: Unlike the leopard beast of Revelation 13:1-2 and the four beasts of Daniel 7:2-7, **it is very strange that this beast arises “out of the earth.”** This means that, unlike the other beasts which arise out of areas where there are many people (Rev. 17:15), **this nation comes up where there are no winds of strife and almost no inhabitants.**

John Wesley, in his notes on Revelation 13:11, written in 1754, says of this beast:

“He has not yet come, though he cannot be far off. For he is to appear at the end of the forty-two months of the first beast.”—*John Wesley, Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, p. 735.

**“What nation of the New World was in 1798 [at the end of the 42 months, which is the 1260 year prophecy] rising into power, giving promise of strength and greatness, and attracting the attention of the world? The application of the symbol admits of no question. One nation, and only one, meets the specifications of this prophecy; it points unmistakably to the United States of America . . . The beast was seen ‘coming up out of the earth;’ and, according to the translators, the word here rendered ‘coming up’ signifies ‘to grow or spring up as a plant.’ And, as we have seen, the nation must arise in territory previously unoccupied.”—*Great Controversy*, 440.**

**“Two horns like a lamb”:** The American bison is over 6 ft high, 11 feet long, and weighs up to 2,000 lbs. Although massive in size, this second beast of Revelation 13 has “two horns like a lamb.” **For this reason, it is called the lamblike beast.**

***Civil and Religious Liberty***—These horns symbolize the secret of its great strength, which are the principles of civil and religious liberty. “Republicanism and Protestantism” (rule by the people and freedom to study the Bible and worship God) were its two foundation stones. **Church and state are separate powers;** the church is not to have the state enforce its doctrines, and the state cannot control the church. **This new nation was, at first, indeed like a lamb; for it was gentle, not harmful and cruel like the other beasts.** A lamb is a symbol of youthfulness and peaceful intent. The main concern was to live peacefully, order its own affairs, and be a haven of rest for the oppressed of many nations.

**The concept that every man has a right to freedom and the exercise of his religious beliefs was a new idea in the world of the late 1700s;** and it has since spread to many other nations. This belief in the personal freedoms of man has, for the time being, prevented the Roman beast from once again slaughtering heretics as it formerly did.

Throughout the Dark Ages, the people suffered under

the false theory of a “divine right of kings.” Whatever the king demanded had to be done, even though it violated one’s conscience. No one thought to question it. Fortunately, the principles symbolized by the two horns of this lamblike Beast provided a new, better way to live.

—*Yet prophecy predicted that, with the passing of time, a terrible change would eventually take place!*

“*And he spake as a dragon*”: According to prophecy, the time will come when this gentle beast will change its nature!

“**The ‘speaking’ of the nation is the action of its legislative and judicial authorities.** By such action it will give the lie to those liberal and peaceful principles which it has put forth as the foundation of its policy. The prediction that it will speak ‘as a dragon’ and exercise ‘all the power of the first beast’ plainly **foretells a development of the spirit of intolerance and persecution** that was manifested by the nations represented by the dragon and the leopard-like beast.

“And the statement that the beast with two horns ‘causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast’ indicates that **the authority of this nation is to be exercised in enforcing some observance which shall be an act of homage to the papacy.**”—*Great Controversy*, 442.

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“**And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.**” **Revelation 13:12.**

“*All the power of the first beast*”: The word for power here means “authority.” We learned in Revelation 12 that, in addition to representing Satan, the dragon also represents pagan Rome. That power, under Emperor Constantine, enacted the world’s first Sunday Law in A.D. 321. Although urged to do this by the bishop of Rome (Pope Sylvester I), Constantine enacted a total of six Sunday



laws after he declared himself to be a “Christian” (at the same time that he was having some of his relatives killed).

**During the height of its power, the first beast, which is the papacy, exercised widespread authority in both religious and political matters. For the second beast to exercise all the authority of the first beast, it would have to enter the field of religion and seek to dominate religious worship.** For America to take this step would mean a complete reversal of its present policy of granting full freedom of religion to its citizens. Such a step is here predicted.

**The special mark of authority of the papacy is requiring Sunday worship in place of the Bible Sabbath.** The time is coming when the lamblike beast will speak “as a dragon.” **It will enact laws to force everyone to keep Sunday as a sacred day.**

**“Caused them which dwell therein”:** The movement here described is more than a national enterprise; it takes on international proportions. **The prophecy says that all the inhabitants of the earth will be required to yield obedience.**

**“To worship the first beast”:** This lamb-beast will systematically force people to worship the leopard-beast of Rome.

**The one law which will produce that worship—In order to do this efficiently and effectively in nation after nation, it will focus on coercing them into the enactment of just one single law,—that one which Rome has always claimed as its “mark” of authority.**

“The observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an **HOMAGE** they pay in spite of themselves to the **AUTHORITY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.**”—*Monsignor Louis Segur, Plain Talk about the Protestantism of Today, p. 213 (caps his).*

**Here, in Revelation 13:12, prophecy is clearly pointing to some religious measure, the observance of which would be regarded as an act of worship which the wor-**

shiper acknowledges as the authority of the first beast.

Revelation 14:9-12 helps explain this by strongly contrasting those who receive the mark as doing the opposite of those who faithfully keep all the commandments of God.

*“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”—Revelation 14:12.*

According to Daniel’s description of this same power, it was to “think to change times and laws” (Dan. 7:25). The God of heaven has given the Ten Commandments to mankind (Ex. 20:3-17) as the moral code by which we are to be governed. These ten moral principles were written on stone with His own finger (Ex. 31:18; Deut. 9:10). History records that the crowning act of the papacy was its attempt to do away with the Fourth of the Ten Commandments—by requiring worship on the first day, the Sun day.

*Read it and believe it; for it is true!*

“Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change [of the Sabbath to Sunday] was her act . . . AND THE ACT IS A MARK of her ecclesiastical power.”—From the office of Cardinal Gibbons, through Chancellor H.F. Thomas, November 11, 1895 (caps ours).

“Protestantism, in discarding the authority of the [Roman Catholic] Church, has no good reason for its Sunday theory, and ought logically to keep Saturday as the Sabbath.”—John Gilmary Shea, in the *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, January 1883.

*“It is well to remind the Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, and all other Christians that the Bible does not support them anywhere in their observance of Sunday. Sunday is an institution of the Roman Catholic Church, and those who observe the day observe a commandment of the Catholic Church.”—Priest Brady, in an address, reported in the Elizabeth, N.J., News of March 18, 1903.*

*“Ques.—Have you any other way of proving that the [Catholic] Church has power to institute festivals of precept [to command holy days]?”*

*“Ans.—Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her: She could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.”—Stephen Keenan, Doctrinal Catechism, p. 176.*

*“Reason and common sense demand the acceptance of one or the other of these two alternatives: either Protestantism and the keeping holy of Saturday or Catholicity and the keeping holy of Sunday. Compromise is impossible.”—The Catholic Mirror, December 23, 1893.*

*“God simply gave His [Catholic] Church the power to set aside whatever day or days she would deem suitable as Holy Days. The Church chose Sunday, the first day of the week, and in the course of time added other days as holy days.”—Vincent J. Kelly, Forbidden Sunday and Feast-Day Occupations, p. 2.*

*“Protestants . . . accept Sunday rather than Saturday as the day for public worship after the Catholic Church made the change . . . But the Protestant mind does not seem to realize that in observing the Sunday, they are accepting the authority of the spokesman for the church, the Pope.”—Our Sunday Visitor, February 5, 1950.*

*“If Protestants would follow the Bible, they should worship God on the Sabbath Day. In keeping the Sunday they are following a law of the Catholic Church.”—Albert Smith, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, replying for the Cardinal, in a letter dated February 10, 1920.*

*“It was the Catholic Church which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has transferred this rest [from the Bible Sabbath] to the Sunday . . . Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in*

spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church.”—*Monsignor Louis Segur, Plain Talk about the Protestantism of Today*, p. 213.

“We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.”—*Peter Geiermann, CSSR, A Doctrinal Catechism*, 1957 edition, p. 50.

“We Catholics, then, have precisely the same authority for keeping Sunday holy instead of Saturday as we have for every other article of our creed, namely, the authority of the Church . . . whereas you who are Protestants have really no authority for it whatever; for there is no authority for it [Sunday sacredness] in the Bible, and you will not allow that there can be authority for it anywhere else.”—*The Brotherhood of St. Paul, “The Clifton tracts,” Vol. 4, tract 4*, p. 15.

“The Church changed the observance of the Sabbath to Sunday by right of the divine, infallible authority given to her by her founder, Jesus Christ. The Protestant, claiming the Bible to be the only guide of faith, has no warrant for observing Sunday. In this matter the Seventh-day Adventist is the only consistent Protestant.”—*The Catholic Universe Bulletin*, August 14, 1942, p. 4.

“*Whose deadly wound*”: The wound to the papal head of this beast was inflicted when the French, in 1798, entered Rome and took the pope prisoner, temporarily ending the power of the papacy. Again, in 1870 the pope’s property was taken by the Italian government, and the pope looked upon himself as the prisoner of the Vatican.

*The Concordat of Rome*—But, by 1929, the situation had changed; Cardinal Gasparri met Premier Mussolini in the historical palace of the Lateran, to settle a long quarrel—returning temporal power to the papacy, to “heal a wound of 59 years” (*Catholic Advocate [Australia]*, April 18, 1929, p. 16).

The front page of the *San Francisco Chronicle* of February 12, 1929, carried pictures of Cardinal Gasparri

and Mussolini, signers of the *Concordat of Rome*, with the headline: **“Heal Wound of Many Years.”**

“Heal Wound of Many Years, Rome, Feb. 11 (AP)—The Roman question tonight was a thing of the past and the Vatican was at peace with Italy. The formal accomplishment of this today was the exchange of signatures in the historic Palace of St. John Lateran by two noteworthy plenipotentiaries, Cardinal Gasparri for Pope Pius XI and Premier Mussolini for King Victor Emmanuel III.

“In affixing the autographs to the memorable document, healing the wound which has festered since 1870, extreme cordiality was displayed on both sides.”—*Associated Press, February 12, 1929, in San Francisco Chronicle.*

**The agreement was signed because Benito Mussolini did not want Pope Pius XI (1922-1939) to interfere in his plans to conquer portions of Europe. The pope said he would be silent while Mussolini warred against, and slew, 300,000 Europeans,—if Mussolini would sign over a tract of land to the papacy; so Pius XI could have it for a separate “nation.”**

Although this *Concordat* gave 0.17 sq. miles of land to the papacy,—the wound *was not healed*; and, according to Bible prophecy, **it will not be healed until “all the world wonders after the beast”** (Rev. 13:3).

The objective is a universal movement under the leadership of Satan, who is seeking to secure for himself the allegiance of the inhabitants of this earth. **This will heal the wound; and, according to the Bible, the papacy will then be wondered at by the whole world.**

One might wonder how the entire world, with all its varied religions, will eagerly accept this. It will be the marvelous wonders, and apparent miracles, of spiritualism which will convince the ungodly.

**“And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.”**  
**Revelation 13:13.**

**“Doeth great wonders”**: It is predicted that the lamb-like beast will eventually speak “as a dragon” (Rev. 13:11). At that time, **this second beast will do great wonders**. Satan will, through the power of spiritualism, perform apparent miracles by means of demon spirits. **But the people will think that the power is from God.**

“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: **Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders**, 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.**”—2 *Thessalonians 2:8-11*.

**“As spiritualism more closely imitates the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare.** Satan himself is converted, after the modern order of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light. **Through the agency of spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed.** And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power.”—*Great Controversy*, 588.

Only God can do great wonders, but Satan can appear to imitate some of them. **The power behind these miracles is satanic because those who obey will receive, not the seal of God, but the mark of the beast. It is not safe to trust in apparent miracles as a sign of the power of God!**

Says the prophet: “ ‘I saw three unclean spirits like frogs . . . **They are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.**’ Revelation 16:13-14. **Except those who are kept by the power of God, through faith in His Word, the whole world will be**

swept into the ranks of this delusion. The people are fast being lulled to a fatal security, to be awakened only by the outpouring of the wrath of God.”—*Great Controversy*, 561-562.

**“Maketh fire come down from heaven”**: Among the signs that this demon power will do—will be the apparent bringing down of fire from the skies in different places, in the sight of hundreds of thousands of people. This may be an attempt to counterfeit the miracle when Elijah was on Mount Carmel.

“Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again. **Then the fire of the Lord fell**, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, He is the God; the Lord, He is the God.”—*1 Kings 18:37-39*.

“You know that Satan will come in to deceive if possible the very elect. He claims to be Christ, and he is coming in, pretending to be the great medical missionary. **He will cause fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men to prove that he is God.** We must stand barricaded by the truths of the Bible. The canopy of truth is the only canopy under which we can stand safely.”—*Medical Ministry*, 87-88.

**Counterfeit Miracles—Just because something appears marvelous, does not mean that it is from God.** Satan has, in the past, appeared to counterfeit divinely wrought miracles (Ex. 4:3-4; 7:9-10, 12).

“Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, **they also did in like manner with their enchantments.** For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods.”—*Exodus 7:11-12*.

The magicians *only appeared* to produce live snakes.

**“The magicians also showed signs and wonders;**

for they wrought not by their own skill alone, but by the power of their god, Satan, who assisted them in counterfeiting the work of Jehovah.

**“The magicians did not really cause their rods to become serpents; but by magic, aided by the great deceiver, they were able to produce this appearance.** It was beyond the power of Satan to change the rods to living serpents. The prince of evil, though possessing all the wisdom and might of an angel fallen, has not power to create, or to give life; this is the prerogative of God alone. **But all that was in Satan’s power to do, he did; he produced a counterfeit. To human sight the rods were changed to serpents.** Such they were believed to be by Pharaoh and his court. There was nothing in their appearance to distinguish them from the serpent produced by Moses.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 264.

**A number of years ago, the present writer read a small travel book written by a father who took his family for a tourist visit to India in the 1960s.** The father had a home movie camera and decided to film an entire incident which was about to begin. As a boy sat on the ground, a fakir threw a rope up into the air. The rope went up and up by itself to nearly the end of a 12-foot coil and there it hung! Then the boy climbed up the rope, followed by the fakir. Then they both descended back to the ground.

**When the father got back to the States, he had the film developed—and found that it only showed the coiled rope, the boy sitting on the ground close to the fakir who was standing.** The heads of the bystanders gasped as they looked up into the air, and soon back down. Yet all the while the fakir and the boy and the coiled rope were on the ground. The whole thing was an illusion.

***Spiritualism—Satan is the “god of this world”*** (2 Cor. 4:4), “the prince of this world” (John 14:30), and the “prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2). **Only in the strength of Christ can we resist him. But, clinging to Christ, we are secure!**

Here are several Bible verses about Satan’s master-



piece: spiritualism:

**“For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles.”—Revelation 16:14.**

**“Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God.”—Leviticus 19:31 (1 Chron. 10:13-14).**

**“Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers . . . For they prophesy a lie unto you.”—Jeremiah 27:9-10 (Deut. 18:10-12).**

**“And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for [instead of] the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.”—Isaiah 8:19-20.**

**We must flee to the God of heaven and, in His strength, resist these evil powers.**

**“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”—Ephesians 6:11-13.**

**“Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil.”—Ephesians 4:26-27.**

**“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith.”—1 Peter 5:8-9.**

**“Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the**

kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.”—*Galatians 5:20-23*.

***Satan will appear—personating Christ, healing the sick, and declaring that he has changed the Sabbath to Sunday!***

“Satan will come in to deceive if possible the very elect. He claims to be Christ, and he is coming in, pretending to be the great medical missionary. He will cause fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men to prove that he is God.”—*Medical Ministry, 87-88*.

“As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ . . . Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness . . . **The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld.** The shout of triumph rings out upon the air: “Christ has come! Christ has come!” The people prostrate themselves in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands and pronounces a blessing upon them . . . **In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered;** he heals the diseases of the people, and **then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday,** and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name.”—*Great Controversy, 624*.

***We must stand firm in the Bible truth that the dead “know not anything.”***

“For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything.”—*Ecclesiastes 9:5*.

“His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.”—*Psalms 146:4*.

The time is coming when the “wonders” of Revelation 13:13 and the “miracles” of Revelation 16:14 will be done in our sight.

**“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.** Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”—*2 Corinthians 11:14-15.*

**“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.”**—*2 Thessalonians 2:9-10.*

**Oh the road to Endor is the oldest road**

**And the craziest road of all.**

**Straight it runs to the Witch’s abode,**

**As it did in the days of Saul.**

**And nothing has changed of the sorrow in store**

**For such as go down on the road to Endor!**

**—Rudyard Kipling**

“That old road has never been more crowded than it is today.”—*Jane T. Stoddard, The Case against Spiritualism, Preface.*

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**“And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.”** Revelation 13:14.

**“And deceiveth them”:** It will be the miracles which will play a major part in bringing the entire world into obedience to this strange confederation of demon power promoting a close alliance of Sundaykeeping churches with the United States Government.

**“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:**

**“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,**

and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.”—2 *Thessalonians* 2:8-10.

“There is a limit beyond which Satan cannot go, and here he calls deception to his aid and counterfeits the work which he has not power actually to perform. In the last days he will appear in such a manner as to make men believe him to be Christ come the second time into the world. He will indeed transform himself into an angel of light . . . So far as mere appearance goes, it will deceive none but those who, like Pharaoh, are seeking to resist truth.”—5 *Testimonies*, 698.

**“Them that dwell on the earth”:** Satan will make appearances all over the world, pretending to be Christ.

“As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour’s advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. Revelation 1:13-15. The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air: ‘Christ has come! Christ has come!’ The people prostrate themselves in adoration before him.”—*Great Controversy*, 624.

“Then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion.”—*Ibid.*

**“Make an image”:** The word, “image” (*eikon*, in the Greek), means a copy, a likeness, or image.

In 2 Corinthians 4:4, we are told, “Christ, who is the

image of God.” He is the exact likeness to the Father (also Col. 1:15). It is the purpose of the plan of salvation to transform man into the *eikon* of Christ.

**But this *eikon* of Revelation 13:14 is far different. It will be both an image to the beast (13:14) and an image of the beast (13:15). It will both lead to the worship of the beast and to becoming like the beast. And that image will especially exhibit the key quality which the papal beast has: Sunday worship as the mark of its authority.**

The distinctive quality about the papacy, which made it so dangerous in past ages, was that it was a church-state. **The papacy used civil power to control the consciences of the people. When America does this, and tries to require others to do it also, it will have formed an image to the beast—an image to the leopard beast, the papacy.**

**“But what is the ‘image to the beast’? and how is it to be formed? The image is made by the two-horned beast, and is an image to the beast. It is also called an image of the beast. Then to learn what the image is like and how it is to be formed we must study the characteristics of the beast itself—the papacy.**

“When the early church became corrupted by departing from the simplicity of the gospel and accepting heathen rites and customs, she lost the Spirit and power of God; and **in order to control the consciences of the people, she sought the support of the secular power. The result was the papacy, a church that controlled the power of the state and employed it to further her own ends**, especially for the punishment of ‘heresy.’ In order for the United States to form an image of the beast, the religious power must so control the civil government that **the authority of the state will also be employed by the church to accomplish her own ends.**”—*Great Controversy*, 443.

**“When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of**

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the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result.”—*Great Controversy*, 445.

**“Which had the wound”:** The wound will, at that time, be fully healed—for when the multitudes worship the image, it will be the beast itself which will actually be worshiped. For it was the papacy which used Constantine to first legislate Sunday worship in the Christian church. It was the papacy which gained from the bargain.

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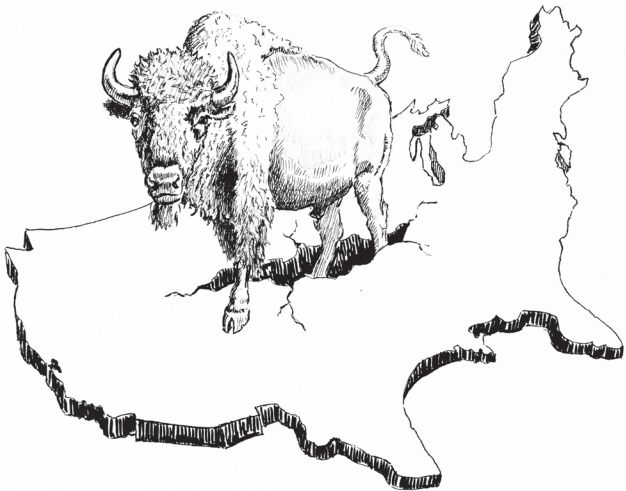
**“And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.”** Revelation 13:15.

**“Give life to the image”:** The second beast will, at that time, speak as a dragon and copy, or duplicate, the papal beast. It will do this when the U.S. begins using its civil laws—to force people to obey religious laws. —For that is what papal Rome did during the 1260 years! **In doing that, America will make a powerful, almost overmastering image of the beast.** The United States will become a church-state power, and the image will be the multiplication throughout the world of this church-state power, in support of Sunday worship.

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

But is the U.S. able to tell the other nations what to do? We have seen many examples of such coercion in recent decades.

**It will soon enact laws to force all people to not only keep Sunday, but also to break the seventh-day Sabbath of the Lord.**



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But God's true people will not yield their faith. God will strengthen them and they will remain firm in their loyalty to His Sabbath.

***“Cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed”***: This will result in a crisis; and the lamblike beast with a dragon voice will finally—according to this Bible prophecy—declare that such rebels against its authority must die. **A death decree will be enacted; at a certain time all the Sabbathkeepers are to be killed. When that decree is issued, God closes probation on this earth and the plagues begin to fall on the wicked.** By that time, everyone will have made his decision, whether to obey God's Ten Commandment law or obey the papal holy day.

**Keep in mind that this is only history repeating. For centuries, the papacy put to death large numbers of God's people because they refused to keep the Sunday holy instead of the Bible Sabbath.** This final crisis is only a repetition of what had taken place for centuries.

Thankfully, God's obedient people will be strengthened in this final crisis. Even those who may die as martyrs, before that death decree is issued, will be given all the courage and help they need—exactly when they need it.

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**“And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a MARK in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” Revelation 13:16-17 (caps ours).**

***“Receive a mark”***: People have many strange ideas about the identity of this “mark” on the hand or forehead. But, to careful Bible students, it is no mystery; ***the mark of Rome's authority is Sundaykeeping enforced by law.*** This is the “mark” which the leopard-like “beast” (the papacy), gives to the lamblike beast to enforce.

**“Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change [of the Sabbath to Sunday] was her act**



. . . **AND THE ACT IS A MARK of her ecclesiastical power.**—*From the office of Cardinal Gibbons, through Chancellor H.F. Thomas, November 11, 1895 (caps ours).*

**“PROVE TO ME from the BIBLE ALONE that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. THERE IS NO SUCH LAW IN THE BIBLE!** It is a law of the holy Catholic Church alone.

**“The Bible says, ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’ THE CATHOLIC CHURCH SAYS, NO. By my divine power, I ABOLISH THE SABBATH DAY and command you to keep holy the first day of the week.** And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the holy Catholic Church!”—*Priest Thomas Enright, C.S.S.R., president Redemptorist College, Kansas City, MO., in a lecture at Hartford, Kansas, February 18, 1884, and published in The American Sentinel (R.C. journal), June 1893, p. 173 (caps his).*

**“Causeth all to receive”:** It will be required by law that everyone must receive this mark.

“When the legislature frames laws which exalt the first day of the week, and put it in the place of the seventh day, **the device of Satan will be perfected.**”—*7 Bible Commentary, 976.*

**This decree will, through international pressure, extend to nations throughout the world.**

“History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image at Babylon. **All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath.** This is Satan’s plan to make of no account the day instituted by God and given to the world as a memorial of creation. **The decree enforcing the worship of this day is to go forth to all the world.**”—*7 Bible Commentary, 976.*

**The key to this success is the astounding—even dazzling—power of spiritualism.**

“As spiritualism more closely imitates the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare. **Satan himself is converted, after the modern order of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light. Through the agency of spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed.** And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power.”—*Great Controversy*, 588.

“As we near the close of time, **there will be greater and still greater external parade of heathen power; heathen deities will manifest their signal power, and will exhibit themselves** before the cities of the world.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 117-118.

**“Heathen deities will manifest their signal power and will exhibit themselves”!**

Muhammad, Gautama Buddha, Confucius, Lao Tzu, Shiva, and Vishnu, along with departed local shamans, will appear. They will approve of their followers' worship and will change nothing—except to add the keeping holy of the Sun day.

**“Right hand or in their forehead”:** Each person will have to make his own decision in the matter. No one can decide for another.

**“The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great final conflict in which all the world will act a part.** Men have honored Satan's principles above the principles that rule in the heavens. They have accepted the spurious sabbath, which Satan has exalted as the sign of his authority. But God has set His seal upon His royal requirement. **Each sabbath institution [both true and false] bears the name of its author, an inefaceable mark that shows the authority of each.**”—6 *Testimonies*, 352.

**One mark is the Bible Sabbath**, commanded in the Fourth Commandment as the memorial of Creation. **The**

other mark is the Sun day, the papal sacred day which was inherited from Mithra, the Sun god.

***Either the mark or the seal***—Each person will receive either the mark of the beast or the seal of God. Our Creator has a moral law, the Ten Commandments. **Christ is able and willing, by the impartation of His grace, to strengthen each of us to obey that which He commands. Those who do so will be sealed.**

“Courage, fortitude, faith, and implicit trust in God’s power to save do not come in a moment. These heavenly graces are acquired by the experience of years. **By a life of holy endeavor and firm adherence to the right the children of God were sealing their destiny.** Beset with temptations without number, they knew they must resist firmly or be conquered.”—*5 Testimonies, 213.*

“**The Sabbath is not introduced as a new institution but as having been founded at creation.** It is to be remembered and observed as the memorial of the Creator’s work. **Pointing to God as the Maker of the heavens and the earth, it distinguishes the true God from all false gods.** All who keep the seventh day signify by this act that they are worshipers of Jehovah. **Thus the Sabbath is the sign of man’s allegiance to God as long as there are any upon the earth to serve Him.** The fourth commandment is the only one of all the ten in which are found both the **name** and the **title** of the Lawgiver. It is the only one that shows by whose **authority** the law is given. **Thus it contains the seal of God, affixed to His law as evidence of its authenticity and binding force.**”—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 307.*

“Now is the time to prepare. **The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman.** It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. **All who receive the seal must be without spot before God—candidates for heaven.**”—*5 Testimonies, 216.*

“If we receive this mark in our foreheads or in our

hands, the judgments pronounced against the disobedient must fall upon us. **But the seal of the living God is placed upon those who conscientiously keep the Sabbath of the Lord.**”—*7 Bible Commentary, 980.*

*When the mark and seal are applied*—The mark and seal are applied after the National Sunday Law is enacted, when each person, understanding the issues, makes his decision whether or not to obey God’s law.

**“Sundaykeeping is not yet the mark of the beast, and will not be until the decree goes forth causing men to worship this idol sabbath.** The time will come when this day will be the test, but that time has not come yet.”—*7 Bible Commentary, 977.*

“The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God’s law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. **While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God.**”—*Great Controversy, 605.*

“If the light of truth has been presented to you, revealing the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and showing that there is no foundation in the Word of God for Sunday observance, and yet you still cling to the false sabbath, refusing to keep holy the Sabbath which God calls ‘My holy day,’ you receive the mark of the beast. When does this take place? **When you obey the decree that commands you to cease from labor on Sunday and worship God, while you know that there is not a word in the Bible showing Sunday to be other than a common working day, you consent**

to receive the mark of the beast, and refuse the seal of God.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 980.

“**The living righteous will receive the seal of God prior to the close of probation.**”—*1 Selected Messages*, 66. (For a fuller understanding of this, see *EW* 279-280.)

“**The great decision now to be made by every one** is whether he will receive the mark of the beast and his image, or the seal of the living and true God.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 977.

“**This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed.** All who prove their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God. **Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast.**”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 976.

**After the National Sunday Law is enacted, those who realize that Sunday should not be kept holy but still obey the law requiring it—will symbolically receive the mark in their foreheads.** Immediately behind the forehead are the frontal lobes of the brain—the thinking and deciding part of the mind. This mark is not a visible mark, but rather a choice.

**Those who, while knowing that Sunday sacredness is not Biblical, still yield obedience to this religious law so they can have employment—will symbolically receive the mark in their hand.**

While the beast mark will be engraved into the minds of those who, knowing the issues, submit to the teachings of Rome and worship on Sunday; in decided contrast, **the seal of God will be placed within the minds of God’s faithful ones** who keep the Bible Sabbath and refuse to worship on the first day of the week (Rev. 7:3; 14:1).

“Those who have in their foreheads the seal of the infinite God will regard the world and its attractions as subordinate to eternal interests.”—*7 Bible Com-*

*mentary, 978.*

Those who are faithful to God in this crisis, and refuse the mark of the beast, are the ones who cry to God for help and obey Him alone.

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**“And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” Revelation 13:17.**

**“No man might buy or sell”:** Those who refuse to obey this man-made worship law—will not be able to buy or sell. America has been very successful, in recent years, in using such “economic sanctions” on targeted nations, to stop them from buying and selling until they do as it says.

**“No man save he that had”:** Three groups are named here.

**“The mark”:** *First:* These are the ones who, regardless of whether they consider themselves loyal to the pope of Rome, when the law is enacted, faithfully worship on the papal holy day each week.

**“The name”:** *Second:* There are those who have “the name of the beast.” When the final test comes, they fully submit to the authority of Rome, and keep its sacred day.

*But there is also a third group:*

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**“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.” Revelation 13:18.**

**“The number”:** The *third* group consists of those who, while accepting the Sunday, have the “number of the beast’s name.” This represents the pagan religions, the various New Age movements, secret societies, and witchcraft cults; all of these have the mystery number 666 somewhere in their ceremonies or worship.

All three classes will unite to persecute the true Sab-

bathkeepers.

**The number 666**—What is this famous number, the 666? It is the ancient code number of the mystery religions, handed down from antiquity through Babylon and Egypt to the mysteries of Asia Minor, and then adopted by Mithraism and pagan Rome. All of those mystic symbols, rites, and beliefs were adopted by the papacy.

**“It was a method practiced among the ancients, to denote names by numbers.”**—*Matthew Henry, Commentary, Vol. 3, p. 1065.*

“Representing numbers by letters of the alphabet gave rise to a practice among the ancients of representing names also by numbers. Examples of this kind abound in the writings of heathens, Jews and Christians.”—*Adam Clarke, Commentary on the New Testament, Vol. 2, p. 1025.*

**The number six (and multiples of it) were common in ancient Babylon. Each of their gods had numbers.** The number of Anu, their highest god, was sixty; and it was also the number of Marduk or Bel, when he replaced Anu as head of the Babylonian pantheon.

**The number six and multiples thereof were quite common in occult writings and rituals.** Often they had evil or sexual connotations. *Hex* is the Greek word for six, and *sex* is the Latin word for six.

**In Revelation 13:18, the number of the beast is given as 666 (600 + 60 + 6).**

“The number is indicated by the letters of his name.”—*Revelation 13:18, The Twentieth Century New Testament.*

“Verse 18, Six Hundred Sixty Six. **The numeral letters of HIS NAME shall make up this number.**”—*The Douay-Rheims (Catholic) Bible, note on Revelation 13:18 (caps ours).*

“The method of reading, generally adopted, is that known as the *ghematria* of the Rabbins, **which assigns each letter of a name its usual numerical value, and gives the sum of such numbers as the equivalent of**

the name.”—*Marvin R. Vincent, D.D., Word Studies in the New Testament, Comment on Revelation 13:18.*

“The number in the Mark in Revelation 13 will be found in the title of the leader of ‘Mystery, Babylon the Great.’ **It is the number of the man of sin of 2 Thessalonians 2, the little horn of Daniel 7, the beast of Revelation 13. It is the number of the one who led out through long centuries in killing the martyrs and uniting Christianity with paganism.**”—*Jean Delacroix.*

***Vicarius Filii Dei***—As for the number 666 itself, in Latin (the old Roman language still used by the Papacy today), letters are also used to represent numbers. It is for this reason that some names can add up to a number. Significantly, **the name and number of the pope has been found on some of his crowns until fairly recently.**

“The pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the Vicar of God. The pope is of such lofty and supreme dignity that, properly speaking, he has not been established in any rank of dignity, but rather has been placed upon the very summit of all ranks of dignities . . . **He is likewise the divine monarch and supreme emperor and king of kings.**

“**Hence the pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions.**”—*Lucius Ferraris, Prompta Bibliotheca, Vol. VI, pp. 438, 442 (R.C. sourcebook).*

“**Q. What are the letters supposed to be in the pope’s crown, and what do they signify, if anything?**

“**A. The letters inscribed in the Pope’s miter are these: ‘Vicarius Filii Dei,’ which is the Latin for ‘Vicar of the Son of God.’** Catholics hold that the church, which is a visible society, must have a visible head . . . As head of the church, [the pope] was given the title, ‘Vicar of Christ.’”—*Our Sunday Visitor (Catholic Weekly) “Bureau of Information,” Huntington, Indiana, April 18, 1915.*

**As a title of the pope, *Vicarius Filii Dei* has appeared**



## A KEY TO THE MYSTIC NUMBER



**“VICARIUS FILII DEI”**  
 OR  
**“VICAR OF THE SON  
 OF GOD”,**

IS A FORMAL LATIN TITLE OF THE LEADING  
**“MAN”** OF THE PAPAL SYSTEM

CERTAIN LETTERS OF THE LATIN ALPHABET HAD  
 NUMERICAL VALUE, AND IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT  
 THE NUMERICAL EQUIVALENT OF THE ABOVE TITLE  
 IS **666**

**666**  
**LATIN**

V	=	5
I	=	1
C	=	100
A	=	0
R	=	0
I	=	1
U	=	5
S	=	0
F	=	0
I	=	1
L	=	50
I	=	1
I	=	1
D	=	500
E	=	0
I	=	1

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**666**

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SEE PAGE 434 FOR ADDITIONAL VIEWS  
 OF PAPAL CROWNS.

frequently in Roman Catholic literature and rituals for centuries.

**“Vicarius Filii Dei appeared as early as 752-774 in a document historically known as *The Donation of Constantine* . . . [This document] was used as valid by at least nine of the popes over a period of seven centuries or more in establishing the spiritual and temporal supremacy of the bishops of Rome.”—Uriah Smith, *Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation*, p. 621.**

**This title, *Vicarius Filii Dei*, is part of the Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church.** Here is the original wording:

**“Beatus Petrus in terris vicarius filii Dei videtur esse constitutus.”—*Decretum Gratiani, prima pars, dist. 96.***

**“This title proves the supremacy of the pope over earthly kings, by the very designation which has been the special foundation title of the pope for centuries: *Vicarius Filii Dei*,—which shows that he is greater than all earthly rulers and essentially equal to God Himself (*Corpus Juris Canonici, Lyons, 1622; also P. Labbe and G. Cossart, Sacrosanct Concilia, Vol. 1, col. 1539-1541*).**

**“The title, *Vicarius Filii Dei*, . . . is very common as the title for the Pope.”—*Dr. J. Quaston, S.T.D, professor of Ancient History and Christian Archaeology, School of Sacred Theology, Catholic University of America, March 5, 1943.***

**“As the Blessed Peter is seen to have been constituted vicar of the Son of God [in the original Latin text: *Vicarius Filii Dei*] on the earth, so the Pontiffs who are the representatives of that same chief of the apostles should obtain from us and our Empire the power of a supremacy greater than the clemency of our earthly imperial serenity.”—*The Donation of Constantine, p. 11.***

***The letters in this name, when added up, total 666.***

***Vicarius: V-5, I-1, C-100, A-0, R-0, I-1, U-5, S-0 = 112***

***Filii: F-0, I-1, L-50, I-1, I-1 = 53***

***Dei: D-500, E-0, I-1=501***

***Total: 112 + 53 + 501= 666***

That is how to compute the number for the Latin equivalent of “Vicar of the Son of God.”

*What is a “vicar”?* It is a person who claims to have all the authority of another person,—usually someone with very great power.

The standard Roman Catholic Bible, the *Douay-Rheims* (1582-1610; also called the “*Douay Bible*”), has this marginal notation beside Revelation 13:18:

“Ver. 18, Six hundred sixty-six. **The numeral letters of his name shall make up this number.**”—*Douay-Rheims, Note on Revelation 13:18.*

“*Vicar of the Son of God*”—The phrase, “*Vicar of the Son of God,*” means that **the pope claims to take Christ’s place and have the same authority as God to make laws, change laws, forgive sin, and be worshiped.**

—*But this is blasphemy!* Jesus Christ, God’s Son who is also fully divine and eternal, stands next to God and shares in His authority.

**No frail human on earth can take the place of God and have His authority! Only the Antichrist dares to do that;** and those who worship the Antichrist will someday perish with him. This phrase (the same in both Greek and Latin) refers to someone who claims to “take the place of” Christ, or to stand in His place. **The word, “anti (or ante),” does not mean “against”; but it means to take the place of.**—The papacy claims to do just that! to take the place of Christ and exercise all His prerogatives and authority! **“Antichrist” means the “vicar of Christ”—the one daring to take the place of Christ!**

Several popes have claimed that they “take the place” of Christ. In Latin, this is worded, *Vicarius Christi*, which has precisely the same meaning as the word, Antichrist.

“The Latin equivalent of the Greek ‘anti’ is ‘vicarius,’ from which comes ‘vicar.’ The ‘vicar of Christ’ literally means ‘Antichrist.’ ”—*Dave Hunt, A Woman Rides the Beast, p. 45.*

“The Reformers and their creeds were unanimous in identifying each pope as the antichrist.”—*Ibid., p. 47.*

Here is a Catholic statement on the meaning of the pope as the “Vicar of Christ”:

**“The pope alone is said to be the vicar of God; wherefore only what is bound or loosed by him is held to be bound and loosed by God Himself. Therefore the decision of the pope and the decision of God constitute one decision . . . Since, therefore, an appeal is always made from an inferior judge to a superior, just as no one is greater than himself, so no appeal holds when made from the pope to God, because there is one consistory of the pope himself and of God himself, of which consistory the pope himself is the key-bearer and the doorkeeper.**

**“Therefore no one can appeal from the pope to God,** as no one can enter into the consistory of God without the mediation of the pope, who is the key-bearer and the doorkeeper of the consistory of eternal life; and as no one can appeal to himself because there is one decision and one court [papal *curia*] of God and of the pope.”—*Augustinus Triumphus, Summa de Potestate Ecclesiastica* (“Summary Concerning Ecclesiastical Power”), *questio 6, “De Papalis Sentencie Apellatione,” fol. 61.*

**“Dei Filii Vicarius”:** A variety of different documents from the Vatican contain wording, such as *“Adorandi Dei Filii Vicarius et Procurator quibus numen æternum summam Ecclesiæ sanctæ dedit,”* which is Latin for **“Worshipful Vicar of the Son of God,** to whom the eternal divine will has given the highest rank of the Holy Church.” (The source for the above quotation is *Decree of Paul VI [1963-1978] elevating the Prefecture Apostolic of Bafia, Cameroon, to a Diocese: Acta Apostolicae Sedis, Commentarium Officiale, Vol. LX [1968], n. 6, pp. 317-319. Libreria Editrice Vaticana.*)

**“Lateinos” - The Latin Man:** The second-century writer, Irenaeus, was the first person to mention the “mark of the beast” and its “666” number after the death of the Apostle John. Irenaeus (A.D. 120-203) had been a pupil of

Polycarp, who was the Apostle John's student. **Irenaeus wrote the oldest commentary on Revelation and the mark of the beast.**

In his book, *Against Heresy*, Irenaeus suggested "*Lateinos*," which means "Latin man." At the time when he wrote, the papacy did not yet exist; the suggestion is indeed remarkable, almost prophetic in its significance. The pope truly is the "Latin Man."

**"*Lateinos* has the number six hundred and sixty-six, and it is a very probable solution, this being the name of the last kingdom [of the four seen by Daniel]."**—*Irenaeus, Against Heresy*.

**Irenaeus clearly tied the "mark of the beast" to the fourth beast of Daniel 7—the last kingdom—that Daniel saw in his vision.**

Yet there was a mystery here: Irenaeus could not figure out how one man could continue for 1260 years! But God's suffering people in later centuries understood!

It is only as we compare all of these predictions about this strange power, that we can have certainty as to who they apply to.

**Four of the key identifying points are found in just one verse:**

**"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."**—*Daniel 7:25*.

There is only one power which (1) **blasphemed God** in so many ways, (2) **slew millions of God's faithful children**, (3) **tried to change the Ten Commandments**,—*and spent 1260 years doing it!* This is a complete identification of the papacy!

**"The number of a man":** We have just read here, in Revelation 13:18, that "it is the number of a man." And so it is. **It is the number of the pope of Rome.**

Regardless of whether other titles and names also add

## The Two Beasts, Image, and Mark 333

up to 666, **Revelation 13** clearly identifies the papacy for **what it is**: a blasphemous power which, by its own admission, seeks to replace God here on earth; so that everyone will worship **this frail man in the city of Rome**.

In addition, it should be mentioned that **the number 6, and the triple 6, both have deep significance in all the mystery religions of ancient times**. It is a known fact that many of their idols, holy days, gods, and practices (including sacred beads and cloths) were adopted by the papacy and given new names.

The present writer had a friend, Murl Vance (died in 1971), who studied the 666 in pagan literature from 1941 onward for over 20 years! He personally showed me microfilms from among the 35,000 pages which he had copied from special libraries in the United States. **The 666 symbol was found all through them. In ancient times, it was three slightly curved lines together** (the same shape as the papal “blessing hand” of three fingers).

*The Apostle Paul clearly predicted that this Antichrist apostasy would develop and be exposed to the world!*

“Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day [the Second Advent] shall not come, except there come **a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition**; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”—2 *Thessalonians* 2:3-4.

**Pagan rituals**—The papacy brought a thousandfold number of pagan rituals, rites, beliefs, and gods (saints) into the church,—while daring to declare that each must be accepted, on pain of death.

“The belief in miracle-working objects, talismans, amulets, and formulas was dear to . . . Christianity, and **they were received from pagan antiquity** . . . The vestments of the clergy and the papal title of ‘*Pontifex Maximus*’ were legacies from pagan Rome. The [Catholic] Church found that rural converts still revered certain springs, wells, trees, and stones; she thought it

wiser to bless these to Christian use . . . **Pagan festivals, dear to the people, reappeared as Christian feasts, and pagan rites were transformed into Christian liturgy . . . The Christian calendar of saints replaced the Roman ‘fasti’** [calendar of gods]; **ancient divinities dear to the people were allowed to revive under the names of ‘Christian saints’** . . . Gradually the tenderest features of Astarte, Cybele, Artemis, Diana, and Isis were gathered together in the worship of Mary.”—*Will Durant, The Age of Faith, 1950, pp. 745-746.*

“**The [Catholic] Church took the pagan philosophy and made it the buckler of faith against the heathen.** She took **the pagan Roman Pantheon**, temple of all gods, and made it sacred to all the martyrs; so it stands to this day. She took **the pagan Sun day** and made it the Christian Sunday. She took **the pagan Easter** [in honor of Ishtar] and made it the feast we celebrate during this season . . . The sun was a foremost god with heathendom . . . Hence the Church would seem to say, ‘Keep that old pagan name [Sunday]. It shall remain consecrated, sanctified.’ And thus the pagan Sunday . . . became the Christian Sunday, [declared to be] sacred to Jesus.”—*William L. Gildea, “Paschale Gaudium,” in The Catholic World, 58, March 1894, p. 809.*

“It is not necessary to go into the subject which the diligence of Protestant writers has made familiar to most of us: the use of **temples** dedicated to particular saints, . . . **holy water; asylums** [monasteries]; **holy days and seasons**, use of saints’ **calendars, processions** . . . **are all of pagan origin**, and sanctified by their adoption into the church.”—*John Henry Newman, An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, p. 373.*

“**The mighty Catholic Church was little more than the Roman Empire baptized. Rome was transformed as well as converted** . . . Christianity could not grow up through Roman civilization and paganism, however, without in turn being colored and influenced by the rites, festivities, and ceremonies of old polytheism. **Christianity not only conquered Rome, but Rome conquered Christianity.** It is not a matter of great

surprise, therefore, to find that by the fourth century the Church had undergone many changes.”—*A.C. Flick, The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, pp. 148-149.

## Revelation 14

# *The Messages of the Three Angels*

*Brief overview*—This chapter once again views the faithful in heaven, after Christ’s return, and then shows the final message of mercy and warning going to all the world. This is followed by the Second Advent, to reap the harvests of earth.

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“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father’s name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.” Revelation 14:1-3.

“*A Lamb stood*”: Just before each new prophetic scene is presented in the book of Revelation, we are frequently given a glimpse of that future time when all the faithful will be with Christ forever; and we are shown how happy they will be: singing and praising Jesus through eternal ages as they realize that their trials are over and they have won the victory through the amazing sacrifice of Jesus on their behalf. (Revelation 7:9-17 and 15:2-3 provide similar views of them in heaven.)

*The Lamb of God*—In the New Testament, Christ as “the Lamb” is first mentioned in John 1:29. (“Behold the



**Lamb of God**, which taketh away the sin of the world.”) In Revelation, it is first found in 5:6 (“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**”). Well may we praise God for His inexpressible Gift: **the One who died so that we can inherit eternal life!**

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: **He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter**, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.”—*Isaiah 53:6-7 (Acts 8:32)*.

“**Ye were . . . redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.**”—*1 Peter 1:18-19*.

“The number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, **Worthy is the Lamb that was slain** to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.”—*Revelation 5:11-12*.

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

“To Daniel was given a vision of fierce beasts, representing the powers of the earth. **But the ensign [the flag] of the Messiah’s kingdom is a lamb**. While earthly kingdoms rule by the ascendancy of physical power, Christ is to banish every carnal weapon, every instrument of coercion.”—*4 Bible Commentary, 1171*.

“**He, the spotless Lamb of God, was about to present Himself as a sin offering**, that He would thus bring to an end the system of types and ceremonies that for four thousand years had pointed to His death.”—*Desire of Ages, 652*.

**“Sung as it were a new song”:** This is not only a song of victory; it is a song of experience. Oh, may each of us have such an experience of victory!

*“The 144,000”*: This subject is fully covered in comments for Revelation 7:4.

According to *Great Controversy, 649*, the 144,000 will live through the loud cry, past the close of probation, are protected from the plagues on the wicked, experience the time of Jacob’s trouble, and are delivered from the wicked by the Voice of God. (*Great Controversy*, chapter 39-40, provides much more detailed information about that final period of history.)

Revelation 7 mentions both groups: the 144,000 (Rev. 7:4) and the “great multitude” (Rev. 7:9). **The great multitude will be all the rest of the redeemed who have lived throughout history.** You and I may not be among the 144,000; for some of us are getting a little too old to likely be among that special final group. Yet all that matters is that we love Jesus, dedicate our lives to Him daily, obey Him, and live to help and bless others!

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**“These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.” Revelation 14:4-5.**

*“Women”*: The pure woman, or church, is described in Revelation 12:1; and the apostate one in 17:1-5. The Bible commends worthwhile marriage (1 Cor. 7:1-5, etc.).

*“Not defiled with women”*: Those mentioned here, in verse 4, have not defiled themselves with illicit relations with false religions. In spite of heavy persecution, they have renounced all former connections with apostasy. In Revelation 18:4, **God’s people are called out of Babylon, lest they become partakers of her sins. They have heeded the call and severed all connection**; they have escaped the defilement of her sins. God’s faithful ones may once have had a connection with corrupt churches; but, learning the truth, they separated—for it would become sin to remain

any longer.

They will triumph in that time, when the coalition of religious elements will bring every pressure to bear upon God's faithful ones, to renounce their obedience to God and His commandments.

“. . . Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, **that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.**”—*Titus 2:13-14.*

“They that are with Him are **called, and chosen, and faithful.**”—*Revelation 17:14.*

“**Follow the Lamb**”: Regardless of the consequences, they are determined to obey God and, in the strength of Jesus, obey His Written Word.

“**But all who follow the Lamb in heaven must first have followed Him on earth,** not fretfully or capriciously, but in trustful, loving, willing obedience, as the flock follows the shepherd.”—*Acts of the Apostles, 591.*

“We are to follow the Lamb of God whithersoever He goeth. **His guidance is to be chosen, His companionship valued above the companionship of earthly friends.**”—*Christ's Object Lessons, 223.*

“**The Lord has a people on the earth, who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.** He has His thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Such will stand with Him on Mount Zion.”—*In Heavenly Places, 298.*

“Past history will be repeated. A determined conflict is to be waged in the Christian world. **People who are disloyal to the commandments of the living God will, in their supposed self-importance, be inspired by Satan to war against those who follow the Lamb of God** which taketh away the sin of the world.”—*Christ Triumphant, 271.*

“**Firstfruits**”: The offering of the firstfruits was an acknowledgment of the goodness of God in giving the harvest. Ancient Israelites brought their firstfruits to God (Deut. 26:1-11). We are to give ourselves as “firstfruits”

to Him:

**“Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.”—James 1:18.**

This group is the first installment, or pledge, of the great harvest that is to follow.

“These, having been translated from the earth, from among the living, are counted as ‘the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.’”—*Great Controversy*, 649.

**“No guile”**: This does not mean that they did not sin at a previous time; “for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). But, **through the grace of Christ, this group has put all that behind them.** As with Peter, they declare, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). They are “without fault” (*amomos*, faultless, blameless).

“According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, **that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.**”—*Ephesians 1:4.*

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### THE FIRST ANGEL'S MESSAGE

**“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” Revelation 14:6, 7.**

*Chronologically, the events in the remainder of this chapter precede those of verses 1-5.*

**“Another angel”**: The angels represent God’s faithful ones who are busily engaged in spreading the Gospel to the world. His angels also help us carry on our work.

**“Everlasting gospel”**: This is the only place in the Bible where this phrase occurs. The message of salvation is to go to all the world; it is never to cease, until everyone has been warned and human probation has finally closed.

There will never be another gospel after it.

**“To preach”**: Literally “to proclaim,” to “tell.”

**“To every nation”**: The primary point here is to show the worldwide extent of this message. It is emphasized by adding “every kindred, tongue, and people” and given with a “loud voice.” **This is an urgent message, and the first of a series of three messages, all of which must be given to the entire world in these last days. This chapter is closely connected with Revelation 13.**

*Here is the special message of the First Angel of Revelation 14:6-7.*

**“Fear God”**: **All men everywhere must return to God! This is the first important truth of the First Angel.** The word here means “reverence,” rather than “feel afraid.” With utter awe and deepest reverence, and setting aside the gods of materialism and pleasure seeking,—**everyone must return to God before it is forever too late!** A full surrender to His will is needed.

The God of heaven must come first in our lives, or none of us will be redeemed and go to heaven. We must put away our sins and become humble, obedient followers of Jesus Christ and His Inspired Word.

**“O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.** For He is our God; and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.”—*Psalm 95:6-7.*

**“Give glory to Him”**: **He deserves our honor, praise, and homage. We must give it publicly.** We must glorify Him by our clean, godly living, the way we treat everyone we meet, care for those in our own home, and all who need our help.

**“The hour”**: The word, “hour,” here means a general time, not a specified time span.

**“The hour of His Judgment is come”**: **The judgment has started in heaven! This is the second important truth of the First Angel:** “The hour of His Judgment is come.”

The Investigative Judgment has begun in the Sanctuary in heaven! **The records of the lives of all who have ever professed faith in God are being examined.** This is part of the cleansing of the heavenly Sanctuary from the records of sin which are there recorded. This is also called the final atonement, because it concludes Christ's atoning work, begun on the cross and continued in heaven by His mediation on our behalf in the heavenly Sanctuary. **This work, begun in 1844, will continue until the close of probation. Soon, none know how soon, it will pass to our names.** Then, shortly afterward, Jesus will return in the clouds of heaven for His own.

**“As Jesus died on Calvary, He cried, ‘It is finished,’** and the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom. **This was to show that the services of the earthly sanctuary were forever finished,** and that God would no more meet with the priests in their earthly temple, to accept their sacrifices. The blood of Jesus was then shed, which was to be offered by Himself in the heavenly Sanctuary. **As the priest entered the most holy once a year to cleanse the earthly sanctuary, so Jesus entered the Most Holy of the heavenly, at the end of the 2300 days of Daniel 8, in 1844, to make a final atonement for all who could be benefited by His mediation, and thus to cleanse the Sanctuary.**”—*Early Writings*, 253.

The prediction given in Daniel 8:14 is “Unto two thousand and three hundred days [years], and then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed.” It is crucial that we prepare our hearts daily for the special work that God has for us at this time.

This is not the final judgment, but an examination of records which occurs before probation closes. The message announcing it is being given now.

***The Three Judgments*—There are three specific Judgments; here is each one of them:**

*First:* The ***Investigative Judgment*** must come, when the records of all who have ever professed faith in God are

examined, to see who will be saved. **That is occurring now.**

*Second:* The ***Sentencing Judgment*** will come **after the Second Advent and during the millennium**; at that time the redeemed in heaven will examine the books and determine the sentence to be given to each of the lost.

*Third:* The ***Executive Judgment*** will come **after the millennium ends, when the wicked are forever destroyed**. Some will suffer for only a few days; others for a longer period; and Satan the longest of all. —And then sin and sinners will be no more and the meek shall inherit the earth!

The second and third judgment will be considered in Revelation 20.

*Do not imagine that you will not come into judgment!* The Bible says that, ultimately, everyone's life record must come before a future judgment.

**“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”—2 Corinthians 5:10.**

**We must individually surrender our lives to God now, while there is still time on earth allotted to us, and obey His Written Word.**

**“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”—Ecclesiastes 12:13-14.**

***Worship the Creator:* We must worship the Creator God, and in the way He told us! This is the *third special truth* of the First Angel: “Worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”**

***Worshiping Our Creator a Duty*—We must openly acknowledge the existence of our Creator, and we are required to worship Him! This is a truth equally crucial to our salvation! Yet many deny it today, including many in the various churches of Christendom! The foolish theory of**

evolution has captured many minds, and for a simple reason: **If men can find an excuse to deny God's existence, then they feel it safe to ignore the voice of conscience and happily continue in their sins!**

**"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created."**—*Revelation 4:11*.

The gods of evolution, which men worship, shall perish, along with those who revere them.

**"The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by His discretion."**—*Jeremiah 10:11-12*.

**It is urgent that we venerate God as supreme, and obey His Written Word and His Ten Commandment Law.** We must keep *all* His commandments, *including the Fourth*. Only the Fourth Commandment contains the seal of the Law. It alone tells us who God is, why He has authority over all, and why we must obey Him.

"By the first angel, men are called upon to 'fear God, and give glory to Him' and to worship Him as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In order to do this, they must obey His law. Says the wise man: 'Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.' Ecclesiastes 12:13. **Without obedience to His commandments no worship can be pleasing to God. 'This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.'** 'He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.' 1 John 5:3; Proverbs 28:9.

**"The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator and that to Him all other beings owe their existence.** And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power. **'All the gods of the nations are**



## THE TWO MAJOR DIVISIONS OF DIVINE LAW

### "MORAL" PRECEPTS

James  
2:8, 12.

CALLED "THE ROYAL LAW"  
"THE LAW OF LIBERTY"

Ex. 20: 1-17  
Deut. 5:22

SPOKEN BY  
GOD HIMSELF

Ex. 31:18,  
32:16

WRITTEN BY GOD'S  
FINGER ON STONE

Deut. 10:1-5  
1 Kings 8:9

PLACED INSIDE  
THE ARK

1 John 3:4, 8  
Rom. 4:15  
Rom. 5:13

EXISTED  
BEFORE SIN

Rom. 3:20  
Rom. 7:7

PURPOSE—TO  
REVEAL SIN

Deut. 5:22  
Ps. 19:7  
Rom. 7:12

COMPLETE, "PERFECT."  
"HOLY, JUST AND GOOD"

Ps. 111:7-8  
Matt. 5:18  
Rom 3:31

ETERNAL, ESTABLISHED BY  
THE GOSPEL

### "CEREMONIAL" PRECEPTS

Eph. 2:15  
Heb. 9:10

CALLED "THE LAW OF  
COMMANDMENTS  
CONTAINED IN  
ORDINANCES

Lev. 1:1-3  
Ex. 24:3

GIVEN TO MOSES TO  
SPEAK TO THE PEOPLE

Deut.  
31:9, 24

WRITTEN BY MOSES IN THE  
"BOOK OF THE LAW"

Deut.  
31:24-26

PLACED BESIDE  
THE ARK

Heb.  
5:1, 8:4

GIVEN AFTER  
MAN HAD SINNED

Lev. 6:1, 6, 7  
John 1:29

PURPOSE—TO REVEAL  
THE REMEDY FOR SIN

Heb.  
7:12, 18, 19

"SUBJECT TO CHANGE"  
"MADE NOTHING PERFECT"

Col. 2:14  
Matt. 27:51

TEMPORARY, ABOLISHED  
AT THE CROSS



**idols: but the Lord made the heavens.**’ Psalm 96:5. ‘To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things.’ ‘Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it: . . . I am the Lord; and there is none else.’ Isaiah 40:25, 26; 45:18. Says the psalmist: ‘Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves.’ **‘O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.’** Psalm 100:3; 95:6.”—*Great Controversy, 436-437.*

Yet men continually refuse to come to their Maker and confess their sins; they are determined not to separate from their beloved idols.

“We do not know where we are going, or why, and we have almost given up the attempt to find out. We are in despair because the keys which were to open the gates of heaven have let us into a larger but more oppressive prison house. **We thought those keys were science and the free intelligence of man. They have failed us. We have long since cast off God. To what can we now appeal?**”—*Robert M. Hutchins, President of the University of Chicago, quoted in “The Revolt against Science,” The Christian Century, January 24, 1934.*

If we do not acknowledge the Creator as our God, we will perish in our sins. Did you know **the great truth, that the Creator is the Author of the Ten Commandments, is given alone in the Fourth Commandment?**

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: **For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day:** wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”—*The Fourth Commandment, Exodus 20:8-11.*

*God’s memorial of Creation—The Sabbath Com-*

**mandment was given so we would forever remember that God is our Creator!**

The seventh-day Sabbath, the only weekly Sabbath God ever gave to mankind, was established long before the races and the Jews existed. It was given to mankind at the Creation of our world!

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and **He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.** And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that **in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.**”—*Genesis 2:1-3.*

*The seventh-day Sabbath is God’s memorial of Creation.*

“Thy name, O Lord, endureth forever; and **Thy memorial, O Lord, throughout all generations.**”—*Psalms 135:13.*

“**The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God**’—because He is the Creator, and we are His creatures. **‘The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship,** for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten’ (*J.N. Andrews, History of the Sabbath, chapter 27*). It was to keep this truth ever before the minds of men, that God instituted the Sabbath in Eden; and **so long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and memorial.**”—*Great Controversy, 437-438.*

Several facts stand out: *First: Nowhere in the Bible was the Sabbath ever changed* from the seventh to the first day of the week. *Second: We cannot accept a change*

which men made several centuries (A.D. 321) after the end of the Bible! *Third:* The issues are so obvious: **God has a government, and the moral law is the basis of it.** Humans who wish to serve Him must obey His law.

*Fourth:* **The great test in the last days will come over the Bible Sabbath.** It may seem like such a small thing, but the God of heaven has commanded us to obey it! Will you and I do what He told us to do? Or will we defy His direct command, saying, “We don’t think we need to. We think we can choose our own day. What does it matter? We think days are all alike.” That is the very reason why the seventh-day Sabbath is such a special test! It purposely appears arbitrary, just one day, a certain day, in the weekly cycle. —Yet it is the one that God selected to be kept!

(A similar, seemingly arbitrary, prohibition was the forbidden tree in the garden. It looked beautiful, just like all the other trees; but its fruit was not to be eaten.)

*Fifth:* We dare not forget the underlying fact, that the Bible Sabbath is a memorial of the Creation of our world and everything in it. **Those who refuse to keep God’s Sabbath as the only weekly day of worship are actually denying His Creatorship!** They can make up any excuse they wish, but that is the bottom line.

“It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever: for **in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.**”—*Exodus 31:17.*

*Sixth:* **This issue of obedience to God will be the deciding point in the crisis** we have just read about in Revelation 13. An attempt to destroy obedience to God’s holy, moral Ten Commandment Law and the Bible Sabbath will be at the heart of Satan’s attempt to impose Sunday worship on everyone. **The devil knows that all he need do is to nullify just one commandment in your life, and you have broken them all.** That is what the Bible says:

“**For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.** For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now

if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. **So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law.**”—*James 2:10-12.*

*Seventh:* The Bible Sabbath will be the deciding point on who receives the Mark of the Beast and who receives the Seal of God! **When the threatening National Sunday Law has been enacted, the issues are understood, and each person makes his decision for or against the Bible Sabbath—each person will then receive the Mark or the Seal.**

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#### THE SECOND ANGEL'S MESSAGE

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

*Here is the special message of the Second Angel of Revelation 14:8.*

**“Babylon”:** This is the first of six times that this word is used in the book of Revelation (14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). Babylon was originally founded by Nimrod (Gen. 10:9-10; Gen. 11:1-9). **Its tower, the tower of Babel, was a monument to apostasy and rebellion against God.** It was the first godless city in the world. The prophet, Isaiah, identifies Lucifer as the invisible king of Babylon (Isa. 14:4, 12-14). It appears that Satan planned to make Babylon the center and agency of his master plan to secure control of the human race, even as God later purposed to work through Jerusalem.

**The two cities (the original Babylon, in the plain of Shinar and symbolic Babylon, the Catholic Church) typify the forces of evil at work in the world.** The founders of Babylon determined to set up a government entirely independent of God; and, had He not intervened, they would eventually have succeeded in banishing righteousness from the earth. For this reason, God destroyed the tower and

scattered its builders (Gen 11:7-8).

Under Nabopolassar, Babylon threw off the Assyrian rule in 612 B.C., and the city became the capital of the Neo-Babylonian Chaldean Empire. With the recovery of Babylonian independence, a new era of architectural activity began, and his son Nebuchadnezzar II (604–562 B.C.) made the city of Babylon into one of the wonders of the ancient world. He planned to make his kingdom universal and eternal (Dan. 3:1; 4:30). But, as predicted earlier by Isaiah (Isa. 44:27-45:6), not only was it captured (Dan. 5), but **ancient Babylon was eventually destroyed** (Jer. 51:37-58).

**Symbolic Babylon will also be destroyed.** This is discussed in detail in Revelation 16 to 20.

**“That great city”:** The adjective, “great,” is applied to Babylon consistently throughout the book of Revelation (Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5, 18; 18:2, 10, 21).

**“Made all nations drink”:** This describes the coercive forcing of its false teachings upon all the world. Religious elements will bring pressure to bear upon the state to enforce their decrees.

**“Babylon hath . . . made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed.”—Jeremiah 51:7-8.**

**“The wine of the wrath”:** Babylon offers it to entice to sin, but drinking this brings the wrath of God.

**“In the warfare to be waged in the last days there will be united, in opposition to God’s people, all the corrupt powers that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah.** In this warfare the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will be the great point at issue; for in the Sabbath commandment the great Lawgiver identifies Himself as the Creator of the heavens and the earth.”—7 Bible Commentary, 983.

**“Fornication”:** This is the illicit connection between the church and the world, which is also between the

church and the state. By leaving God, she commits spiritual fornication (Eze. 16:14-16; James 4:4).

**“Babylon is fallen”:** We must flee out of Babylon before it is too late.

**“Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.”—***Isaiah 21:9.*

**“Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord’s vengeance; He will render unto her a recompense.”—***Jeremiah 51:6.*

***The Second Angel’s Message***—Because it explains the Second Angel’s Message so clearly, the following information is excerpted from *Great Controversy*, 380, 381, 382-383, 388, 389, 390.)

**“In refusing the warning of the first angel, they rejected the means which Heaven had provided for their restoration.** They spurned the gracious messenger that would have corrected the evils which separated them from God, and **with greater eagerness they turned to seek the friendship of the world.** Here was the cause of that fearful condition of worldliness, backsliding, and spiritual death which existed in the churches in 1844.

**“In Revelation 14, the first angel is followed by a second proclamation: Babylon is fallen . . .** Revelation 14:8. The term, ‘Babylon,’ is derived from ‘*Babel*’ [the tower of Babel; Gen. 11:1-9], and signifies confusion. It is employed in Scripture to designate the various forms of false or apostate religion. In Revelation 17, Babylon is represented as . . . a vile woman, an apostate church . . .

**“Babylon is said to be ‘the mother of harlots.’ By her daughters must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions,** and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world. **The message of Revelation 14, announcing the fall of Babylon, must apply to religious bodies that were**

**once pure and have become corrupt.** Since this message follows the warning of the judgment [in the first angel's message], it must be given in the last days; therefore **it cannot refer to the Roman Church alone, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. Furthermore, in the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation, the people of God are called upon to come out of Babylon.** According to this scripture, many of God's people must still be in Babylon. And in what religious bodies are the greater part of the followers of Christ now to be found? Without doubt, in the various churches professing the Protestant faith . .

“The great sin charged against Babylon is that she ‘made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.’ **This cup of intoxication which she presents to the world represents the false doctrines** that she has accepted as the result of her unlawful connection with the great ones of the earth . .

“Rome withheld the Bible from the people and required all men to accept her teachings in its place. It was the work of the Reformation to restore to men the Word of God; but **is it not too true that in the churches of our time men are taught to rest their faith upon their creed and the teachings of their church rather than on the Scriptures?** . .

“**The second angel's message of Revelation 14 was first preached in the summer of 1844,** and it then had a more direct application to the churches of the United States, where the warning of the judgment had been most widely proclaimed and most generally rejected, and where the declension in the churches had been most rapid. **But the message of the second angel did not reach its complete fulfillment in 1844.** The churches then experienced a moral fall, in consequence of their refusal of the light of the advent message; but that fall was not complete. As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time they have fallen lower and lower. **Not yet, however, can it be said that ‘Babylon is fallen . . because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.’** She has not yet



made all nations do this. The spirit of world conforming and indifference to the testing truths for our time exists and has been gaining ground in churches of the Protestant faith in all the countries of Christendom; and these churches are included in the solemn and terrible denunciation of the second angel. **But the work of apostasy has not yet reached its culmination . . .**

**“Revelation 18 points to the time when, as the result of rejecting the threefold warning of Revelation 14:6-12, the church will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel, and the people of God still in Babylon will be called upon to separate from her communion.** This message is the last that will ever be given to the world; and it will accomplish its work. When those that ‘believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness’ (2 Thess. 2:12), shall be left to receive strong delusion and to believe a lie, then **the light of truth will shine upon all whose hearts are open to receive it, and all the children of the Lord that remain in Babylon will heed the call: ‘Come out of her, My people’ (Rev. 18:4).**”—*Great Controversy*, 381, 382-383, 388, 389, 390.

*And now we come to the special message of the Third Angel of Revelation 14:9-12:*

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#### THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE

**“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:9-12.**

**“If any man worship”:** *This is a most solemn warning! Indeed, it is the most terrible threatening given in the entire Bible!*

**“The most fearful threatening ever addressed to mortals is contained in the third angel’s message. That must be a terrible sin which calls down the wrath of God unmingled with mercy. Men are not to be left in darkness concerning this important matter; the warning against this sin is to be given to the world before the visitation of God’s judgments, that all may know why they are to be inflicted, and have opportunity to escape them.”**—*Great Controversy, 449-450.*

**“The beast,” “his image,” “his mark”:** These three are described in Revelation 13:1-10; and all three are here connected. The **leopard beast symbolizes the papacy.** The **second (lamblike) beast, of Revelation 13:11-12, requires the worship of the first beast. This warning will not have full force until after the healing of the deadly wound and the formation of the image to the beast.** The beast and the image are united in their aims and policies and in their demand that men receive the mark of the beast. **The “image” is the coalition of churches and world powers that works with the papacy in enforcing Sunday worship on everyone.** Therefore, to worship the image is to worship the beast and receive the mark.

**“The mark”:** This is discussed more thoroughly in the comments for Revelation 13:16. **It is a sign of allegiance to the beast and his image, by keeping holy the beast’s mark of authority—the Sunday. The controversy will focus on whether we need to obey the law of God as He gave it (Ex. 20:3-20); and this includes the Fourth Commandment, the Bible Sabbath (Ex. 20:8-11).**

**The Third Angel warns against the reception of the mark. This message, swelling into a loud cry (Rev. 18:1-4), will enlighten men as to the issues involved. When the issues are thus clearly set before them, and they nevertheless choose to give their support to Sunday sacredness, knowing**

it to be in direct opposition to the command of God, they thereby show their allegiance to that power and receive the mark of the beast.

**“When Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of Rome, will thereby honor popery above God.** He is paying homage to Rome and to the power which enforces the institution ordained by Rome. He is worshiping the beast and his image. As men then reject the institution which God has declared to be the sign of His authority, and honor in its stead that which Rome has chosen as the token of her supremacy, **they will thereby accept the sign of allegiance to Rome—the mark of the beast.**” And it is not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive ‘the mark of the beast.’ ”—*Great Controversy*, 449.

“Choose you this day whom ye will serve . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”—*Joshua 24:15*.

**“The observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church.”**—*Monsignor Segur, Plain Talk about the Protestantism of Today*, p. 213.

*“Reason and sense demand the acceptance of one or the other of these alternatives: either Protestantism and the keeping holy of Saturday, or Catholicity and the keeping holy of Sunday. Compromise is impossible.”*—*The Catholic Mirror*, December 23, 1893.

**“Protestantism, in discarding the authority of the [Roman Catholic] Church has no good reason for its Sunday theory, and ought logically to keep Saturday as the Sabbath.”**—*John Gilmary Shea, American Catholic Quarterly Review*, January 1883.

**“The Church chose Sunday, the first day of the**

week, and in the course of time added other days as holy days.”—*Vincent J. Kelly, Forbidden Sunday and Feast-Day Occupations, p. 2.*

“Protestants . . . accept Sunday rather than Saturday as the day for public worship after the Catholic Church made the change . . . But the Protestant mind does not seem to realize that . . . **in observing the Sunday, they are accepting the authority of the spokesman for the church, the Pope.**”—*Our Sunday Visitor, February 5, 1950.*

Here is an example of utter blasphemy:

“Not the Creator of the Universe, in Genesis 2:1-3,—but the Catholic Church can claim the honor of having granted man a pause to his work every seven days.”—*S.D. Mosna, Storia della Domenica, 1969, pp. 366-367.*

**“Wine of the wrath”:** That is “wine which is the wrath.” The warning is clear and plain. None need misunderstand. **After the close of probation, the undiluted justice of God will be poured out upon those who refused to repent** while there was still opportunity.

**“Without mixture”:** “Without mixture;” that is, unmixed with water. It is given full intensity. **It is poured out without mercy.**

**We can choose the wrath or the blessing:** It is a solemn fact that **the warning against the Mark of the Beast (Rev. 14:9-11) is here powerfully contrasted with the blessing pronounced on those who remain faithful to God—who “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12).** The one commandment which will be especially contested and rejected by most will be the Fourth Commandment, the seventh-day Sabbath.

**The MARK of Rome’s authority**—The papacy not only declares that it changed the day of weekly worship to the first day, the Sunday,—but boasts that, because the Protestant churches obey Rome in this worship,—**Sunday worship is its mark of authority!** It claims that this shows that papal authority is greater than that of the

commands of God!

Cardinal James Gibbons (1834-1921) of Baltimore wrote in his book, *The Faith of Our Fathers*, these words:

**“You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday.** The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday [the seventh day of the week], a day which we never sanctify.”—*Cardinal Gibbons, Faith of Our Fathers*, p. 86.

Gibbons was obviously an authority on Catholic belief. He also wrote this:

**“Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change [of the Sabbath to Sunday] was her act . . . AND THE ACT IS A MARK of her ecclesiastical authority** in religious things.”—*From the office of Cardinal Gibbons, through Chancellor H.F. Thomas, November 11, 1895 (caps ours)*.

Louis Segur (1820-1881) was a high-ranking French monsignor, only a little below the rank of a cardinal. He also clearly understood the facts:

**“The observance of Sunday by the Protestants is a HOMAGE they pay in spite of themselves to the AUTHORITY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.”**—*Monsignor Louis Segur, Plain Talk about the Protestantism of Today*, p. 213 (caps ours).

“Q.—Have you any other way of proving that the [Catholic] Church has power to institute festivals of precept?

“A.—**Had she not such power . . . she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week for Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority.**”—*Doctrinal Catechism*, p. 174 (Roman Catholic).

A leading American Catholic priest, in the late 1800s, set the facts on the table and dared Protestants to reply. He even offered a large monetary reward for anyone who could find one verse in the Bible which transferred the sanctity of the seventh day to the first day of the week:

**“Prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. There is no such law in the Bible. It is a law of the holy Catholic Church alone. The Bible says ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’ THE CATHOLIC CHURCH SAYS NO. By my divine power I ABOLISH THE SABBATH DAY and command you to keep holy the first day of the week. And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the Holy Roman Catholic Church.”—Thomas Enright, CSSR, President, Redemptorist College, Kansas City, Missouri, February 18, 1884 (caps his).**

Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) wrote this in 1885:

**“First and foremost it is the duty of all Catholics worthy of the name . . . to endeavor to bring back all civil society to the pattern and form of Christianity which we have described.”—*The Great Encyclical Letters of Leo XIII, “Encyclical Letter Immortale Dei, November 1, 1885,” p. 132.***

More recently, there has been a trend for the popes to demand that national governments, throughout the world, enact national Sunday laws.

**“On September 7, 1947, Pope Pius XII declared that ‘the time for reflection and planning is past’ in religious and moral fields and the ‘time for action’ has arrived. He said that ‘the battle in religious and moral fields hinged on . . . the sanctifying of Sunday.’ ”—*Evening Star (Washington, D.C., September 8, 1947).***

**On May 31, 1998, at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, Pope John Paul II (1920-2005) issued an *Apostolic Letter*, entitled *Dies Domini*. In this official decree from the Vatican, the pope declared that the nations of the world should enact national Sunday laws. On pp. 22-23 (sections 64-67) of that 37-page papal letter, he calls on secular governments to enact—and strictly enforce—laws which will guarantee that all their citizens will rest on Sundays; so church worship services will be attended. Gifted with a brilliant mind, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (the future Benedict XVI, born 1927, became pope on April 24, 2005) wrote that**

Apostolic letter, just as he has written all John Paul II's papers since 1981.

**At that time, Ratzinger immediately set to work to start two new ecumenical bodies,—in each of which the papacy would be the primary decision maker.** The first is the *Global Christian Forum* (GCF), started in 2000 in Zimbabwe. It is now worldwide in scope and includes nearly every Christian denomination.

The second is *Christian Churches Together* (CCT), which began in a Cardinal's mansion in Baltimore in 2001. By 2005, it was fully formed and included far more member Christian denominations and organizations than the National Council of Churches. **In February 2007, at its annual meeting in Pasadena, CA, a *Ten Point Objective* was drawn up,—all ten points of which it wants Congress to eventually enact.** Point No. 7 is this:

**“Throughout all the land, a National Day of Rest shall be honored by governments, industrial manufacturers, and public shopping facilities.”—*Enforced Sunday Law Coming Soon to America*, p. 19.**

Joseph Ratzinger became Benedict XVI in April 2005.

**Fortunately, God will not punish anyone until he understands the issues and has made his decision.** But the time is coming when everyone will have learned these issues. God will care for His own, those who love and serve Him. While time remains, He calls for others to return to Him.

**“The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God—because He is the Creator and we are His creatures. The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship, for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this.”—*J.N. Andrews, History of the Sabbath*, chapter 27.**

**“The Catholic Church . . . changed the day from Saturday to Sunday . . . But the Protestant says: How can I receive the teachings of an apostate Church? How,**

we ask, have you managed to receive her teachings all your life, *in direct opposition* to your recognized teacher, the Bible, on the Sabbath question? . .

“The Christian Sabbath [Sunday] is therefore to this day the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic Church, as Spouse of the Holy Ghost, without a word of remonstrance from the Protestant world.”—*The Christian Sabbath, 2nd ed., pp. 29-31 (quoted in Catholic Mirror, September 23, 1893).*

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**“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”  
Revelation 14:12.**

This is the second half of the Third Angel’s Message. The first half (Rev. 14:9-11) gives a warning against disobedience. This second half (14:12) presents a wonderful promise to those who will cling to God and, by faith, obey His law.

**“Patience”**: This is **“steadfast endurance.”** It is obviously needed, in view of the terrific crisis through which these faithful souls must pass, which includes the threat of boycott and death (Rev. 13:11-17).

At the same time, Satan will work with all “deceivableness of unrighteousness” (2 Thess. 2:10; Matt. 24:24), making it appear that the power of God is manifest in the movement for Sunday sanctity. Through all of this, **there will be those who will faithfully endure and prove loyal to God.** It is urgent that you and I determine that we will be among that number!

**“Saints”**: This is *Hagioi*; it means **“holy ones.”** These faithful children of God are dedicated to humbly obeying His Inspired Writings and fulfilling His will for their lives. It is God’s will that each of us will be dedicated to Him (Rom. 1:7).

**“Keep the Commandments”**: The message from God in Revelation 14:12 is: **“Here, in contrast to those who receive the mark—are the ones who I approve; look at**



*them!*” This little group is standing true.

*But how can we identify who they are?* —They are the ones who are keeping God’s moral law, all ten of its precepts.

**“The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, ‘Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.’ It follows that the message which commands men to worship God and keep His commandments will especially call upon them to keep the fourth commandment.**

“In contrast to those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus, the third angel points to another class, against whose errors a solemn and fearful warning is uttered: ‘If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.’ Revelation 14:9, 10.”—*Great Controversy*, 438.

**“Faith of Jesus”:** The Greek of this phrase can be translated as **“faith of Jesus;”** that is, **“faith that belongs to Jesus.”** Or it can be translated as **“faith in Jesus;”** that is, **“by faith in Jesus.”**

They are the ones who are steadfastly keeping all ten of God’s Ten Commandments,—*and they are doing it in the strength which Jesus imparts, moment by moment, as they trust Him!* No one can, by himself, remove sin from his life or obey the words of God. Only in Christ’s enabling grace can it be done.

This is the last part of the Third Angel’s Message; and it is a wonderful promise! A special blessing is pronounced on those who patiently keep the Bible Sabbath, in spite of opposition from family, friends, and the world.

*Summarizing what we have learned from the Greek:* **“This is the steadfast endurance of the holy ones. Here are they that keep the commandments of God by faith in Jesus.”**

***The Two Key Identifying Verses***—Do you see that the high point of the Three Angels’ Messages is Revelation 14:12? *Without that verse we would not know how to avoid*

*the mark of the beast!* But now we do know.

Can you also understand that **the high point at the end of chapter 12 also clearly identifies the remnant, the faithful people of God in the last days!**

Revelation 12 takes us all the way through history, from the casting out of Satan from heaven and the time of Christ's birth on down through the Dark Ages of persecution. —Then, in one verse at the end, it clearly identifies the faithful living at the close of time:

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with **the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.**”—*Revelation 12:17.*

Revelation 14 provides the final warning message about the mark of the beast that must go to all the world. **It climaxes with a clear statement as to how to avoid receiving that mark:**

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”—*Revelation 14:12.*

So here we have the two key verses, each climaxing one of the two major sections of Revelation (chapter 12, and chapters 13-14),—and both identifying God's people in the final crisis before Christ returns. ***God arranged this so there could be no room for doubt. Obedience by faith will be the final test!*** —It will be either obedience to the papacy or obedience to God!

***The Sealing—Everyone will receive either the Mark of the Beast or the Seal of God.*** Those who are redeemed will have the seal, which is mentioned in Revelation 7:2-4 and 9:4. **Before the seven last plagues are poured out upon the wicked, God's faithful ones will have been sealed.**

“And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, **Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the**

servants of our God in their foreheads.”—*Revelation* 7:2-3.

**Official documents are sealed to validate their authenticity. The seal of the Ten Commandments is in the Fourth Commandment. This is because it alone reveals who the author of this Moral Law is.**

“Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed.”—*Daniel* 6:8.

As mentioned earlier, **the seal of a lawgiver must show three things:** (1) his **name**; (2) his **official position, title, or authority, and sole right to rule**; and (3) the **extent of his dominion and jurisdiction**. You will find all three in the Fourth of the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:8-11): “In six days, (1) the Lord (name); (2) made (office, Creator); (3) heaven and earth (dominion).” **The Fourth Commandment alone, therefore, contains “the seal of the living God.”** This commandment shows God’s authority to enact the entire moral law and require our obedience. It also shows all other gods to be false gods.

“Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples.”—*Isaiah* 8:16.

**Obedience to the Sabbath commandment is a sign that we belong to God, and acknowledge Him as our Creator.**

“It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever: **for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.**”—*Exodus* 31:17.

“And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, **that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.**”—*Ezekiel* 20:20.

**The Sabbath is the sign of God’s creative power, whether revealed in creation or redemption; for the act of redemption is a new creation. (A “new creature” in 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Galatians 6:15 means a “new creation”). It requires the same power to redeem that it does to create!**

“Create in me a clean heart.”—*Psalms* 51:10.

“Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; **that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.**”—*Exodus 31:13*.

God’s faithful ones will have **“His Father’s name written in their foreheads”** (Rev. 14:1). They have a **character like God’s**. “They are without fault before the throne of God” (verse 5). God’s law is a transcript of that character. **Since the law is written in the mind, the seal of the law (obedience to the Bible Sabbath) is there also.**

Thus we see that the opposite of those having the Mark of the Beast (Rev. 14:9-11) are those having the Seal of God (Rev. 14:12). They are accepted and honored by the God of heaven.

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”—*Revelation 14:12*.

**When are we saved?**—Many are confused on this point. **The concept means to be saved from sin. The moment of full salvation cannot occur until there is no further possibility of later being lost.** “To save” (*soso*) is related to the word, “salvation” (*soteria*); and here it specifically means deliverance, preservation. **“To save” means to be delivered from the power of sin:**

“She shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for **He shall save His people from their sins.**”—*Matthew 1:21*.

“I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; **by which also ye are saved**, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, **unless ye have believed in vain.**”—*I Corinthians 15:1-2*.

**“Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost** that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.”—*Hebrews 7:25*.

“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls. **But be ye doers**

of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”—*James 1:21-22*.

“**Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them:** for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.”—*1 Timothy 4:16*.

“Ye shall be hated of all men for My name’s sake: but **he that endureth to the end shall be saved.**”—*Matthew 10:22*.

In this sense the word, “salvation,” has the same meaning of being finally delivered from the power of sin and Satan. We are now to live godly lives in Christ, having the hope of salvation (1 Thess. 5:8-9):

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.** For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”—*Philippians 2:12-13*.

“**Receiving the end [final objective] of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.**”—*1 Peter 1:9*.

“**The holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation** through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”—*2 Timothy 3:15*.

“**How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?**”—*Hebrews 2:3*.

“Now it is high time to awake out of sleep: **for now is our salvation nearer** than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. **But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.**”—*Romans 13:11-14*.

“There are some who are seeking, always seeking, for the goodly pearl. **But they do not make an entire surrender of their wrong habits.** They do not die to self that Christ may live in them. Therefore they do

not find the precious pearl . . . They never know what it is to have peace and harmony in the soul; for **without entire self-surrender there is no rest, no joy.** Almost Christians, yet not fully Christians, they seem near the kingdom of heaven, but they cannot enter there. **Almost but not wholly saved means to be not almost but wholly lost.**”—*In Heavenly Places*, 49.

**“God’s holy law is the only thing by which we can determine whether we are keeping His way or not.** If we are disobedient, our characters are out of harmony with God’s moral rule of government, and it is stating a falsehood to say, ‘I am saved.’ **No one is saved who is a transgressor of the law of God,** which is the foundation of His government in heaven and in earth.”—*I Selected Messages*, 315.

**“We are never to rest in a satisfied condition, and cease to make advancement, saying, ‘I am saved.’** When this idea is entertained, the motives for watchfulness, for prayers, for earnest endeavor to press onward to higher attainments, cease to exist. **No sanctified tongue will be found uttering these words till Christ shall come, and we enter in through the gates into the city of God.** Then, with the utmost propriety, we may give glory to God and to the Lamb for eternal deliverance. As long as man is full of weakness—for of himself he cannot save his soul—he **should never dare to say, ‘I am saved.’**”—*I Selected Messages*, 314.

“Never can we safely put confidence in self or feel, this side of heaven, that we are secure against temptation. **Those who accept the Saviour, however sincere their conversion, should never be taught to say or to feel that they are saved. This is misleading. Every one should be taught to cherish hope and faith;** but even when we give ourselves to Christ and know that He accepts us, we are not beyond the reach of temptation. God’s Word declares, ‘Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried.’ Daniel 12:10. Only he who endures the trial will receive the crown of life. James 1:12.

**“Those who accept Christ, and in their first con-**

fidence say, I am saved, are in danger of trusting to themselves. They lose sight of their own weakness and their constant need of divine strength. They are unprepared for Satan's devices, and under temptation many, like Peter, fall into the very depths of sin."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 155.

"We shall be saved eternally when we enter in through the gates into the city. Then we may rejoice that we are saved, eternally saved. But until then we need to heed the injunction of the apostle, and to 'fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it.'"—*That I May Know Him*, 162.

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**"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Revelation 14:13.**

**"Blessed are the dead"**: This is one of the seven so-called beatitudes of Revelation. The others are: Revelation 1:3; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; and 22:7, 14.

What encouragement we find in this verse! It may be that some of us will be alive during the final crisis and be part of the 144,000. **But what about those who die before that time? Although they may not be part of that special group, they will also receive a special blessing when they awake from sleep at the special resurrection** (Dan. 12:2), just before the Second Advent! For them there will be an eternal life of happiness with friendly people and with Jesus!

**[In the special resurrection] "Those who had died in faith under the third angel's message, keeping the Sabbath, came forth from their dusty beds, glorified, to hear the covenant of peace that God was to make with those who had kept His law."**—*Early Writings*, 285.

**[All the redeemed down through all the ages] "For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed . . . Then shall**

be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.”—*1 Corinthians 15:52, 54.*

“We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are 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 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”—*1 Thessalonians 4:15-18.*

**In view of such triumphant words, there is no need for God’s faithful ones to fear death!** They will retire to sleep; and then, at Christ’s Second Coming, they will awake when He calls them forth from their graves.

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**“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.” Revelation 14:14-16.**

**“Behold a white cloud”:** *It is highly significant that only two verses after the end of the Third Angel’s Message—is the Second Coming of Christ!* The messages of the three angels are the last which will ever be given to the world before human probation closes! Just afterward, Christ returns for His people.

**“Harvest of the earth is ripe”:** *We are here told about two different harvests.* Both will be made of those who are alive when Christ returns for His own.

**The First Harvest**—The first harvest, in verses 14 to 16, tells about God’s faithful ones. Some are raised





**THERE ARE TWO HARVESTS.  
THE *FIRST* IS OF THE PRECIOUS GRAIN, GATHERED  
AT CHRIST'S RETURN AND TAKEN TO HEAVEN.**

**THE *SECOND* IS THE GRAPE (WINE) HARVEST  
WHICH IS DESTROYED.**



from the dead and changed to immortality. The others are alive and are translated without experiencing death. They then go with Jesus to heaven. Oh, I want to be there! My friend, we all can. **God will help us right now to be faithful, if each day we will cling to Jesus and obey His will as given in Scripture.**

**You can read about the harvest of the *wheat* and the *tares* in Matthew 13:25-30.** The Lord wants a good harvest of wheat. But the enemy plants a second crop; he wants a lot of tares to grow up. Then, in the final harvest, the two harvests occur—one of wheat and the other of tares.

“Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, **Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into My barn.**”—*Matthew 13:30.*

Here is another view of the two final harvests; one provides a harvest of *wheat* and the other yields only *chaff*.

“Whose fan is in His hand, and **He will thoroughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His garner; but the chaff He will burn** with fire unquenchable.”—*Luke 3:17.*

The faithful are likened to pure, worthwhile wheat.

Seated on a cloud, Jesus Christ returns for His own. While on earth, He wore a crown of thorns (Matt 27:29); now He wears a gold crown of authority.

*But there is also another harvest in Revelation 14:*

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**“And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto**

the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.” Revelation 14:17-20.

*The Second Harvest*—We are here told of a grape harvest, apparently of deep red grapes. **Notice that, just as the first harvest was fully ripe when it was collected, now this second harvest is also “fully ripe.”**

While some made their decisions to remain loyal to Christ, regardless of consequences; others, day after day, remained on the side of evil. Perhaps some deliberately chose it, while others just never got around to pleading with Christ to help them put away their sins.

“As the attention of the people was called to the subject of Sabbath reform, popular ministers perverted the Word of God, placing such interpretations upon its testimony as would best quiet inquiring minds. **And those who did not search the Scriptures for themselves were content to accept conclusions that were in accordance with their desires.** By argument, sophistry, the traditions of the Fathers, and the authority of the church, many endeavored to overthrow the truth.”—*Great Controversy*, 455.

“Whatever may be their profession, it is only those who are world servers at heart that act from policy rather than principle in religious things. **We should choose the right because it is right, and leave consequences with God.** To men of principle, faith, and daring, the world is indebted for its great reforms. By such men the work of reform for this time must be carried forward.”—*Great Controversy*, 460.

*Why is it a “wine harvest”?*—Why is this a harvest of grapes, and not of tares or chaff? **It is a harvest of grapes because the “wine of Babylon” (the pagan teachings which have been brought into the Church) which she makes all nations drink is the theme of many passages in the book of Revelation.**

This wine is mentioned by the second angel:

“And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, **because she made all**

**nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.**”—*Revelation 14:8.*

According to the third angel’s message in Revelation 14:9-10, those who choose to drink of Babylon’s wine—will drink of the wine of God’s wrath!

“If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, **the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God,** which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation.”—*Revelation 14:9-10.*

This is mentioned again, just before the Second Advent:

“The cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, **to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.**”—*Revelation 16:19.*

***Drinking of the wine: The wine is all the evil teachings of Babylon.***

“Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and **the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.**”—*Revelation 17:1-2.*

**She made all the nations drink of this wine:**

“Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. **For all nations have drunk of the wine** of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her.”—*Revelation 18:2-3.*

***“The great winepress of the wrath of God”:*** This world is a proving ground for all men, all nations. **But the time is coming when His mercy will have ended.**

“Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.”—*Romans 12:19.*

“O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, show Thyself. Lift up Thyself, **Thou judge of the earth: render a reward**



**MOSES BREAKING THE TEN COMMANDMENTS**

to the proud.”—*Psalm 94:1-2*.

“To Me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; **their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand**, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.”—*Deuteronomy 32:35*.

***Furlongs of blood:*** When those grapes in the second harvest are crushed, *why is there so much juice and why is it bloody?* **The juice symbolizes the multiplied millions who drank of Babylon’s wine. The blood represents the tragic loss of so many souls who could have been saved if they had refused to drink of that cup which seemed so pleasant.**

“**Babylon hath been a golden cup . . . that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine;** therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed.”—*Jeremiah 51:7-8*.

***Flee from Babylon!***—Partaking of that wine results in eternal death. **The warning is for us today: *Flee from Babylon, while there is still time!***

“**Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans,** with a voice of singing declare ye, **tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth.**”—*Isaiah 48:20*.

“And he answered and said, **Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken** unto the ground.”—*Isaiah 21:9*.

“**Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed . . .** We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her . . . for her judgment reacheth unto heaven.”—*Jeremiah 51:8-9*.

## Revelation 15

# *Preparing to Pour Out the Plagues*

***Brief overview***—In addition to another brief view

of the faithful in heaven after Christ returns, we are brought back to this world. This chapter describes events which occur after the close of probation, when the Sanctuary in heaven no longer has a Mediator, and the plagues are given to the seven angels to pour out.

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

*“Another sign in Heaven”*: John saw a marvelous wonder in Revelation 12:1, when he saw the birth of Christ and events which followed. Now he is shown another.

*“A marvelous sign”*: A remarkable event is about to occur, because human probation has forever closed and each person has made his decision for one side or the other.

*“The seven last plagues”*: In this chapter, preparation is made to pour out those terrible plagues; in the next chapter, they are poured upon those who, in spite of all the appeals to repent, have chosen to remain in their sins.

*“Filled up”*: This is “to finish,” “to accomplish.” The allotted time for the wicked to repent has finally expired, the Three Angels’ Messages have been rejected, and plague pouring time has come.

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**“And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest.” Revelation 15:2-4.**

*This is a brief transitional chapter.* The first sentence mentions the angels getting ready to pour out the plagues. But, before continuing with that, **the picture switches to the third of the heaven scenes in Revelation.** As Revelation 7 follows the seals, and the second part of Revelation 14 follows the warning about the mark, so the first part of Revelation 14 and the first part of Revelation 15 take us forward to events immediately following Christ's return for His own in chapter 14. As mentioned earlier, several times in Revelation (chapters 7, 14, 15, 19, 20-22) we are shown views of the final victory, to give us courage. **These views of the future are repeatedly given to the faithful, to assure them that, if they persevere, they will soon inherit a wonderful home!** Revelation 2 to 4 reassures us that, after this overflowing scourge is past, it will be seen that the faithful had been safely protected through it all.

**“Sea of Glass”:** This glass-like material is mentioned four times in Revelation:

“Before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal” (Rev. 4:6). “A sea of glass mingled with fire . . . [and the redeemed] stand on the sea of glass” (15:2). “The city was pure gold, like unto clear glass” (21:18). “The street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass” (21:21).

Revelation 21:21 may be the key to understanding the “sea of glass.” **It may all be “pure gold, as it were transparent glass.”**

**“Gotten the victory”:** Through the enabling grace of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour, *everyone of us can gain that victory!*

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

**“Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.** Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that



your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”—*1 Corinthians* 15:57-58.

**“And they sing”**: After being caught up with Jesus and journeying to heaven, **the faithful stand on the sea of glass—and rejoice not only that they are redeemed and in heaven**, but also at the wonderful way in which Christ has solved the entire sin problem.

They have won the victory over evil through the power of Jesus, and are now singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. **This is a song about unselfish love that wins the victory over evil by humble self-sacrifice.** They rejoice that God is just and good in all He does.

**“Song of Moses”**: This song of deliverance was sung by Moses after Israel safely crossed the Red Sea and their enemies were all destroyed (Ex. 15:1-21). The new song is about deliverance from the tyranny of “Babylon the great” (Rev. 17:5) and of “victory over the beast,” his image, his mark, and the number of his name” (Rev. 15:2).

**“Moses the servant of God”**: Moses was called by this title in Exodus 14:31 and Joshua 14:7.

**“Song of the Lamb”**: The deliverance of the redeemed was achieved by Christ, the Lamb of God (Rev. 17:14). In grateful acknowledgment, He is adored and exalted in this song of deliverance. (*For much more on the Lamb of God, see comments for Revelation 14:1.*)

**But when I sing redemption’s story,  
They will fold their wings,  
For angels never felt the joys  
That our salvation brings.**

—Johnson Oatman, Jr.

**“Marvelous are Thy works”**: You will find many of God’s wonderful works praised in Ps. 139:14; 111:2, 4.

**“Who shall not fear Thee?”** Fear here is “**reverence.**” In Revelation 14:7, the message is “Fear (reverence) God and give glory to Him.” Reverence includes the concept of “submit to and obey.”

“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him.”—*Psalms* 89:7.

**“All nations”:** It is obvious that even the impenitent will eventually acknowledge that the grace of God and His judgments were right. This will occur after the millennium (Rev. 20), when the wicked are raised to receive the Executive Judgment—after clearly learning why it is dispensed.

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**“And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth forever and ever.”**  
**Revelation 15:5-7.**

*Verse 5 now explains the preparation made in heaven, after human probation ends and just before the first of the plagues is poured out upon the wicked.*

**“Tabernacle opened”:** The Most Holy Place of the heavenly Sanctuary was opened at the time, in 1844, when Jesus entered it (Rev. 11:19) to begin the Investigative Judgment. At that time the faithful learned that they needed to keep all ten of the commandments,—including the Fourth.

But it is opened once again, when Jesus begins His intercession for His children in that apartment; but, later, **the Investigative Judgment will end.** As will be described below in more detail, **when Christ leaves, He declares that probation is forever ended (Rev. 22:11)—and instructs the seven angels to begin pouring out the plagues on the impenitent.**

**“Pure and white”:** The seven angels are clothed in purest white; for the mission assigned them is correct and proper. The wicked have repeatedly refused all opportunities for repentance and forfeited their right to protection from

the elements of nature.

**“Vial”**: Each angel is given a golden vial (“bowl,” *phialai*) which is “full of the wrath of God.” **This is a “strange act”; for God delights in mercy. Yet there has to be a line that is drawn, beyond which mercy ends and judgment (justice) follows.** If there were no final judgment, the wicked would continue to live and persecute forever! Remember that all this is the result of a lifetime of choices.

“For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim, He shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that **He may do His work, His strange work; and bring to pass His act, His strange act.**”—*Isaiah 28:21*.

**“Tabernacle of the Testimony”**: In the time of Moses, the “testimony” was a frequent synonym for the law of God, the tables of stone beneath the mercy seat in the ark of the covenant in the most holy place of the tabernacle (Ex. 16:34; 25:16, 21-22; 26:33-34, and on and on). Here are two examples:

“And thou shalt put it before the veil that is **by the ark of the testimony**, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee.”—*Exodus 30:6*.

“And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communing with Him upon mount Sinai, **two tables of testimony**, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.”—*Exodus 31:18 (Deut. 9:10)*.

**“Out of the tabernacle”**: The wilderness tabernacle was a type of the original in heaven, “**the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man**” (Heb. 8:2).

Once again, the “door” (veil) into the Most Holy Place in the heavenly Sanctuary has been opened—to reveal the crucial importance of the law of God in the work of mediation and in the Investigative Judgment. The Temple had previously been opened to the faithful, when they discovered the importance of keeping all ten of the Ten Commandments. Here is that verse:

“And the temple of God was opened in heaven,

and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament.”—*Revelation 11:19*.

**At the time that Christ ends His mediation and concludes the Investigative Judgment in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly Sanctuary, He speaks the words of Revelation 22:11-12, which forever end human probation.**

**“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.**

**“And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”—*Revelation 22:11-12*.**

The second veil (Ex. 26:33-34, sometimes spelled “vail” in the KJV) at the entrance to the Most Holy Place is then opened; and, **as Jesus steps out, He appoints the seven angels, with the plagues, to begin their work.**

**“Vials full of the wrath of God”:** It is only the stubbornly impenitent who will ever experience this.

**“For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and He poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.”—*Psalms 75:8*.**

**“The Wrath of God”:** Our loving heavenly Father has patience, unselfishness, and kindness far beyond anything that we see on earth. He delights to forgive and accept sinners who return to Him. —**Yet He must finally pour judgments on those He has done everything to save, but who, after human probation has closed, still despise His goodness and are determined to slay His faithful children.**

***How terrible it is to wear out the patience of God! But, for the good of the universe, and even those upon whom those terrible plagues are about to fall, these judgments are necessary.***

No matter what God could do to get these rebels to change, so He could save them,—they refused all His appeals and continued to revel in their wickedness.

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**“And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from His power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.” Revelation 15:8.**

**“Filled with smoke”:** This is actually glory radiating from the presence of God (Ex. 40:34-35).

“And the posts of the door moved at the voice of Him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.”—*Isaiah 6:4.*

“There rose up before him [Isaiah] a vision of Jehovah sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, **while the train [outflowing] of His glory filled the temple.**”—*Prophets and Kings, 307.*

**“No man was able to enter into the temple”:** This last verse of the chapter reveals that no one could enter the heavenly Sanctuary at this time. **This means that the mediation of Christ has ended and, with it, the Investigative Judgment. Probation has forever closed on the earth.** The mercy and love, which for all the years of earth’s history has been poured out for people through Jesus, has finally come to an end. **The world is left to its chosen ways, while the faithful ones are surrounded by heavenly angels and protected.**

“An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received ‘the seal of the living God.’ **Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the Sanctuary above. He lifts His hands and with a loud voice says, ‘It is done;’** and all the angelic host lay off their crowns as He makes the solemn announcement: ‘He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous,

let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.' Revelation 22:11. **Every case has been decided for life or death. Christ has made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The number of His subjects is made up;** 'the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, is about to be given to the heirs of salvation, and Jesus is to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.'"—*Great Controversy, 613-614.*

***There is still time!*** Whoever is reading this just now, please consider that Jesus, our Great High Priest, is still pleading in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary! **There is still time to repent and return to Him!** But soon, none know how soon, probation will end; and then it will be forever too late to come back. How soon that end will come, we cannot know; but the signs all about us—in the warring nations, in the terrible natural disasters—all tell us in thunder tones that Jesus is soon to close His mediation forever!

Jesus, as our interceding High Priest, has all power in Heaven and Earth to save each of us. *But none dare delay. Soon it will be too late.*

**Do not wait or put it off. Do not listen to those who say that "all you need do is believe."** We are told that even the devils believe and tremble (James 2:19),—and none of them will be saved!

**Seven times, in the letters to the churches, we are told that only those who overcome will go to heaven. My friend, we can overcome! In the enabling strength of Christ, it can be done, one day at a time, one day after another.** If you want Jesus more than you want yourself, then you can have Him.

**Jesus is in the Sanctuary; and He will give us overcoming power,** as we come to Him and plead for it anew each day. His victory can enable each of us to live a life like His. **But we have to want it and determine to have it. We must put forth earnest efforts to cooperate with Jesus, or it will not be ours.**

The old song is right:

**Trust and Obey - For there's no other way  
To be happy in Jesus - But to Trust and Obey.**

## Revelation 16

# *The Seven Last Plagues Are Poured Out*

*Brief overview*—One after another, the Seven Last Plagues are poured out in judgments upon the living wicked who, while probation continued, refused to repent. The plagues end just before the Second Advent.

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**“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.” Revelation 16:1.**

*“A great voice:”* This shows the immense power of the voice. This is a type of code phrasing: **the great power of the voice showing that it is Christ who is speaking.**

“I . . . heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.”—*Revelation 1:10*. “And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth.”—*Revelation 10:3*. “His voice as the sound of many waters.”—*Revelation 1:15*. (Also see Revelation 11:12; 18:2; 21:3.)

*“The vials of the wrath of God”:* The fact that **the first plague is poured out upon men who have received the mark of the beast** and who worship its image (Rev. 16:2) places the plagues after the setting up of the image and the affixing of the mark (13:14-17); this time is also after the proclamation of the third angel, which warns against the beast and its mark (14:9-11).

The fact that the seven last plagues have the fullness of

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divine wrath unmixed with mercy (Rev. 14:10; 15:1; 16:1) clearly shows that **probation has ended for everyone on whom they fall** (22:11).

At the time of the fifth plague, men cry out from the sores of the first plague (Rev. 16:10-11); this clearly shows that **the plagues are poured out successively and yet within a comparatively short period of time.**

Here we are called to look into the “armory” of the Lord and behold the “weapons of His indignation” (Jer. 50:25). Here are brought forth the treasures which have been reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war (Job 38:22-23).

**We are here being shown that time, just after the close of probation and a little before the return of Christ in the clouds of heaven—when the seven last plagues are poured out.**

Human probation has ended, and the Sanctuary in heaven has no one in it. Christ has stood up, put on garments of vengeance, and is preparing to return to earth to deliver His faithful ones from the terrible ferocity of the wicked. It is at this time that the plagues are poured out.

“I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of My wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out My fury upon you.”—*Ezekiel 22:21-22.*

**Upon whom are the plagues poured out? These plagues are poured out upon the wicked inhabitants of earth—who at that very time are laying plans to put to death every one of God’s people on earth! Do they deserve those plagues? They surely do; by a lifetime of rebellion and wickedness, they have earned them!**

**Before the angels pour out their vials, the whole human race will have divided themselves into two classes—those who are sealed with the seal of the living God and those who have the mark of the beast.**

**When our High Priest has finished His work in**



the Sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out.

Each one of these plagues (whether it consists of sores, polluted water, intense heat, or absolute darkness) is described in this chapter.

**God's people protected**—Isaiah spoke of “**the overflowing scourge**” that will pass through the land and destroy those who have made lies their refuge (Isa. 28:15). Daniel speaks of it as the “**time of trouble, such as never was**” (Dan. 12:1). **Then he adds “Thy people shall be delivered**, every one that shall be found written in the book [the book of life].”

**Before the coming of this day of destruction, God sends an invitation to all to gather together and seek Him.** Those who heed His messages—the messages of the three angels (Rev. 14:6-12)—and return to Him in humble obedience will be sheltered from these plagues (Zeph. 2:1-3); for “the Lord will be the hope of His people” (Joel 3:16).

Psalms 46 and 91 are both powerful descriptions of this terrible crisis just before Christ's return for His faithful ones. **But, through all of this terrible crisis, God's children will be protected “under His wings”** (Ps. 91:4). It is now that each of us must decide under which banner we will stand, the banner of God's law or the banner of Satan's rebellion.

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### THE FIRST PLAGUE

**“And the first [angel] went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.” Revelation 16:2.**

**Timing of the Plagues:** As mentioned earlier, the fact that the first plague is poured out upon men who have received the mark of the beast and who worship its image (Rev. 13:14-17) places the plagues after the setting up of the image and the affixing of the mark. This time is also after the proclamation of the third angel, which

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warns against the beast and its mark (14:9-12).

*In addition, the fact that the seven last plagues constitute an outpouring of divine wrath, unmixed with mercy (Rev. 14:10; 15:1; 16:1), clearly reveals that the probation of those upon whom they fall has closed (22:11).*

**The First Plague:** These gnawing, painful sores will afflict only those who have the mark of the beast and worship his image.

**“Sore”:** This is *helkos*, “ulcer,” “sore,” “suppurating wound.” In the Greek Old Testament (LXX) *helkos* is used of the boils that befell the Egyptians (Ex. 9:9-10), of a “botch” that could not be healed (Deut. 28:27), and the boils that came upon Job (Job 2:7).

Just as the magicians of Egypt could not remove the sores (Ex. 9:10-11), so the demonic forces (Rev. 16:14) aiding Babylon and its associates (Rev. 13:13-14; 18:2; 19:20) will not be able to remove these sores.

**While the wicked experience these plagues, the persecuted and mocked children of God are safe in His care. Angels of God protect them.** Even though they have been sentenced to death by the death decree, and are waiting for it to be executed,—God’s people will not die. Jesus will interpose to save them.

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### THE SECOND PLAGUE

**“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.” Revelation 16:3.**

**The Second Plague:** The oceans are totally ruined and become a place of death.

Some of the most beautiful promises in God’s Word reveal His plan to protect His chosen ones during those difficult times.

**“When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.**

I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.”—*Isaiah 41:17-18*.

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### THE THIRD PLAGUE

**“And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.” Revelation 16:4.**

*The Third Plague: This is an extension of the second plague. Water sources throughout the world are polluted. The fish in the rivers die.*

**“These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off.”—Great Controversy, 628.**

**“Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel . . . And had turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink.”—Psalm 78:41, 44.**

**“All the waters that were in the river were turned to blood.”—Exodus 7:20. “He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish.”—Psalm 105:29.**

*But God’s faithful ones are protected throughout this trying ordeal.*

**“He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.”—Isaiah 33:16.**

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**“And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments.” Revelation 16:5-7.**

**“Thou art righteous”:** This is “Thou art holy.” According to Matthew 23:34-35 and 1 John 3:15, the

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wicked in this last generation are guilty of the sins of their forefathers. Guilt attaches to motive no less than to action.

**“But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.”—Romans 2:2. “Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.”—Revelation 18:20. “It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you.”—2 Thessalonians 1:6.**

“It is written, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.”—Romans 12:19.

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### THE FOURTH PLAGUE

**“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.” Revelation 16:8, 9.**

*The Fourth Plague: The sun becomes so hot that the air inside the houses is stifling; yet the sun beats down so hot that they cannot go outside. Lack of water and oppressive heat cause great suffering.*

*The people with the Mark of the Beast have been worshipping the day of the ancient Sun god, and now the sun in the skies becomes an enemy to them.*

“For the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed is come . . . And My fury, it upheld Me. And I will tread down the people in Mine anger, and make them drunk in My fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.”—Isaiah 63:4-6.

**“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”—Revelation 9:20-21.**

“The land mourneth . . . because the harvest of the field is perished . . . **All the trees of the field are withered:** because joy is withered away from the sons of men . . . How do the beasts groan! **The herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture.**”—*Joel 1:10-12, 18.*

Once again, God’s faithful ones are protected.

“The Lord is thy keeper: **the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee** by day, nor the moon by night.”—*Psalms 121:5-6.*

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### THE FIFTH PLAGUE

**“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.” Revelation 16:10-11.**

*The Fifth Plague:* The **first** plague is body sores. The **second** is destruction of the oceans. The **third** is the ruination of the rivers and water sources. The **fourth** is blasting heat from the sun.

And now **the fifth is total darkness—which especially falls on “the seat of the beast.”** This is purposely done to reveal, to all the wicked, that it is the papacy that is the cause of the plagues, not those who keep God’s commandments.

**“Seat of the Beast”:** This is “throne,” *thronos*,—**the Vatican itself.**

**“And his kingdom”:** Except for the small remnant, Satan numbers the whole world as his subjects. It may be that the darkness falls upon the Vatican first, and then upon all of the wicked everywhere.

**“Repented not”:** But rational thought is now beyond them. **Their only response is to blaspheme God.** They cannot repent because repentance is the work of the Holy Spirit on the heart. Unfortunately, before the plagues began falling, they had totally rejected the pleadings of the Spirit

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calling them to repent. **The refusal to repent proves them to be completely opposed to God.**

“When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness.”—*Isaiah 26:9-10*.

“Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.”—*Proverbs 27:22*. **“In the time of his distress did he trespass yet more.”**—*2 Chronicles 28:22*.

**“The wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.”**—*Daniel 12:10*.

But amid all this ongoing misery, God’s faithful ones are cared for. **When Egypt was dark, there was light in the dwellings of Israel.**

**“Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.”**—*Isaiah 33:16*.

“A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. **Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked . . . There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.**”—*Psalms 91:7-8, 10*.

It would seem that none of the human family could long survive a continuation of plagues as terrible as these. Therefore they must be limited in their duration, as were the ones in Egypt.

**“These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off.** Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. **All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy.**”—*Great Controversy, 628-629*.

Before continuing on, because the sixth and seventh plagues are so important, it is best to pause here and compare the ten plagues of Egypt with the final plagues in Revelation.

**Summarizing the Plagues**—*The first plague* is a collection of sores on the wicked that cause them itching, pain, and great distress.

*The second plague* causes the oceans and seas to be totally ruined. It may have killed all or nearly all the fish in them.

*The third plague* ruins all the rivers, streams, springs, and water sources. Even well water is rendered useless. Most, if not all, of the fish in the rivers die.

*The fourth plague* causes intense heat to fall on everything, whether outside or inside houses. Combined with the lack of water, all the plants, bushes, trees, and animals are decimated. A great many will die.

*The fifth plague* is intense darkness, giving the wicked a brief time to think. But they only use it to plot the death of God's faithful people. Through the power of spiritualism, Satan tells them that those who keep the commandments of God are the cause of the plagues,—and not until they are slain will the plagues cease.

The *sixth and seventh plagues* are about events just prior to the return of Christ.

**Comparing the Plagues**—It would be well to compare the Ten Plagues on Egypt (Ex. 7:17-10:28; 12:29-33) with the Seven Last Plagues (Rev. 16:2-20). *Here is a summary of the ten Egyptian plagues:*

*The first two plagues of Egypt were river plagues:*

*The First Plague* - The river and other water sources turned to blood, which caused the fish to die (Ex. 7:17-25).

*The Second Plague* - Frogs spread over the land (Ex. 8:1-14).

*Comparison:* During the Seven Last Plagues, the *First and Second Plagues* will be far worse—and ruin water sources and kill all water creatures.

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*The next two plagues of Egypt were insect plagues:*

*The Third Plague* - Lice (Ex. 8:15-18).

*The Fourth Plague* - Flies (Ex. 8:21-32).

Neither of these minor plagues will be in the last plagues.

*The next two plagues of Egypt were body disease plagues:*

*The Fifth Plague* - Murrain on the cattle (Ex. 9:3-4).

*The Sixth Plague* - Boils on the Egyptians (Ex. 9:9).

*Comparison:* The Third and Fourth of the Seven Last Plagues (lack of water followed by intense heat) will be far worse on animal life than the Fifth Egyptian Plague.

The First of the Seven Last Plagues was far worse than the Sixth Egyptian Plague and continues throughout all the last plagues; whereas the Egyptian plague may have only lasted a day or two.

*The next two plagues of Egypt were plant destruction plagues:*

*The Seventh Plague* - A terrible hail and windstorm (Ex. 9:22-35).

*The Eighth Plague* - Locusts (Ex. 10:1-20).

*Comparison:* The Third and Fourth of the seven Last Plagues (lack of water followed by intense heat) also have some effects on plant life.

*The Ninth Plague - Darkness over all the land* (Ex. 10:21-28).

*Comparison:* The Fifth of the Seven Last Plagues of darkness will be far worse—for this darkness is not only on the “seat of the beast,” but also on “his kingdom.”

*The Tenth Plague - Death to the firstborn* of the Egyptians (Ex. 12:29-31).

*Comparison:* The Sixth and Seventh, of the Seven Last Plagues, will be far worse than the tenth Egyptian plague—for they will produce lingering suffering which will end in death for all the wicked, at Christ’s Second Advent.



These plagues are the most terrible scourges ever to be visited upon mankind. **In the time of trouble, the wicked are enraged at the righteous, accuse them of being the cause of the plagues, and seek to destroy them. But God will miraculously deliver His people at this time!**

“As the decree issued by the various rulers of Christendom against commandment keepers shall withdraw the protection of government and abandon them to those who desire their destruction, **the people of God will flee from the cities and villages and associate together in companies, dwelling in the most desolate and solitary places.** Many will find refuge in the strongholds of the mountains.”—*Great Controversy*, 626.

“When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, **there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction. As the time appointed in the [death] decree draws near, the people will conspire to root out the hated sect.** It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof.”—*Great Controversy*, 635.

***Promises during the plagues***—The promise is given that God’s faithful ones will be protected throughout this terrible experience.

“**Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.** Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.”—*Psalms 91:5-10*.

Here are two passages which were written especially for the comfort and encouragement of God’s people during the time of the seven last plagues: **Psalms 91 and 46.** *Great*

*Controversy, 629:2-630:0*, has some more.

Now we will continue on with the study of the plagues in Revelation.

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### THE SIXTH PLAGUE

**“And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.” Revelation 16:12.**

*The presentation now changes. Instead of individual plagues, we will now be shown very different crises which occur to the wicked:*

***The Sixth Plague:* The pouring of the vial by the sixth angel—results in “the Battle of Armageddon.”**

**“The river dried up”:** First comes the symbolic drying up of a river. **The literal river Euphrates was the river of literal Babylon** (Jer. 51:12-13, 63-64). In our modern world, the drying up of a literal river would not impede the passage of any kind of army. Even in ancient times, it was not necessary to dry up that river in order for armies to pass across from one side to the other. But we are discussing a symbolic drying up, as will be explained below.

Ancient history provides us with the meaning of this symbol of the fall of mystic Babylon down near the end of time: **When literal Babylon was conquered in October 538 B.C.** (predicted over a hundred years earlier in Isaiah 44:28-45:1-4), **the river that flowed through the city was diverted, so the soldiers could enter** through the open river gates into the city through the riverbed.

**The source of strength for the city of Babylon was that life-giving river.** “Waters,” in prophecy, represent people (Rev. 17:15); and **it is the money of the people supporting Babylon that enabled it to continue its nefarious work.**

When Babylon conquered other nations, its invading armies were like flowing water. It is said to have flowed and overflowed. For example, Daniel 11:40: “He shall enter into

the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.”

**The papacy sits on spiritual Euphrates** (Rev. 17:1; Jer. 51:13) and was destined to flood across the lands, even to antitypical Israel and to Jerusalem (Isa 8:7-8; Dan 11:45).

**“The water”**: The “waters” represent the people (Rev. 17:1, 15) loyal to Babylon. **Spiritual Babylon will fall as the “waters”—the people who formerly supported her—now abandon her.** It will be the outpouring of God’s wrath which will causes those waters to dry up (Rev. 16:12, 16-17).

“**The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.**”—*Revelation 17:15.*

**“Dried up”**: The form of the verb in Greek denotes an accomplished fact. **A total withdrawal of support of Babylon will occur shortly before Christ returns.** This drying up is symbolically described in Revelation 16:18-19; 17:15-18; and literally in *Great Controversy, 654-656.* **The drying up of the river Euphrates refers to the doom of Babylon.** (See Jeremiah 50:34-38; 51:11-13).

“**A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols. Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited forever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.**”—*Jeremiah 50:38-39.*

**“Kings of the East”**: Historically, Cyrus arrived from the East, when he conquered ancient Babylon in October 538 B.C., by diverting the flow of the Euphrates River. **The antitype of this is the arrival of Christ at His Second Advent, to conquer mystic Babylon and its supporters in the last days.**

It had earlier been prophesied that the armies of Cyrus would pass through the dried-up river, enter through the gates, and destroy Babylon (Isa. 45:1-3). **The Babylonians were, that night, conquered by “the kings of the east”**

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(Isa. 41:2, 25; 46:11; Jer. 51:11, 28).

The word, “Cyrus,” means “sun.” Jesus is the “Sun of righteousness,” “the Shepherd King,” God’s “anointed,” or “Messiah” who will come to overthrow spiritual Babylon, by drying up her waters, and will bring deliverance to His people.

Historians tell us that Cyrus in his youth was originally a shepherd (Isa. 44:28) before he rose to power. Thus he was a type of Christ—the great Shepherd of His people (John 10:1-18).

**“That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: That saith of Cyrus, he is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built.”—Isaiah 44:27-28.**

The Euphrates are the waters that flow down from the north country, from of the king of the north (Jer. 46:6, 10). Cyrus dried up the waters of the Euphrates by diverting them; thus he conquered Babylon (Isa. 44:27; Jer. 50:38). So Christ, the true king of the north (Ps. 48:2; Isa. 14:13-16), will conquer spiritual Babylon by drying up the river.

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

The events symbolized by these prophecies are not always sequential; some may occur together and some before one another.

**“Three . . . like frogs”:** In ancient Egypt the frog was an object of veneration,—and three black frogs were a symbol of their pagan and spirit deities. Frogs hibernate; that is, they disappear for a time, only to return later. So paganism and spiritism appeared to disappear for a time, at least in the Western world; but, in the last days, they will

reappear under many disguises. Pagan thinking has entered our schools and even many pulpits. **In the final scenes of history, paganism and spiritism under the cloak of religion will exercise a tremendous influence.**

**“Out of the mouth of”:** These unclean spirits come from the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. Prophecy portrays them as repulsive frogs. The “mouth” symbolizes speech. **The false teachings given to the world by these three at the end of time are spoken of as the “wine” of Babylon** (Rev. 16:14; 17:2, 6).

**“The dragon . . . beast . . . and false prophet”:** The first of these, the dragon, represents spiritualism. The spirits of demons, working miracles, will help gather the nations for this battle. They also teach that there is no death and man will live forever.

**The second, the beast, represents the papacy.** It provides the backing and special breaking of God’s law which will become universal.

**The third, the false prophet, represents modern, apostate Protestantism** which will wholeheartedly join in the work of bringing the whole world into Sunday worship. It deceives men into making an “image” to the beast.

Here is a very clear statement about this:

**“Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions.** While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and **under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.**

**“As spiritualism more closely imitates the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare.** Satan himself is converted, after the modern order of things. He will appear in the

character of an angel of light. **Through the agency of spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed.** And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power.

“The line of distinction between professed Christians and the ungodly is now hardly distinguishable. Church members love what the world loves and are ready to join with them, and Satan determines to unite them in one body and thus strengthen his cause by sweeping all into the ranks of spiritualism. **Papists, who boast of miracles as a certain sign of the true church, will be readily deceived by this wonder-working power; and Protestants, having cast away the shield of truth, will also be deluded.** Papists, Protestants, and worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and **they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world.**”—*Great Controversy*, 588-589.

**“Spirits of devils working miracles”**: All three groups of people in spiritual Babylon are closely united with Satan in their objectives to eliminate obedience to God’s moral law.

**“Working miracles”**: These supernatural manifestations are also referred to in Revelation 13:13-14 and 19:20.

**“The kings”**: These are the political powers of earth.

**“Battle of that great day”**: The word, “battle,” is *pol-emos*, and is often translated “war” rather than “battle.” The whole world will be the battlefield.

This battle is also mentioned in Revelation 14:14-20; 16:12; 19:20; 17:14-17; 19:11-21. **This will not be an international conflict of nations against nations; but it will be a battle by all the wicked against God Himself, in the person of His faithful children.** Under the leading of the dragon, beast, and false prophet, the nations of the world will unite to oppose the Creator God; but they will

imagine that they are only trying to rid the earth of those who keep the commandments, so there can once again be peace on earth.

**“Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” Revelation 16:15.**

It is now, before that final crisis begins, that we must prepare our hearts and lives for what is to come on all the earth.

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**“And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” Revelation 16:16.**

**“He gathered”:** The Greek may be translated either as **“he”** or **“they”**—meaning the three unclean spirits of verses 13-14. According to verse 12, the sixth angel dried up the river, “that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.” So it is likely that here, in verse 16, **it is either the unclean spirits or Satan who gathers them to battle.**

**“Together”:** The kings of the earth are united in mind and purpose.

**“These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast . . .** For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.”—*Revelation 17:13, 17.* (Also see *Psalm 83:2-5.*)

**“Gathered them together”:** This gathering together of all the forces of earth for the purpose of blotting out the commandment keepers will be the last great battle before the return of Christ.

**“In the Hebrew tongue”:** We are especially directed to the Hebrew Old Testament in order to find the meaning of this word, Armageddon.

**“Armageddon”:** The Greek of this verse is *Harmageddon*, a translation from the Hebrew. There are two possible meanings of this word.

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(1) *Mageddon* could be from the Hebrew *Megiddo*, or *Megiddon* (1 Kgs. 9:15; Zech. 12:11), which is the ancient small town of Megiddo. But *Harmageddon* means “mountain of Megiddo,—and there is no mountain there! Megiddo is a valley. It is located in the western portion of the plain of Esdraelon. **It would be impossible to place this final war between the nations of the entire world on one side, and God and His people on the other side—on a hill beside Megiddo, much less in its valley.**

(2) *Mageddon* is from *Mo'ed*, the Hebrew word commonly used throughout the Old Testament for “congregation” (Ex. 27:21; 28:43; 29:4, 10, 11, 30, 32; etc.). **This word is used very often in the Old Testament, and is far more likely to be the original source of the word used in Revelation 16:16.** For example, the *Mo'ed* is the appointed place for a feast (Lev. 23:2, etc.); it is also for a “place of assembly,” or gathering place. In the following verse, an assembly (army) is called by the Lord to crush the wicked.

“The Lord hath trodden underfoot all my mighty men in the midst of me: He hath called an **assembly** against me to crush my young men.”—*Lamentations 1:15*.

In the above verse, God has destroyed His own religious assembly places because they had become wicked. Here is another example:

“He hath destroyed His places of the **assembly**.”—*Lamentations 2:6*.

Both of the above verses are examples of *Mo'ed*,—**but there is one verse from Isaiah (Isa. 14:13), which will be quoted below, which provides an even closer fit with the word, Armageddon. It is *har-mo'ed*, which means mountain of Mageddon (mountain of *Mo'ed*).**—And the verse directly links with Satan's objective from the beginning, to destroy God's people and take control of God's government in heaven! He has continued his warfare down here on earth; and the battle of “Armageddon” will be the final phase prior to the Second Advent. At the Third Advent, the battle will be resumed before the final destruction of Satan and his followers.



“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and **shall go out to deceive the nations** which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, **to gather them together to battle**: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.”—*Revelation 20:7-9*.

In Isaiah 14:13, *har-mo’ed* is translated as “**mount of the congregation,**” or “**mount of assembly.**” The symbol in that verse refers to the mountain (the Temple Mount) on which **Solomon’s Temple stood, just north of ancient Jerusalem.** This would also agree with the information we are given about the final battle in Daniel 11:45. (*For more information on this, see Daniel 11:45.*)

“For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: **I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation [har-mo’ed], in the sides of the north.**”—*Isaiah 14:13*.

From the beginning of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, it has been the objective of Satan to gain control of God’s throne (symbolized in Isaiah 14:13 as the “mount of the congregation,” or Temple) and destroy His people.

*This closely links the battle of Armageddon with the intended battle in Daniel 11:45, which also portrays the final battle by the forces of the world against the people of God! (See Daniel 11:45 for more on this.)*

Here is a clear portrayal of the two sides in this terrible worldwide conflict:

“**These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them:** for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.”—*Revelation 17:14*.

“**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.

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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 . . . **And the remnant [the beast's army] were slain.**"—*Revelation 19:19-21*.

Here are several other passages which refer to this great contest between Christ and Satan: Revelation 12:7-9, 17; 17:14; 19:11-21.

**"Two great opposing powers are revealed in the last great battle.** On one side stands the Creator of heaven and earth. All on His side bear His signet. They are obedient to His commands. On the other side stands the prince of darkness, with those who have chosen apostasy and rebellion."—*7 Bible Commentary, 982-983*.

"The angels are already girded, awaiting the mandate of God to pour their vials of wrath upon the world. Destroying angels are taking up the work of vengeance; for the Spirit of God is gradually withdrawing from the world. **Satan is also mustering his forces of evil, going forth "unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world," to gather them under his banner, to be trained for "the battle of that great day of God Almighty.**" Satan is to make most powerful efforts for the mastery in the last great conflict. Fundamental principles will be brought out, and decisions made in regard to them. Skepticism is prevailing everywhere. Ungodliness abounds. The faith of individual members of the church will be tested as though there were not another person in the world."—*7 Bible Commentary, 983*.

***The battle of Armageddon:*** This is its usual name. Yet, first, **it is not a literal battle but a war;** and, second, **it is not fought in a single location.** Although the international gathering for this conflict occurs under the sixth plague, **the war itself is fought throughout the world under the seventh plague** (Rev. 16:12, 17).

**"The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought.** He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings, and Lord of lords, is soon to lead forth the armies of heaven."—*6 Testimonies, 406*.

“Every form of evil is to spring into intense activity. Evil angels unite their powers with evil men, and as they have been in constant conflict and attained an experience in the best modes of deception and battle, and have been strengthening for centuries, they will not yield the last great final contest without a desperate struggle. **All the world will be on one side or the other of the question. The battle of Armageddon will be fought,** and that day must find none of us sleeping . . . **The Captain of the Lord’s host will stand at the head of the angels of heaven to direct the battle.** Solemn events before us are yet to transpire. Trumpet after trumpet is to be sounded, vial after vial poured out one after another upon the inhabitants of the earth. Scenes of stupendous interest are right upon us.”—7 Bible Commentary, 982.

“We need to study the pouring out of the seventh vial. **The powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon.** When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber, and the armies of the living God will take the field.”—7 Bible Commentary, 983.

Amid the working of spiritualist miracles, **a world-wide decree will be enacted, saying that all the Sabbathkeepers will be put to death on a certain day. This is done so the plagues can stop. This universal law will seek, in one day, to strike a decisive blow that will wipe the hated sect from the face of the earth.** But this act seals the doom of the wicked.

*Their objective is suddenly stopped by what we are about to read next:*

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#### THE SEVENTH PLAGUE

**“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 earth-**

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quake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.” Revelation 16:17-18.

*There is, in many respects, a parallel to the seventh plague. It is the seventh trumpet, which is found in Revelation 11:14-19.*

**The seventh plague:** The forces of wickedness have “gathered themselves together.” **They are united in their objective to forever silence God’s faithful ones. But the battle is suddenly stopped!**

Throughout this time, God’s faithful ones are trusting in Him to deliver them.

“Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord.”—*Joel 3:11.*

“**God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear**, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.”—*Psalms 46:1-3.*

“**Great voice**”: Here we find this phrase again, indicating that it is God who is speaking (Rev. 1:10-13; 11:12; 16:1, 17; 21:3). **The Voice of God delivers His faithful ones from the power of the wicked.**

“**God will in a wonderful manner preserve His people through the time of trouble.** As Jesus poured out His soul in agony in the garden, they will earnestly cry and agonize day and night for deliverance. The decree will go forth that they must disregard the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and honor the first day, or lose their lives; but they will not yield, and trample under their feet the Sabbath of the Lord, and honor an institution of papacy.

“**Satan’s host and wicked men will surround them, and exult over them, because there will seem to be no way of escape for them.** But in the midst of their revelry and triumph, there is heard peal upon peal of the

loudest thunder. The heavens have gathered blackness, and are only illuminated by the blazing light and terrible glory from heaven, as **God utters His voice from His holy habitation.**

“The foundations of the earth shake; buildings totter and fall with a terrible crash. The sea boils like a pot, and the whole earth is in terrible commotion. **The captivity of the righteous is turned, and with sweet and solemn whisperings they say to one another: ‘We are delivered. It is the voice of God.’**”—*1 Testimonies, 353-354.*

**On the date appointed for the death decree,—God steps in and, by a series of disasters, changes the entire situation. The wicked realize that they have actually been fighting against God.** (*Great Controversy, chapters 39 and 40, covers this in great detail.*) They then turn upon one another and the religious leaders whom they have trusted. This is the fall of Great Babylon.

**“It is Done”:** As the moment appointed in the death decree arrives, and the wicked rush forward with shouts of triumph to annihilate God’s faithful ones, the Voice of God is heard declaring, **“It is done!”**

**“A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations.”**—*Jeremiah 25:31.*

**“It is at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people.** The sun appears, shining in its strength. **Signs and wonders follow in quick succession. The wicked look with terror and amazement upon the scene, while the righteous behold with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance.** Everything in nature seems turned out of its course. The streams cease to flow. Dark, heavy clouds come up and clash against each other. In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying: **‘It is done’** (Revelation 16:17).

**“That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. There is a mighty earthquake, ‘such as was not since**

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men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.’ Verses 17, 18.”—*Great Controversy*, 636-637.

**“Great earthquake”**: A massive worldwide earthquake devastates all the cities of earth. This great earthquake is the same one mentioned in Revelation 6:17-20; 8:5; and 11:19. See also *Great Controversy*, 636-637, and 657. (For additional information about this earthquake, see comments for Revelation 11:19).

(Clarification: The Lisbon Earthquake of 1775 is mentioned in Revelation 6:12.)

“The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel.”—*Joel* 3:16.

At this point, the threefold union of Revelation 16:12-14 totally collapses. The wicked know that they cannot fight against God, and they turn on their religious leaders.

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**“And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”** Revelation 16:19-21.

**“Great Babylon”**: This is the second of six times that this word, “Babylon,” is used in the book of Revelation (14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). Chapter 17 will give a detailed description of it; and chapter 18 will provide us with a warning to flee out of it, and also describes its fall.

**“Great city was divided”**: If this has a literal application, this would indicate that the Vatican and the city of Rome are ripped to pieces. Major earthquakes have occurred from time to time on the Italian peninsula. If it has a sym-



A LOCAL CITY OF ROME MAP OF THE VATICAN

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*bolic meaning*: In another sense, the threefold union, uniting mystical Babylon, is split apart; and they now turn on one another. Perhaps both occur. In Revelation 17, we will learn more about the splitting apart of the papal coalition.

**“Came in remembrance”**: This is a common Biblical expression denoting the arrival of the hour when divine judgment is to be meted out (Ps. 109:14; Eze. 21:23-24; also Jer. 31:34).

**“To give her the cup”**: Compare this with prophecies about judgments on ancient Babylon (Isa. 51:17, 22; Jer. 25:15-16). **“The cup” indicates suffering and judgments meted out** (Ps. 11:6; 75:8; Isa. 51:17, 22-23; Jer. 25:15-17, 28; 49:12).

**“Wine”**: The third angel warned men that this was coming, and now it has arrived (Rev. 14:10; also 17:2).

**“Great hail . . . every stone”**: A massive worldwide earthquake and a terrible hailstorm (hail the size of a talent, cannon balls about 63 lbs.) combine to devastate all the cities of earth. (For hail as a divine judgment, see Joshua 10:11 and Ezekiel 13:11, 13).

**Suddenly realize**—When God’s voice delivers His waiting people from their enemies, the wicked suddenly realize what they have lost.

**“When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life.** While probation continued they were blinded by Satan’s deceptions, and they justified their course of sin . . . They look with terror upon the destruction of the idols which they preferred before their Maker. They have sold their souls for earthly riches and enjoyments, and have not sought to become rich toward God. The result is, their lives are a failure; their pleasures are now turned to gall, their treasures to corruption . . . **Their lamentations are silenced by the fear that they themselves are to perish with their idols.**

**“The wicked are filled with regret, not because**



**of their sinful neglect of God and their fellow men, but because God has conquered.** They lament that the result is what it is; but they do not repent of their wickedness. They would leave no means untried to conquer if they could.

“The world see the very class whom they have mocked and derided, and desired to exterminate, pass unharmed through pestilence, tempest, and earthquake. **He who is to the transgressors of His law a devouring fire, is to His people a safe pavilion.**”—*Great Controversy*, 654.

The wicked now turn on one another, and the “ten kings” (Rev. 17:12-16) take revenge upon mystical Babylon.

**Filled with fury, the hosts of earth turn their weapons, with which they had purposed to slay the saints, upon their leaders and upon one another.**

“The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but **all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers.**

“Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. **‘We are lost!’ they cry, ‘and you are the cause of our ruin;’ and they turn upon the false shepherds.**

“The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God’s people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.”—*Great Controversy*, 655-656.

*Are you ready for what is coming?* Have you made your decision to steadfastly remain on the side of your Creator and His Bible Sabbath?

Soon you will have to face your natural death or the

final crisis. *It is now that you need to decide.* You may not be convicted as strongly tomorrow as you are right now.

## Revelation 17

# *The Sins of Mystery Babylon*

*Brief overview*—This chapter describes the inner wickedness of Babylon, and many of the terrible evils that it has committed over the centuries.

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**“And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” Revelation 17:1-2.**

*This is a continuation of the seventh plague.* The “judgment of the great whore” (the decision condemning Babylon and its followers) occurs under this final plague.

**“Come hither”**: Literally **“Come here!”** This is in the imperative sense. It is urgent that John understand this.

**“Judgment”**: This word, *krisis*, can also be translated as “verdict.” This word can indicate either **the act of investigating a case or the carrying out of the sentence.**

Chapter 17 consists of two sections: **Part One** (Rev. 17:3-6) reveals the symbolic vision and the crimes of Babylon. This is Heaven’s bill of indictment. **Part Two** gives the sentence itself and the way it will be carried out.

**Chapter 17 explains the final crisis, when Satan works to finally slay God’s faithful people; so it is an**



**TWO VIEWS OF VATICAN II (Oct. 1962-Dec. 1965)**



expansion of Revelation 12:17.

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”—*Revelation 12:17*.

“The eye of God, looking down the ages, was fixed upon the crisis which His people are to meet, when earthly powers shall be arrayed against them. Like the captive exile, they will be in fear of death by starvation or by violence. But the Holy One who divided the Red Sea before Israel, will manifest His mighty power and turn their captivity. ‘They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.’ Malachi 3:17.”—*Great Controversy*, 634.

God permits Satan and his agents to carry forward their work just to the point when they intend to kill every faithful child of God—and then they are stopped in their tracks (EW 282-285; GC 635-636).

**“That sitteth upon”:** John is shown an evil woman which symbolizes mystic Babylon sitting on a blood-red beast. She is contrasted with the pure woman of Revelation 12:1-2, 6, which represents the true church that, in spite of persecution, remains faithful to God.

**Oddly enough, the symbol of a woman with a cup in her hand was used at a papal jubilee.** (Apparently, no one at the Vatican had been reading the Bible lately.)

“In 1825, on the occasion of the jubilee, Pope Leo XII struck a medal, bearing on the one side his own image, and on the other, that of the Church of Rome symbolized as a **‘Woman,’ holding in her left hand a cross and in her right a cup**, with the legend around her, *Sedet super universum*, **‘The whole world is her seat.’**”—*Alexander Hislop, The Two Babylons*, p. 6.

This woman of Revelation 17:3 is called “Babylon.” But, we are told that she is the **“mother of harlots”** (verse 5). So there are other independent religious organizations that constitute the apostate daughters and belong

to the same family.

In Jeremiah 6:2, God likens His people to “a comely and delicate woman,” a woman “dwelling at home” (margin). But **this woman, in Revelation 17, is not dwelling at home. Instead she is courting kings and living in evil relationships with the world.**

Durante Alighieri (1265-1321), commonly known as Dante, was a major Italian poet of the Middle Ages. His *Divine Comedy* is considered the greatest literary work composed in the Italian language and a masterpiece of world literature (*Harold Bloom, The Western Canon*). **In it, he made a forthright indictment of the papacy in his day, which at that time was at the height of its worldly glory.**

“[It was] the boldest, most unsparing, most incisive, denunciatory song that has ever been composed.”—*J.H. Ignaz Dollinger, The Pope and the Council*.

The following brief portion of it sounds like Revelation 17:

“Your avarice overcasts the world with mourning, underfoot treading the good, and raising bad men up. Of shepherds like to you, **the Evangelist [John the Revelator] was aware, when her, who sits upon the waves, with kings in filthy whoredom he beheld. She who with seven heads towered at her birth, and from ten horns her proof of glory drew . . . Of gold and silver ye have made your god . . . Ah, Constantine! to how much ill gave birth!**”—*Canto 19*.

“*Upon many waters*”: As we know, the “waters” represent peoples and nations. **The woman is exercising despotic control over the souls of a very large number of people**, just as the ancient city of Babylon was also located beside the literal waters of the Euphrates.

“For the Lord hath both devised and done that which He spake against the inhabitants of Babylon. **O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come.**”—*Jeremiah 51:12-13*.

**But her source of power (her followers) will be lost, prior to Christ’s Second Advent.**

“And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; **and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.**”—*Revelation 16:12*.

“*The kings of the earth*”: These rulers are her accomplices in causing the loss of millions of souls.

“*Made drunk with the wine*”: Those who are steeped in its pagan rituals and beliefs cannot think as clearly. *We must make sure that we do not drink any of this wine!*

“**The conflict is between the requirements of God and the requirements of the beast.** The first day, a papal institution which directly contradicts the fourth commandment, is yet to be made a test by the two-horned beast. And then the fearful warning from God declares the penalty of bowing to the beast and his image. They shall drink the wine of the wrath of God.”—*I Testimonies, 223*.

This is not the cup of salvation for which David prayed (Ps. 116:13); instead, **it is a cup full of false gods and lying abominations.**

*The Wine of Babylon*—*What else is included in this wine?* Here are some answers:

“The great sin charged against Babylon is that she ‘made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.’ This cup of intoxication which she presents to the world represents **the false doctrines that she has accepted as the result of her unlawful connection with the great ones of the earth.** Friendship with the world corrupts her faith, and **in her turn she exerts a corrupting influence upon the world by teaching doctrines which are opposed to the plainest statements of Holy Writ.**”—*Great Controversy, 388*.

“**Babylon has been fostering poisonous doctrines, the wine of error.** This wine of error is made up of false doctrines, such as the **natural immortality** of the soul, the **eternal torment** of the wicked, the **denial of the pre-existence of Christ** prior to His birth in Bethlehem, and advocating and exalting **the first day of the**

week above God's holy and sanctified day. **These and kindred errors are presented to the world by the various churches**, and thus the Scriptures are fulfilled that say, 'For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.' It is a wrath which is created by false doctrines, and when kings and presidents drink this wine of the wrath of her fornication, they are stirred with anger against those who will not come into harmony with the false and satanic heresies which exalt the false sabbath, and lead men to trample underfoot God's memorial."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 61-62.

**"The theory of eternal torment is one of the false doctrines that constitute the wine of the abominations of Babylon**, of which she makes all nations drink. Revelation 14:8; 17:2. That ministers of Christ should have accepted this heresy and proclaimed it from the sacred desk is indeed a mystery. **They received it from Rome, as they received the false sabbath.**"—*Great Controversy*, 536.

**"The theory of the immortality of the soul was one of those false doctrines that Rome, borrowing from paganism, incorporated into the religion of Christendom.**"—*Ibid.*, 549.

*(Will hellfire be eternal? For the truth on this, see comments for Revelation 20:14-15.)*

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**"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." Revelation 17:3.**

**"Into the wilderness":** This angel very briefly takes John back "into the wilderness," so he can view how this abomination has continued for over a thousand years. This recalls the time, in Revelation 12:6, 10-17, when the faithful were forced to flee into desolate places of the earth during the 1260-year persecution by Rome.

**"Beast":** In Bible prophecy, beasts commonly represent political powers (Dan. 7:3-7, 17; 8:3, 5, 20, 21; Rev. 12:3;

13:1). —And this beast is blood-red,—symbolic of all the lost souls that it will bear responsibility for.

*The origin of pagan religions*—Here is yet more information about this wine of Roman Babylon. The following references help clarify the fact that **the primary pagan religions which eventually were absorbed by pagan and then papal Rome originated in the earliest history in Babylonia:**

Layard, in his book, *Nineveh and Its Remains*, declares that we have the united testimony of sacred and profane history, that **idolatry originated in the area of Babylonia, which had the most ancient of religious systems** (*Alexander Hislop, The Two Babylons, p. 12*).

**When Rome became a world empire, she assimilated into her system the gods and religions from the various pagan countries over which she ruled** (*Bailey, The Legacy of Rome, p. 245*).

*“It has been and always will be the intent and tradition of the Apostolic See, to make a large allowance in all that is right and good, for the primitive traditions and the special customs of every nation.”—Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XII, p. 308.*

*“It is interesting to note how often our Church has availed herself of practices which were in common use among pagans.”—Externals of the Catholic Church, p. 156.*

*“To convert and civilize her new subjects, she [the Catholic Church] descended to their level and employed means in keeping with their notions and customs.”—History of the Church of God, p. 407.*

Laing mentions several pagan practices by which the mother-goddess was worshiped by the heathen and adopted into Christianity by Rome: holy water, votive offerings, elevation of sacred objects [lifting of the host and statues], the priest’s bells, the decking of images, processions, festivals, prayers for the dead, the worship of relics and the statutes of saints. See *Gordon J. Laing, Survivals of Roman Religion, 1831 edition, pp. 92-95, 123-*



131, 238-241.

*The papal doctrine about Mary*—Instead of teaching the people to look to God and Christ as their loving Helpers, **Catholics were told that only Mary and other dead people (the “saints”) could intercede for them.** The church leaders had erected high walls between the people and their Saviour.

**“We have no greater help, no greater hope, than you, O most Pure Virgin. Help us then, for we hope in you. We are your servants. Do not disappoint us.”**—*Novena Prayers in Honor of Our Mother of Perpetual Help (published by Sisters of St. Basil, with imprimatur).*

**“Mary is our Lady and Queen because she, the new Eve, has shared intimately in the redemptive work of Christ, the new Adam, by suffering with Him and offering Him up to the Eternal Father.”**—*Ludwig Ott, Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma, p. 211 (1974).*

In addition to writing a book (*The Duties and Dignities of the Priest*) that exalts the status of the priests and the pope as those who have all power over God, **Alphonsus de Liguori wrote a book in lavish praise of Mary (The Glories of Mary).** He was rewarded at his death with sainthood (1839 by Gregory XVI). Because he was canonized, all his statements are declared to be infallible. Liguori was later proclaimed a Doctor of the Church in 1871, by Pope Pius IX, and as “Patron of Confessors and Moralists” by Pope Pius XII on April 26, 1950. (That means he is now a patron saint they can pray to.) He is considered one of the most highly valued writers in the Catholic Church.

**“With reason does an ancient writer call her ‘the only hope of sinners;’ for by her help alone can we hope for the remission of sins.”**—*De Liguori, The Glories of Mary, p. 83 (1931 edition).*

**“If God is angry with a sinner, and Mary takes him under her protection, she withholds the avenging arm of her Son and saves him.”**—*Ibid., p. 24.*

**“[Prayer of St. Ephram:] O Immaculate Virgin, we are under thy protection . . . We beseech thee to prevent thy**

beloved Son, who is irritated by our sins, from abandoning us to the power of the devil.”—*Ibid.*, p. 273.

“‘At the command of Mary, all obey—even God.’ St. Bernardine fears not to utter this sentence; meaning indeed, to say that **God grants the prayers of Mary as if they were commands** . . . Since the Mother, then, should have the same power as the Son, rightly has Jesus, who is omnipotent, made Mary also omnipotent.”—*Ibid.*, p. 82.

“Because men acknowledge and fear the divine Majesty, which is in him [Christ] as God, for this reason it was necessary to assign us another advocate, to whom we might have recourse with less fear and more confidence, and **this advocate is Mary, [other] than whom we cannot find one more powerful** with his divine majesty, **or one more merciful** towards ourselves . . . A mediator, then, was needed with the mediator himself.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 180-182.

Here are statements by three popes, living in the 20th century, who in their infallible statements say this about Mary:

“Christ has taken His seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high . . . and **Mary as Queen stands at His right hand.**”—*Pius X (1903-1914), Mary Mediatrix, in Encyclical: Ad Diem Illum. February 2, 1904.*

“Nothing whatever of that immense treasure of all graces, which the Lord brought us . . . is granted to us **save through Mary, so that, just as no one can come to the Father on high except through the Son, so almost in the same manner, no one can come to Christ except through his Mother.**”—*Leo XIII (1878-1903), Encyclical, Magnae Dei Matris (Magnifying the Mother of God). September 8, 1892.*

“She [Mary] remains forever associated to Him [Christ], **with an almost unlimited power in the distribution of the graces which flow from the Redemption.** Jesus is King throughout all eternity by nature and by right of conquest; through Him, with him and subordinate to him, Mary is Queen by grace, by divine



relationship, by right of conquest and by singular election. And **her kingdom is as vast as that of her Son and God, since nothing [in the universe!] is excluded from her dominion.**—*Pius XII (1939-1958), quoted in E.R. Carrol (ed.), Mariology, Vol. 1, p. 49 (1955).*

**The mother goddess came from Babylon into pagan Rome, and thence into the Church, with its statues of the “Queen of Heaven” sold to the people to place in and near their homes.** This Babylonian Ishtar is identified with Astarte, Ashtoreth, Persephone, Artemis (Diana) of Ephesus, Venus, and Isis of Egypt (*S.H. Langdon, Semitic Mythology, pp. 12-13, 19-20, 24-34*).

**“From ancient Babylon came the cult of the virgin mother goddess, who was worshiped as the highest of gods.”**—*S.H. Langdon, Semitic Mythology, 1931 ed.*

**The Chinese had a mother goddess called Shingmoo or the “Holy Mother.”** She is pictured with a child in her arms and rays of glory around her head (*J.B. Gross, The Heathen Religion, p. 60*).

“In religion and mythology, of even greater importance than . . . Anu, Enlil, and Enki [the three leading early Babylonian gods], is **the Sumerian Mother-goddess** . . . who then became [several] goddesses in later nations.

“The cult of the virgin Earth-goddess in Canaan, Phoenicia, and Syria seems to have been entirely borrowed from Babylonia. As already suggested, the primitive name of this Sumerian goddess seems to have been Ninanna, Innini, **‘Queen of Heaven’ as she was called.**—*Stephen H. Langdon, Semitic Mythology, Vol. 5 of The Mythology of all Races, p. 108.*

“When men sin **the gods punish with terrible vengeance, but the mother goddess ever intercedes for them.** The religious scenes on seals in all periods represent her **standing in prayer beside humans, and interceding with a god on their behalf.** To the very end of Babylonian religion, Nintu, Aruru, Innini, Ishtar may be correctly described as the *mater dolorosa*, the ‘Weeping Mother [goddess].’ ”—*Stephen Herbert Langdon,*

*“Babylonian and Assyrian Religion,” Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1691 ed., Vol. 2, p. 858.*

**The concept of mother goddess worship did not exist among Christians in the first few centuries before the papacy began:**

**“Devotion to Our Blessed Lady . . . is not contained, at least explicitly, in the earlier forms of the Apostles’ Creed, there is [therefore] no ground for surprise if we do not meet with any clear traces of the cultus of the Blessed Virgin in the first Christian centuries.”—*Catholic Encyclopedia, art. “Virgin Mary,” Vol. 15, p. 459.***

***Mary’s status as an immaculate redeemer***—On December 8, 1854, in the document, *Ineffabilis Deus*, Pope Pius IX issued the doctrine of the *Immaculate Conception of Mary*. **Part of it stated that it was Mary, not Christ, who fulfilled the prophecy of Genesis 3:15 and crushed the head of Satan!**

**“The most holy Virgin, united with him [Christ] by a most intimate and indissoluble bond, was, with him and through him, eternally at enmity with the evil serpent, and most completely triumphed over him, and thus crushed his head with her immaculate foot.”—*Ineffabilis Deus.***

In this document, Mary has been exalted to being co-equal with Jesus Christ in destroying Satan; and **it is stated that she actually carries out the deed, not Jesus!** Here is that first prophecy:

**“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.”—*Genesis 3:15.***

The February 2, 1904, Encyclical of Pope Pius X on the Immaculate Conception, *Ad Diem Illum Laetissimum*, **declared that all of God’s people in the Old Testament looked forward to the birth of Mary, and longed for it so she could stamp on the serpent’s head!**

In reality, Mary was a sinner by birth; for all have sinned. **Mary, herself, would acknowledge her need for a Saviour; and the Bible says nothing of Mary or any**

other human since the Garden of Eden being sinless, except for Jesus Christ.

“**For all have sinned**, and come short of the glory of God.”—*Romans 3:23*.

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; **and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.**”—*Romans 5:12*.

Far from being equal with God, she herself called Him her God and Saviour. (A “saviour” is needed in order to be saved from sin.)

“And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord. And my spirit hath rejoiced **in God my Saviour.**”—*Luke 1:46-47*.

Every version of the Bible (with the exception of the Vulgate, Douay-Rheims, and most other Catholic Bibles) states, in Genesis 3:15, that it is the seed of the woman—and not the woman herself—which crushes the serpent’s head.

“I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: **she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel.**”—*Genesis 3:15, Douay-Rheims*.

In 1950 Pope Pius XII (1939-1958) defined the *Assumption of Mary* as being an article of faith for Roman Catholics. **The theory of the Assumption of Mary, which Catholics are required to believe, is the bodily taking up of the Virgin Mary into Heaven at the end of her life, without experiencing death.** The Virgin Mary, “having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory” (*paragraph 44 of the 1950 decretal*). This doctrine was dogmatically and infallibly defined by Pope Pius XII on November 1, 1950, in his Apostolic Constitution *Munificentissimus Deus*.

**Yet this belief in a “Queen of Heaven” was declared by the prophet Jeremiah to be heathen apostasy!**

“Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, **to make cakes to the Queen of Heaven,**

and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger. Do they provoke Me to anger? saith the Lord: do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces? Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, Mine anger and My fury shall be poured out upon this place.”—*Jeremiah 7:17-20. (Queen of Heaven worship is also condemned in Jeremiah 44:17-19, 25-27.)*

**Ashtoreth was the name by which the goddess was known to the Israelites.** We are told:

“They forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ash-toreth.”—*Judges 2:13 (also Judges 10:6; 1 Sam. 7:3-4; 12:10; 1 Kings 11:5; 2 Kings 23:13).*

Saint Alphonsus Maria de Liguori (1696-1787) was an Italian Catholic Bishop, and founder of the Redemptorists, an influential religious order. He wrote two extremely important books, *The Dignities and Duties of the Priest* (which essentially deifies priests as above God) and *The Glories of Mary* (which places Mary above God in heaven). In appreciation for this, he was canonized in 1839 by Pope Gregory XVI and declared a Doctor of the Church. Therefore, all his writings are infallibly true. He wrote this in a book dedicated to the Virgin Mary:

**“A hawk darted upon a bird which had been taught to say Ave Maria. The bird said ‘Ave Maria,’ and the hawk fell dead.”**—*St. Alphonsus de Liguori, The Glories of Mary, p. 96.*

***The Rosary and Mary*—Jesus spoke of repetitious prayer as being a practice of the heathen.** Satan prepared counterfeits, beginning long centuries before the rise of the papacy. Then they were adopted into Christianity.

**“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them.”**—*Matthew 6:7-8.*

**Those who worshiped the goddess Diana repeated a religious phrase over and over, hundreds of times: “All with one voice about the space of two hours cried out,**

Great is Diana of the Ephesians” (Acts 19:34). **In order to keep track of what they are supposed to be saying, for centuries the heathen used prayer beads.**

“In almost all countries, then, we meet with something in the nature of **prayer counters or rosary-beads.**”—*Catholic Encyclopedia*, art. “Rosary,” Vol. 13, p. 185.

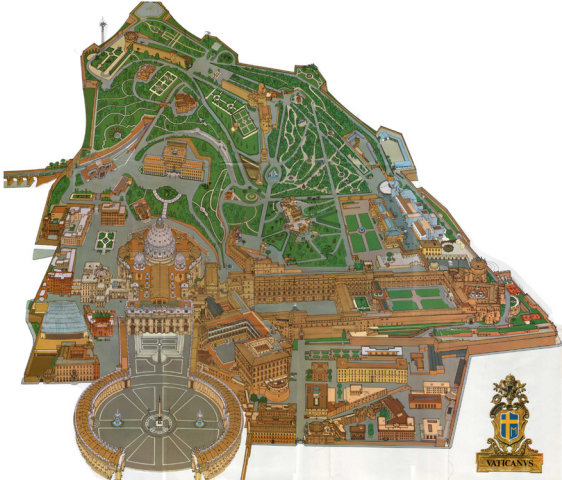
**Among the Phoenicians a circle of beads resembling a rosary was used in the worship of Astarte, the mother goddess, about 800 B.C.** (*Seymour, Cross in History, Tradition, and Art*, p. 21). **The Brahmans of India, from early times, used rosaries with many beads.** The worshipers of Vishnu, in India, gave their children rosaries with 108 beads. A similar rosary is used by millions of Buddhists in India and Tibet (*Encyclopedia of Religions*, Vol. 3, pp. 203-205).

**The “rosarium,” or rosary, indeed has pre-Christian origins. Ancient Rome celebrated the “rosalia,” a spring festival commemorating the dead. The word, rosary, originated from the word for “round,” and became associated with roses which are also round. The rosary anciently consisted of prayer beads, each of which were in the shape of tiny suns, in honor of the Sun god. According to a 13th century legend, the *Hail Marys* recited by a monk became roses in the hands of Mary** (*Dominic of Prussia, Wie der Rosenkrantze ist funden, in: B. Winston-Allen, Stories of the Rose*).

**The most often repeated prayer—and the main prayer—of the Catholic rosary is the “Hail Mary,”** which ends with: “Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of death, Amen.” **The complete rosary sequence repeats the Hail Mary almost nine times as often as the Lord’s Prayer** (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, art. “Hail Mary,” Vol. 7, p. 111).

Someone may think that it is a good thing to say the Lord’s Prayer over and over again ten or twenty times as beads are counted. But the Bible does not teach this. Immediately after condemning the repetition of the same prayer over and over again, “as the heathen do” (Matt.





6:7-8), Jesus taught His disciples the Lord's Prayer as a model prayer,—not something to be repeated over and over again for half an hour—thus making it meaningless to the mind!

*Praying to saints*—God's plan is that, if we want someone to pray with us, it must be a living person. But if we try to commune with people that have died,—this is a form of spiritualism. The Bible repeatedly condemns all attempts to commune with the dead (Isa. 8:19-20). King Saul was slain for trying to do this (1 Chron. 10:13-14). Also see Leviticus 19:31; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; Isaiah 2:6.

Many recite the "apostles' Creed" which says: "We believe . . . in the communion of saints," supposing that such includes the idea of prayers for and to the dead. Concerning this very point, *The Catholic Encyclopedia* says "**Catholic teaching regarding prayers for the dead is bound up inseparably with the doctrine . . . of the communion of saints which is an article of the Apostles' Creed.**" Prayers "to the saints and martyrs collectively, or to some one of them in particular" are recommended (*Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 4, art. "Prayers for the Dead," pp. 653, 655*).

**This concept of a multiplicity of gods to pray to—also came from Babylon.** The Babylonian system had some 5,000 gods and goddesses (*H.R. Hays, In the Beginnings: Early Man and His Gods, p. 65*). In fact, **the Babylonian gods were very similar to the papal ones:** First, they were once "heroes" on earth, who had been taken to heaven and now live on a higher plane (*Encyclopedia of Religions, Vol. 2, p. 78*). Second, the various months and days—and even occupations—were each under the control of a special god which one could pray to for help (*Henry Smith Williams, ed., The Historian's History of the World, Vol. 1, p. 518*).

**In ancient paganism, there was a god for every activity, every problem.** On pp. 645-648 of the *Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary*, you will find a rather complete list of over 300 Catholic saints in charge of various occupations and problems. In some instances, there are two saints for

each one. Here are several: artillerymen, St. Barbara; aviators, Our Lady of Loreto; beggars, St. Alexius; butchers, St. Hadrian; comedians, St. Vitus; convulsion in children, St. Scholastica; dog bites, St. Hubert; eye trouble, St. Lucy; expectant mothers, St. Raymond; fever, St. George; grave diggers, St. Anthony; headaches, St. Teresa of Avila; hunters, St. Hubert; lawyers, St. Ivo; lost articles, St. Anthony of Padua; lovers, St. Raphael. On and on the list goes. **Thus old pagan legends, and their “god heroes,” were transferred from paganism into the Church, which invented still more.**

It was in this way that the pagan Dionysus, the god of grapes and wine making, became St. Dionysus; Bright (the daughter of the Sun god) became St. Bridget. In pagan times, her temple at Kildare was served by Vestal Virgins who tended the sacred fire in her honor; so it would not be extinguished. When the papist missionaries arrived, it became a convent; and tending the ritual fire continued, but it now is called “St. Bridget’s fire.” **There is seemingly no end to the changeovers from gods to saints. —Yet all are in honor of pagan myths or dead people.**

Even the Buddhists in the Orient had their “worship of various deities, as goddesses of sailors, the god of war, the gods of special neighborhoods or occupations” (*F.S. Dobbins, Story of the World’s Worship, p. 621*).

This heathen concept was even shared by the Syrians in Bible times:

“Their [the Israelite] gods are gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.”—*1 Kings 20:23*.

**The worship of saints is actually the worship of the dead.** When the Israelites worshiped with the Midianites (Num. 25:1-5), they died for doing so. The Bible says that, while with them, **they actually ate sacrifices offered to the dead:**

“They joined themselves also unto Baalpeor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead. Thus they provoked Him to

anger with their inventions.”—*Psalms 106:28-29*.

**We are not to worship the dead, nor are we to offer sacrifices in their honor.**

“**The pagan festivals of the dead seem to have been among those that showed persistence in survival.** There are indications that they were celebrated even under Christian emperors . . . But even after the pagan festivals ceased to be celebrated, **the belief that the spirits of the dead could and, if properly approached, would give aid and protection to the living survived and entered the papal church.**”—*Gordon J. Laing, Survivals of Roman Religion, p. 82.*

“Any peasant who prays to a particular saint for a cure for his horse or ox or drops a coin into the box of a miraculous chapel **is in that act pagan** . . . Harnack sees in the veneration of saints nothing but a recrudescence [revival] of **pagan polytheism.**”—*Ibid., pp. 9-10.*

“**The exclusive worship of saints degraded the understanding and begot a credulity and perverted the standard of morality** . . . This monstrous superstition grew to its height in the twelfth century.”—*Henry Hallam, History of Europe during the Middle Ages, Vol. 3, pp. 31-32.*

**We are not to pray to the dead, nor bow down to statues of them; for the “dead know not anything.”**

“For the living know that they shall die: but **the dead know not any thing.**”—*Ecclesiastes 9:5.*

“His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; **in that very day his thoughts perish.**”—*Psalms 146:4.*

“And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? **To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.**”—*Isaiah 8:19-20.*

**The aureole (circle)**—In their paintings, the heathen placed a circle (aureole) around the heads of their gods. This practice was eagerly brought into Catholic paintings.

All Catholic saints are portrayed in this way; yet, significantly, **in very ancient times the practice consistently came from one of the many religions which worshiped the Sun god.** The circle is a symbol of the sun. Statues and wall icons of Buddha often have a halo around their heads. This practice can be seen today in thousands of pictures of Mary and the saints. As was done with the ancient Sun god, pictures of Christ show golden beams coming out of His head.

*The Stigmata*—Catherine of Siena, Padre Pio, and other such “suffering saints” are revered and prayed to by millions of Catholics and popes, for having suffered for the sins of others. Pilgrimages to their shrines have been another source of income for the merchants.

The stigmata are bodily marks, sores, or sensations of pain in locations corresponding to the crucifixion wounds of Jesus, such as the hands and feet, **which spirit forces have placed on certain individuals.** Many stigmata show recurring bleeding that stops and then starts, at times after receiving Holy Communion; and a large percentage of stigmatics have shown a high desire to frequently receive Holy Communion (*Michael P. Carroll, Catholic cults and devotions: A Psychological Inquiry, pp. 80-84*). It is said that **a relatively high percentage of stigmatics also exhibit inedia, which is living with minimal (or no) food or water for long periods of time,** except for the Holy Eucharist; and some exhibit loss of weight. **Many reported stigmatics are members of Catholic religious orders** (*Poulain, A., Mystical Stigmata, quoted in The Catholic Encyclopedia, art. Stigmata*). A high percentage (perhaps over 80%) of all Stigmatics are women (*Carroll, pp. 80-84*).

**Bodily stigmata have been reported in a number of non-Christian religions.** *Buddhist “stigmata”* (*Keith Taylor and John Whitmore, Essays into Vietnamese Pasts. Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1985, p. 278*) are regularly shown in Buddhist art. *The same spirits are working in both religions!*—giving “holy people” these

marks.

According to legends, St. Francis of Assisi is the first recorded stigmatic in Christian history. During a forty-day fast, Francis was purportedly speared in his hands, feet, and side “with the same lance that pierced Christ’s side.” The image of nails immediately appeared in his hands and feet; and the wound in his side often seeped blood (Joan Carroll Cruz, *Mysteries, Marvels, Miracles in the Lives of Saints*).

*Another name of blasphemy*—Here are two more statements by the popes:

**“The Papacy had just reached the zenith of its power under Innocent III [1198-1216].** It claimed supreme authority alike over things sacred and secular. In his inaugural sermon in 1198 Innocent declared: ‘I am the Vicar of Jesus Christ the successor of Peter; I am placed between God and man; less than God, greater than man: **I judge all men but can be judged of none.**’ **The establishment of the Inquisition a few years later followed logically on such claims:** likewise the massacre of the Albigenses, and the demand that the civil authorities should henceforth exterminate all who refused to accept the dogmas laid down by the Church.”—*R.H. Charles, Lectures on the Apocalypse.*

“From about the middle of the twelfth century, the popes began for the first time to take the title ‘Vicar of Christ’ and to claim it for themselves alone . . .

“Innocent III could deliberately sweep aside the limitation implied in the old title [that they were only successors of Peter]: ‘We are the successor of the Prince of the Apostles, but we are not his vicar, nor the vicar of any man nor Apostle, but the vicar of Jesus Christ himself!’ ”—*R.W. Southern, Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages, pp. 104-105.*

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**“And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abomina-**



**THE POPE (AT THE FAR END) MEETING IN COUNCIL WITH HIS CARDINALS IN A SPECIAL MEETING. AT THE PRESENT TIME, THERE ARE 199 CARDINALS; NEARLY ALL OF THEM ARE ABOVE THE AGE OF 75.**

tions and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, **Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.**” Revelation 17:4-6.

*“Purple and scarlet”*: The purple is the color of royalty, and the scarlet is the color of blood. This is the opposite of the pure woman who is clothed in fine linen, clean and white (Rev. 19:7-8), which symbolizes purity, obedience to God’s law, and sinlessness.

*The colors of the papacy*—All of the colors named in Revelation 17:4 are in the garments and decorations worn by the pope. *Here they are*:

*The gold and precious stones*—The papal tiara (triple crown) is covered with **precious stones, intertwined with gold and silver ornamentation.**

An example of this is the tiara given to Pius IX by Queen Isabella II of Spain (1854), on display at the Vatican. It is set with **diamonds, pearls, emeralds, rubies, and sapphires.** (See *Papal tiara*, below for more on these priceless jewels.)

*The purple and scarlet*—Both **purple and scarlet** are worn by the pope on special occasions; the cardinals regularly wear scarlet clothing.

For example, Pope John Paul II celebrated mass in the *Basilica of the Resurrection* in Jerusalem on Sunday, March 26, 2000, dressed in a **purple** Lenten robe and a miter trimmed with **scarlet red.**

**Both pope and cardinals wear these colors.** On March 12, 2000, during the Papal Apology Mass, the pope and other members of the Roman Catholic priesthood wore various shades of **violet/purple** because this occasion also occurred during the Catholic festival of Lent, when the penitential color of purple is traditionally worn. The pope wore a robe of brilliant **purple** and a miter trimmed in the middle with **scarlet red.** The dozens of cardinals around him wore



skirts of **purple**, white smocks, and caps of **scarlet red**.

Priests of the Catholic Church regularly wear **red vestments** on Good Friday, Palm Sunday, Pentecost, Birthday Feasts of the Apostles and Evangelists, and the Feasts of Martyrs. **Purple vestments** are worn on Advent, Lent, and at funerals, although other colors are optional on some of those days. Here are two interesting entries in an official book:

*“Cappa Magna: A cloak with a long train and a hooded shoulder cape . . . [It] was purple wool for bishops; for cardinal, it was scarlet watered silk (for Advent, Lent, Good Friday, and conclave, purple wool); and rose water silk for Gaudete and Laetare Sundays; and for the pope, it was red velvet for Christmas Matins, red serge at other times.”—Our Sunday Visitor’s Catholic Encyclopedia, p. 175.*

*“Cassock (also Soutane): The close-fitting, ankle-length robe worn by the Catholic clergy as their official garb . . . The color for bishops and other prelates is purple, for cardinals scarlet.”—Ibid., p. 178.*

**The missing color—There is a missing color! Although there is gold, silver, purple, and scarlet,—one color is missing, totally missing, always missing.**

**That color is blue**, which was regularly worn by the Old Testament priests (Ex. 28:3-8, 31; 39:1-2).

*“And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen.”—Exodus 28:6.*

A ribbon of blue on the borders of garments was also to be worn by all the Israelites, to remind them that their safety was in keeping the Ten Commandments (Num. 15:38-40).

As you might expect, Satan wants the Vatican to have nothing to do with God’s Moral Law of Ten Commandments!

**The papal tiara—These triple crowns present a spectacular appearance, with the hundreds of jewels and intricate gold and silver settings.** Since 1736 a gor-

geous, oversized one has been on the large head of the statue of St. Peter in the Vatican (*Lord Twining, European Regalia, p. 117*).

The Vatican's papal sacristies of the Sistine Chapel (room of the Copricapi), and St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, have about twenty papal tiaras.

A jewel encrusted, gold and silver triple tiara (a three-level high crown) was on the head of Pope Pius IX. There are a dozen or so *triregno* crowns in the Vatican treasury. A new, expensive, heavily jeweled crown is designed and made for each new pope.

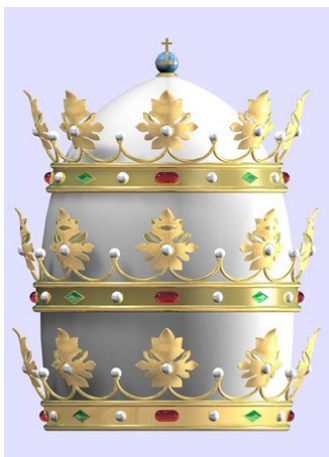
**“Hence the Pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions. (*Hinc Papa triplici corona coronatur tanquam rex coeli, terre et infernorum.*)”**—*Lucius Ferraris, “Papa,” art. 2, No. 13, in his Prompta Bibliotheca Canonica, Vol. 6, p. 442.*

In the coronation of all popes, the tiara is placed on the candidate's head with the following words:

“Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns and know that **thou art Father of princes and kings, Ruler of the world, Vicar of our Saviour Jesus Christ.**”—*Pontificale Romanum Clementis VIII, Editio Princeps (1595-1596), the official liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church.*

“If this phraseology had not been sanctified by long usage, it would not have been coined in this generation to express the relation of the pope to the political and social order; but it would not have been created in the first place if it had not meant then what it says: “Ruler of the world.”—*Paul Hutchinson and Winfred E. Garrison, 20 Centuries of Christianity: A Concise History, p. 120.*

According to papal protocol, the pope wears this triple crown on nine occasions: (1) at Mass for his coronation; (2-7) at Mass for the Feasts of the Epiphany, the Annunciation, Easter, the Ascension, St. Peter and St. Paul, All Saints,' and on the third Mass on Christmas Day; (8) when the Pope celebrates Pontifical Mass; and (9) certain special



**HERE ARE FOUR VIEWS  
OF PAPAL TIARAS  
(CROWNS). FOR MORE  
INFORMATION ON THIS,  
SEE PAGE 328.**

occasions, such as the canonization of a new Saint (*Lord Twining, European Regalia, p. 117*).

The papal crown was said to have been first worn, only with a single coronet (single rounded top), by Pope Sylvester in the time of Emperor Constantine (A.D. 320). In 1298, Boniface VIII was the first pope who added a second coronet, to show the spiritual supremacy and the temporal power united. About 20 years later, John XXII placed **the third coronet** (also called *triregno*, or triple crown) upon it, **thus making a tiara to exhibit the pontifical, the imperial, and the royal authority combined—ruler of “heaven, earth, and the underworld”** (*John England, Vestments of the Clergy and Ceremonies of the Mass, pp. 116-117*). By A.D. 1315, the *triregno* (triple crown) appears for the first time in the documentation of the Papal Treasury (*James-Charles Noonan, The Church Visible, p. 189*).

**According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, the origin of the papal tiara is originally from Babylon:** “The tiara . . . is fashioned after the Persian royal headpiece” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia, p. 579*).

Checking on this, we learn that **the Persian triple-horned headpiece with a rounded top** is on gate A in the citadel of King Sargon II (722-705 B.C.), in Khorsabad, Iraq. **This triple-horned headpiece indicated deity and was worn by the pagan Sun gods, Shamash and Ashur** (*Oriental Institute, University of Chicago*). It can be seen at that Chicago museum.

For full-color photos of some of these tiaras on exhibit, see *Allen Dunston and Roberto Zagnoli, St. Peter and the Vatican: The Legacy of the Popes, p. 44*.

A papal tiara presented to Pius IX, by Belgium in 1871, has the inscription: *Jesu Christi Vicario Infallibili Orbis Supremo in Terra Rectori Regum atque Popularus Patri*. (To the **Infallible Vicar of Jesus Christ. To the Supreme Governor of the World on Earth. To the Father of Nations and Kings**”).

**Here is a detailed description of the Coronation**

**Tiara of Pius XI (1922-1939).** This is the pope which history declares to be Mussolini and Hitler's pope. As you can see, **it is worth countless millions of dollars. The papacy must be fabulously wealthy!**

“Rome. Feb. 6.—The Papal tiara which will be worn by the successor of Pope Benedict XV, is a magnificent sample of the goldsmith's and jeweler's work. It is formed on a basis of very fine felt covered with a kind of silver mesh on which there are **three crowns**, each of which consists of a gold band of extremely light construction, set with jewels and edged with two rows of pearls. There are **90 pearls in each row, making 540 pearls in all.**

“**The first crown** is, in addition to the pearls, adorned in the order given with 16 rubies, three emeralds, a hyacinth, an aquamarine, three rubies, a sapphire, and eight gold points with five garnets and two balas rubies. **The second crown** has 10 emeralds, 8 balas rubies, one chrysolite, two aquamarines, six small rubies and three sapphires.

“**In the third** are 16 small balas rubies, three larger balas rubies, four sapphires, three hyacinths, three aquamarines, one garnet, eight gold floral ornaments each with two emeralds, one balas ruby, a chrysolite and eight gold points, each adorned with a garnet.

“**The top of the tiara** is covered with a layer of thin gold, in which there are set eight rubies and eight emeralds. The gold covering is surmounted by a golden globe enameled in blue on the top of which is a cross composed of 11 brilliants. Finally **the fanions [outer sides] of the tiara**, which will bear the arms of the new Pontiff, are adorned with topazes, emeralds, and other jewels.

“Altogether, **without reckoning the six rows of valuable pearls, there are 146 jewels** of various colours and 11 brilliants.”—*Reuters, The Daily Gleaner, Kingston Jamaica, Tuesday, March 14th, 1922, page 4.* (Checking on this, a “balas ruby” is an old name for a very expensive rose-tinted variety of ruby.)

**“A golden cup”:** The gold of the cup deceives people with respect to the nature of the contents. It appears attractive outside, but the wine inside is poisonous.

**“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”—Prov-  
erbs 14:12.**

**The Cup**—There is a statue of a woman holding a cup, with the word “*Fidis*” beneath the statue, in the Santa Maria Vallicella, Rome. The word is commonly found in Rome and means “the faith (beliefs) of the Vatican” (“*Fidis Vaticanus*”).

Another statue of a woman holding a cup is next to the monument of Pope Clement IX (1667-1669), on the right side of the nave entrance of the basilica Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, and was placed there in 1671.

Coins minted by Pope Paul VI (1963-1978), Pope Pius XII (1939-1958), and Pope John the XXIII (1958-1963) all showed the pope on the front side, and a woman holding a cup on the back side.

On the occasion of the jubilee of Pope Leo XII, a medal was struck; it was bearing, on the one side, his image and, on the other side, a symbol of the Church of Rome. On this medal we see a woman holding, in her left hand, a cross and, in her right hand, a cup with this legend around her, *Sedet super universum* (“The whole world is her seat”).

**“A cup in her hand full”:** The apostasy and opposition to God by this deadly power is total and complete. She and her associates will receive the cup “filled up” with the wrath of God (Rev. 15:1).

**“Her fornication”:** The Old Testament repeatedly represents an apostate people as a licentious woman (Eze. 16:15-58; 23:2-23; Hosea 2:5; 3:1; etc.)

**Priestly celibacy**—The position of the Bible on this is very clear. The apostle Paul said he had the right to marry, as did the other apostles (1 Cor. 9:5). A bishop was to be “the husband of one wife” (1 Tim. 3:2). **There is no rule in the Bible requiring a minister to be unmarried. Paul also**

spoke about fanatics who said people should not marry:

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; **forbidding to marry.**”—*1 Timothy 4:1-3.*

**The apostles were married (1 Cor. 9:5) and a bishop**



was to be “the husband of one wife” (1 Tim. 3:2).

“We do not find in the New Testament any indication of celibacy being made compulsory either upon the apostles or those whom they ordained.”—*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, art. “Celibacy,” Vol. 3, p. 481.

**Celibacy entered the Church the same way as the other traditions: from paganism.**

“Every scholar knows that when the worship of Cybelle, the Babylonian goddess, was introduced into pagan Rome, it arrived with its celibate clergy.”—*Alexander Hislop, Two Babylons*, p. 220.

**The council held by Pope Siricius in A.D. 386—only 49 years after the death of Constantine—was the first to officially forbid marriages by priests** (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, art. “Celibacy,” Vol. 3, p. 484).

**The citizens of pagan Rome discovered that these celibate priests were involved in terrible excesses, which were so bad that the Roman Senate wanted those priests expelled from the Empire. Later, after priestly celibacy became established in papal Rome, similar problems developed on a massive scale.**

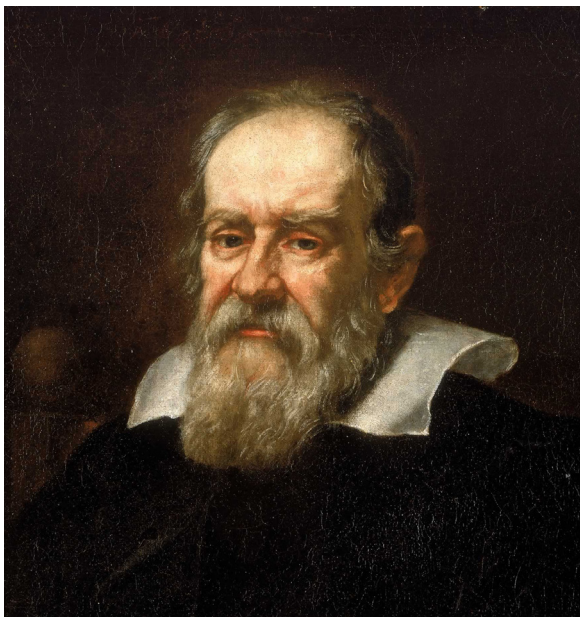
“When Pope Paul V [1605-1621] sought the suppression [elimination] of the licensed brothels in the ‘Holy City,’ the Roman Senate petitioned against his carrying his plan into effect, on the ground that the existence of such places was the only means of hindering the [celibate] Catholic priests from seducing their wives and daughters.”—*Alexander Hislop, Two Babylons*, p. 220.

A sincere Catholic historian, and former Jesuit, wrote:

“The fact is that priestly celibacy has hardly ever worked. In the view of some historians, **it has probably done more harm to morals than any other institution in the West, including prostitution.**”—*Peter de Rosa, Vicars of Christ: The Dark Side of the Papacy*, pp. 395-396.

Oddly enough, **no member of the clergy was ever excommunicated for having sex with fellow priests, with parishioners, with children, or with prostitutes.** —But





**THE NOTORIOUS TRIAL OF GALILEO  
BEFORE THE INQUISITION - APRIL-JUNE 1633**

thousands have been put out of the priesthood fast for the scandal of getting married! Yet the Bible says that marriage is honorable. *Everything right is forbidden, and everything wrong is eagerly indulged in!*

“**Marriage is honourable** in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers [including child molesters] God will judge.”—*Hebrews 13:4*.

**All down through history, not only priests and prelates but popes as well had their mistresses and visited prostitutes. Many were homosexuals.**

While the Church has insisted on celibacy, many popes (among them Sergius III [904-911]), John X [914-928], John XII [955-964], Benedict V [964], Innocent VIII (1484-1492), Urban VIII (1623-1644), and Innocent X [1644-1655], as well as multiplied thousands of cardinals, bishops, archbishops, monks, and priests through history, have repeatedly violated such vows.

**Not only has celibacy encouraged sin in the clergy, but it victimizes and violates those with whom they secretly cohabit.**

**Rome is, indeed, “the mother of harlots”** (Rev. 17:5). Her identification in the book of Revelation is thus unmistakable.

History is replete with sayings that mock the Church’s false claim to celibacy. One is: **“Rome has more prostitutes than any other city because she has the most celibates.”** Pius II (1458-1464) is the only pope who wrote an autobiography (*Commentaries*) while in office. In it, **he wrote that Rome was “the only city run by bastards”; that is, by the sons of current popes and cardinals.** Former Jesuit Peter de Rosa wrote that:

“Popes had mistresses of fifteen years of age, were guilty of incest and sexual perversions of every sort, had innumerable children, and were murdered in the very act of adultery [by jealous husbands].”—*Peter de Rosa, Vicars of Christ: The Dark Side of the Papacy, 396-397.*

The question has been asked why this practice was started and continues. One important reason is because **the**

rule of celibacy has a very practical and lucrative result for the Church. It leaves priests, and especially bishops and popes, without families to whom to bequeath property and thereby impoverish the Church. The clergy must have no heirs.

**“Upon her forehead”**: Imprinted in her thoughts and actions.

**“Drunken with the blood”**: The doctrines and practices of Rome have destroyed millions of people. While the faithful who resisted its power were slain, those who yielded lost eternal life. Babylon is utterly intoxicated with her past success at persecuting the saints, and is delighted with the possibility of soon eliminating them entirely.

Although not as openly expressed today, the objective of the papal monarch, down through the centuries, has been: Either worship me as God, or you will die.

**The god king who can do no wrong**—The following statement is in the authoritative Creed of Pope Pius IV (1559-1565):

**“I acknowledge the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church for the mother and mistress of all churches.”**—*Creed of Pope Pius IV, Article 10.*

The bull, *Unam Sanctum* (1302) by Boniface VIII (pope from 1294 to 1303), is a remarkable statement of exalting the papacy to the highest point. On November 18, 1302, Boniface issued one of the most important papal bulls of Catholic history: *Unam Sanctum*. It declared that both spiritual and temporal power were under the pope’s jurisdiction, and that kings were subordinate to the power of the Church.

This amazing papal document was fully sanctioned by Leo X (1513-1521) in the Fifth Lateran Council (1512-1517); so its authenticity cannot be questioned. **The bull states that the Church of Rome has all power over the world—to kill and destroy, to tear down kingdoms, and set up kingdoms.** The Church is said to have “two swords, both spiritual and temporal.” With the temporal sword, it

controls everyone in the world; with its spiritual sword, it decides who will enter the gates of paradise. It concludes with this sentence:

“We moreover, proclaim, declare and pronounce that **it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human being to be subject to the Roman Pontiff.**”—*Pope Boniface VIII, Bull Unam Sanctum.*

It is of interest that, **the next year, King Philip IV of France (1268-1314) sent an army to Rome and arrested Boniface on September 7, 1303, for immoral activities that he was involved in (too harrowing to be described here). Imprisoned, he died on October 11.** In order to please King Philip who did not like the *Unam Sanctum*, the next pope, Clement V (1305-1314) repealed it. But a later pope, Leo X (1513-1521) in the Fifth Lateran Council (1512-1517) on March 16, 1517, decreed it to an accurate, infallible papal statement. (A little over seven months later, Luther nailed his theses to the church door.)

***The Inquisition*—We will pass over the Inquisition with little comment. It is simply too horrible to discuss!** Will Durant describes it in great detail on pages 776-784 of his 1198-page book, *The Age of Faith*.

But a brief mention will be made here of some of the terrible methods used to locate people to be tortured and slain. **Any kind of accusation by anyone, who was assured that he would never be identified to the suspect, was all that was needed.** The most faithful Catholics were thus imprisoned. **The wealthy were a special target.** After “confessions” were tortured out of them, they were often slain.

“Heretics condemned by the Church were to be . . . burned to death. If they recanted they might be let off with imprisonment for life. All their property was to be confiscated, their heirs were to be disinherited, their children were to remain ineligible to any position of emolument or dignity unless they atoned for their parents’ sin by denouncing other heretics. The houses of heretics were to be destroyed and never rebuilt.”—*Will*

*Durant, The Age of Faith, p. 778.*

Much of the wealth of the Church was acquired through the confiscation of the property of the pitiful victims of the Inquisition. Even the bodies of those who had died without ever having been charged with heresy or having faced the Inquisition, were exhumed to face trial,—so their property could be taken from their heirs.

“His relatives were reduced to beggary by the law that all his possessions were forfeited. The system offered unlimited opportunities for loot.”—*William Shaw Kerr, Handbook of the Papacy, p. 241.*

**For centuries, the Inquisition was an important part of Church life in Europe.** Pope Nicholas III (1225-1280; pope 1277-1280) had been inquisitor-general under Pope Urban IV (1261-1264). **When Nicholas became pope, he issued a bull (1280), infallible as usual, in which he praised the values of the Inquisition and described in lurid detail the manner in which anyone could accuse anyone else to death.**

**For centuries, the Roman, Medieval, and Spanish Inquisitions held Europe in their terrible grip.** In his *History of the Inquisition*, Canon Llorente, who was the Secretary to the Inquisition in Madrid from 1790-1792 and had access to the archives of all the tribunals, estimated that **in Spain alone the number of condemned exceeded 3 million, with about 300,000 burned at the stake** (*R.W. Thompson, The Papacy and Civil Power, p. 82*).

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**“And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.” Revelation 17:7.**

*“Wherefore didst thou marvel?”*: As John sees this scene, he is utterly astounded at the sight of this terrible religio-political power. The Lord has yet more information for us!

*“I will tell you”*: In the Greek, the pronoun is emphatic:

“I myself will tell you.” What he has to say is extremely important.

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**“The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.” Revelation 17:8.**

**“Was, is, is not”:** For 1260 years, this beast ruled; but then that period ended in 1798, and it no longer had supremacy over the nations.

**“Shall ascend”:** Literally “is about to ascend.” John is told that it will once again come into great power and authority!

**“Out of the pit”:** It will ascend out of a bottomless pit. This phrase frequently occurs and refers to the abysmal depths of satanic evil (Rev. 9:1-2, 11; 11:7-8). Each time this phrase is mentioned in prophecy it refers to a different aspect of satanic power.

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**“And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.” Revelation 17:9.**

**“Seven mountains”:** Everyone knows that Rome is referred to as “the city on seven hills.” In Bible prophecy, a “mountain” refers to a church or religious power and “seven” means complete, or total. So this power sits above the other religious organizations, trying to influence their key beliefs. It has, for centuries, prided itself on being located in this city of seven hills:

**“It is within the city of Rome, called The City on Seven Hills, that the entire area of Vatican State Proper is now confined.”—*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, p. 529.**

***The Vaticanus***—It is of interest that one of the hills

in that area was the *Vaticanus*, which was anciently the seat of witchcraft in the city. The word, itself, means “serpent.” In later centuries, St. Peter’s was built on top of that occult place, where demons would meet with men.

This was anciently the place where Romans went to learn things from the spirit world.

“The Vatican Hill takes its name from the Latin word *Vaticanus*, a *vaticiniis ferendis*, in allusion to the oracles, or *Vaticinia*, which were anciently delivered here.”—*Compendious Description of the Museums of Ancient Sculpture, Greek and Roman, in the Vatican Palace*, by H.J. Massi, First Curator of the Vatican Museums and Galleries, Paleographer and Professor of the Italian and French Languages; Rome; Third Edition, 1889, Title page, page 7.

The word derives from the Latin, *vates*, which means “tellers of the future.” This name was the name given to a hillside on the west bank of the Tiber River in Rome because daily lineups of fortune-tellers used to hawk their “wares” there to passersby on the street. **Witches had little huts, where they lived and practiced their incantations.** In the fourteenth century, when the papacy was returned to Rome from a temporary move to Avignon (France), the present-day Vatican became the residence of the popes; and the word came to refer to the enclave in the middle of Rome that had become the seat of the Roman Catholic Church (*Incredible Book of Vatican Facts and Papal Curiosities*, by Nino Lo Bello).

Quoted below is a verse from both the Latin Vulgate Bible and the King James Version, as an example of the use of this Latin word, “*vatic*,” which means clairvoyant, the root from which comes “Vatican”:

“*Et intellexi quod Deus non misisset eum sed quasi vaticinans [clarivoyant, fortune teller] locutus esset ad me et Tobia et Sanaballat conduxissent eum.*”—*Nehe-miah 6:12, Vulgate (Latin)*.

“And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this *prophecy* [soothsaying mes-

sage] against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.”—*Nehemiah 6:12, KJV*.

The word, *anus*, in Latin means “old woman.” So *Vaticanus* is a combination of two words that results in the *old woman of southsaying*; that is, a witch. Throughout history, it is typically older women who have been the witches and interpreters of dark sayings and predictions—the ones who, communing with spirits as did the witch of Endor, relayed special messages from the spirit world to people.

“Then said Saul unto his servants, **Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit**, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor.”—*I Samuel 28:7*.

*Vatican is a City State.* Vatican City is the seat of the Roman Catholic Church; and, since the *Lateran Concordat of 1929*, it is now also an independent country. It declares itself to be a “**Church and State**” combined! The full, formal diplomatic title in Italian is *stato della citta del vaticano* (“**City State of the Vatican**”), as shown on coins from the pontificate of Pope Pius XII.

**On the back side of the lira coin of the Vatican State is its official phrase (quoted above) around the edge, with a standing woman in the middle.** The front side has “*Pius XII Pontiff Maximus Ano*” (“Year of Pope Pius XII”); and, in the center, there is a design of two crossed keys beneath a triple papal crown. Below that is an intricate design work. (The crown on top is a symbol of papal authority. It is a triple-tiered crown, which is also called a *tiara*, or *triregno*, in Latin.)

*The papacy claims to be above the state.* It has been said, by some historians, that **the ancient city of Babylon was purposely built on the site of the Tower of Babel** (Gen. 10:10; 11:4-9). **That was the first city-state, controlling both the civil government and the religion of the people.** Satan’s objective was to extend its control



worldwide.

“God had directed men to disperse throughout the earth, to replenish and subdue it; but **these Babel builders determined to keep their community united in one body, and to found a monarchy that should eventually embrace the whole earth. Thus their city would become the metropolis of a universal empire;** its glory would command the admiration and homage of the world and render the founders illustrious. The magnificent tower, reaching to the heavens, was intended to stand as a monument of the power and wisdom of its builders, perpetuating their fame to the latest generations.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 119.

**Under the guidance of Satan, the plan is for the papacy to attempt to do the same thing! It is to be a second Tower of Babel.** The objective is to ultimately have the papacy control all the nations of earth—and impose on them its pseudo-Christianity. Revelation 17, 18, and 19 tells how this plan, close to succeeding, will come to its end.

“**Thus, as the moon receives its light from the sun . . . so the royal power [state] derives from the pontifical authority the splendor of its dignity . . .** The condition of the world . . . will be restored by our diligence and care . . . For the pontifical authority and the royal power . . . fully suffice for this purpose.”—*Pope Innocent III (1198-1216)*.

“No civil government, be it a monarchy, an aristocracy, a democracy . . . can be a wise, just, efficient, or durable government, governing for the good of the community, without the Catholic Church; and without the papacy, there is and can be no Catholic Church.”—*J.H. Ignaz Dollinger, The Pope and the Council*, p. 23.

The current *Papal Code of Canon Law* makes this statement:

“The First See [the pope] is judged by no one. **It is the right of the Roman Pontiff himself alone to judge . . . those who hold the highest civil office in a state.**”—*Code of Canon Law*, quoted in *Dave Hunt, Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 86.

*The papacy is opposed to democracy.* Because of its avowed purpose to control both nations and their religions, for centuries, **the papacy tried to stifle and eliminate every type of democracy. It is opposed to freedom of thought, freedom of expression, and freedom of religion.**

When England's *Magna Carta* (June 15, 1215; called the "Mother of European Constitutions"—because it was the first step toward democracy) was enacted by the barons of England, **Pope Innocent III** (1198-1216) "**pronounced it null and void**, excommunicated the English barons who obtained it" from King John (*ibid.*, p. 19), and absolved the king of his oath to the barons (*R. W. Thompson, The Papacy and Civil Power*, p. 460). Thus encouraged, the king brought in foreign mercenaries to fight the barons; and the war resulted in great destruction and many deaths. But the barons prevailed. **Subsequent popes did all in their power to help John's successor, Henry III, overturn the Magna Carta, but without success. Yet modern historians declare that the Magna Carta was the first historical document in Europe that hinted of democracy.**

The same policy enabled the papacy to maintain a state religion in Mexico for 300 years (*Emmet McLoughlin, An Inquiry in the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 70). Many other examples could be cited.

**"While the state has some rights, she has them only in virtue and by permission of the superior authority . . . of the Church."**—*The Catholic World*, July 1870, p. 429 (*written at the time of Vatican I*).

The same hatred of the papacy toward basic human freedoms and its concern to maintain despotic control of the religion of the nations **led it to make alliances with the totalitarian governments of both Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, who were praised by the pope and other Catholic leaders as men chosen by God. Catholics were forbidden to oppose either leader. Both dictators agreed that Catholicism would be their national religion—if the pope would not oppose them.** Francesco Pacelli, brother of Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli (later Pope Pius XII), was a

key figure in the success of the *Concordat of Rome* (also called the *Lateran Treaty*).

In this 1929 treaty with the papacy, Mussolini gave the papacy a little plot of land—making it once again an official “nation.”

“After the Concordat was signed, **Mussolini declared, ‘We recognize the preeminent place the Catholic Church holds in the religious life of the Italian people—which is perfectly natural in a Catholic country such as ours, and under a regime such as the Fascist.’**”

“**All the cardinals in Rome, in an address to the pope, hailed Mussolini as ‘that eminent statesman by a decree of the divine Providence.’**”—*Dave Hunt, A Woman Rides the Beast, p. 219.*

**Mussolini also gave a vast sum in cash and bonds to the papacy, to ensure the fact that it would not interfere with his ruthless dictatorship and warfare against the peoples of southern Europe.**

Italy paid the Holy See 750 million lire in cash and 1 billion lire in state bonds . . . **Some would end up in rather strange investments for the benefit of the Church,** such as “an Italian firearms factory and a Canadian pharmaceutical company that manufactured contraceptives” (*Time magazine, July 26, 1982, p. 35*).

“**Thus the Church became the religious weapon of the Fascist State, while the Fascist State became the secular arm of the Church.**”—*Avro Manhattan, The Vatican and World Politics.*

**Throughout World War II, the Church remained loyal to Mussolini;** for it had gained control of public school textbooks; all of which were Catholic oriented. All teachers had to be approved by the Church.

**Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli (later Pope Pius XII, 1939-1958) was the Vatican Secretary of State and played a key role in negotiating the lucrative 1933 Concordat with Hitler.** In return for never excommunicating Hitler, protesting the slaughter of 6 million Jews, or his wars of conquest

across Europe,—Hitler gave the Church the *Kirchensteuer* (German government-imposed “church tax”) throughout the entire war. This brought hundreds of millions of dollars into papal coffers.

“Both in Italy and in Germany the Curia took the opportunity to secure from a dictatorial regime what seemed impossible under parliamentary government, namely a concordat.”—*August Bernhard Hasler, How the Pope Became Infallible, p. 257.*

Hasler then quotes the German Catholic leader, Ludwig Kaas:

**“The ‘authoritarian state’ necessarily understood the basic principles of the ‘authoritarian church’ better than others had.”**—*Ludwig Kaas, quoted in ibid., p. 257.*

An ancient Latin hymn, *Te Deum Laudamus* (praise to God), sung at the conclusion of the Office of Readings on Sundays and special occasions, was sung in Catholic cathedrals for the birthdays of Hitler, his escape from plots to assassinate him, Nazi victories in the field, and the coming into power of the evil Ante Pavelic as head of the Croatian Ustashi Government.

**In 1933, Pius XI openly praised Hitler. In preparation for the 1936 vote, Catholic priests were told to tell their parishioners to vote for Hitler; and they did as they were told.**

“On March 29, 45,453,691 Germans, or 99 percent of those entitled to vote, went to the polls. Of these, 44,461,278, 98.8 per cent of those voting, voiced their approval of Hitler’s leadership.

**“A joint pastoral letter** [from all the German bishops] was read from the pulpits . . . January 3, 1937, [stating that] **‘the German bishops consider it their duty to support the head of the German Reich by all those means which the Church has at its disposal . . . We must mobilize all the spiritual and moral forces of the Church in order to strengthen confidence in the Fuehrer.’**—*Guenter Lewy, The Catholic Church and*

*Nazi Germany, pp. 106-109.*

**For several years into this horrible, bloody war, the Vatican asked God to bless Hitler's German Reich.**

“The Vatican was so appreciative of being recognized as a full partner that it asked God to bless the Reich. On a more practical level, **it ordered German bishops to swear allegiance to the National Socialist regime.**”—*John Toland, Adolf Hitler, 431-432.*

When Hitler suddenly marched into Austria and took it over, he was met by Cardinal Innitzer who greeted him warmly.

“[Innitzer] gave assurance that **so long as the Church retained its liberties, Austrian Catholics would become ‘the truest sons of the great Reich** into whose arms they had been brought back on this momentous day.’ ”—*Ibid., p. 623.*

Hitler shook the cardinal's hand warmly and ‘promised him everything’ (*ibid.*).

**Hitler's policy of destroying Jews agreed with the work of the papacy during the Dark Ages.**

*The Papacy vs. the Jews*—An important objective of the crusades was to destroy Jews in Palestine. In 1096, Pope Urban II started the first crusade to retake Jerusalem from the Muslims. The Crusaders massacred Jews across Europe on their way to the Holy Land. Upon arrival there, they herded all the Jews into the synagogue and set it ablaze (*ibid., p. 111; also Peter de Rosa, Vicars of Christ: The Dark Side of the Papacy, pp. 20-21.*)

**Historians do not understand the underlying reason for the papacy's antipathy toward the Jews. It was the fact that the Jews kept the Bible Sabbath all through the Dark Ages; they were a living testimony to the fact that the weekly cycle had not changed and that the true Sabbath should be kept on the seventh day of the week!** This was a primary reason why Satan wanted them destroyed. For this purpose, he used both the papacy and, later, Hitler.

“In 1936, Bishop Berning of Osnabruch had talked with the Fuehrer for over an hour. Hitler assured his

Lordship there was no fundamental difference between National Socialism and the Catholic Church. Had not the church, he argued, looked on Jews as parasites and shut them in ghettos?

“**‘I am only doing,’** he boasted, **‘what the church has done for fifteen hundred years, only more effectively.’** Being a Catholic himself, he told Berning, he ‘admired and wanted to promote Christianity.’”—*John Toland, Adolf Hitler, p. 5.*

**“And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.” Revelation 17:10.**

**“Seven kings”:** The **“seven kings”** of Revelation 17:10 are the same as the **“seven heads”** of Revelation 17:7, 9. The Greek of this passage is **“and seven kings are they,”** showing a continuation of verse 9. They represent all the powers that Satan has used to fight against God, His truth, and His faithful people throughout world history.

In order to properly understand this verse (Rev. 17:10), we need to briefly review the great powers which we have already discovered in Daniel and Revelation,—*for our conclusions must be based, not on human speculations, but on what is taught in those two books.*

We are told that (1) **“five are fallen.”** (2) **“One is.”** (3) **“Another is not yet come.”** But when he does, he will **“continue a short space.”**

**“Five are fallen”:** *What are these five?* These would be the **five kingdoms mentioned in Daniel 7: Babylon** (which extended back to the time of Nimrod); **Medo-Persia; Greece; Pagan Rome;** and its heir, **Papal Rome.**

“And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a **lion**, and . . . behold another beast, a second, like to a **bear**, and . . . another, like a **leopard**, . . . and behold a fourth beast, **dreadful and terrible**, and strong exceedingly . . . and it had **ten horns** . . . Behold, there came up among them another

**little horn**, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.”—*Daniel 7:3-8*.

**This little horn power, the papacy of Daniel 7, is also shown as a strange leopard-like beast in Revelation 13**, “having **seven heads and ten horns**, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a **leopard**, and his feet were as the feet of a **bear**, and his mouth as the mouth of a **lion**: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority” (*Revelation 13:1-2*).

As we have been discovering, **this leopard-like beast inherited the vicious tactics and pagan religions of the ancient nations which preceded it.**

*The first five of these powers in Revelation 17:10 are symbolized in Revelation 13:1-2 by the lion (Babylon), bear (Medo-Persia), leopard (Greece), dragon (Pagan Rome), and the first beast of Revelation 13 (Papal Rome). We will see that the sixth, seventh, and eighth will also be shown by symbols in that chapter.*

**Papal power officially ended in 1798, at the close of the 1260 years. It has tried to regain its power; and eventually it will.**

*So the “five that are fallen” are the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Pagan Rome, and Papal Rome; and, after reigning for 1260 years, Papal Rome received a wound in 1798.*

“And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; **and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.**”—*Revelation 13:3*.

The first four nations had totally passed away centuries earlier, and the fifth had a wound which brought it close to death. **The papacy did not cease to exist in 1798, but it lost immense authority.** Yet, although “fallen” from power, it remains alive, and is steadily laying plans to regain its former greatness—which we are told it will.

**“And one [the sixth] is”:** But then “one is.” **This is the sixth power: the United States.** Close to 1798, this great, new power arose; and, **although at first speaking as a lamb, it will later speak as a dragon.**

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.”—*Revelation 13:11.*

To say it again: The United States of America arose near the year 1798 (at which time, the papacy lost its power at the end of the 1260 years). This has been clearly shown in Revelation 13, and has already been discussed. This is the lamblike beast, with its two horns of civil and religious liberty, which will exercise all the power of the leopard-like beast which preceded it (Revelation 13:12). It gained its great power, after that leopard beast (symbolizing the papacy) received a wound which would later be healed (Revelation 13:3).

**This lamblike beast will cause the earth to worship the “first beast” of Revelation 13, the leopard-like beast, the papacy—at the time that its wound is healed.**

“And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.”—*Revelation 13:12.*

**Satanic power will aid in coercing the nations and peoples of earth to take part in this worship.**

“And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.”—*Revelation 13:13.*

**“One is [the seventh]”:** The U.S. (the sixth power) will cause those on earth to make an image-power to the papacy. **This image will be the seventh power,**—and we are told that its power will be great!

“And he [the lamblike beast] deceiveth them . . . saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. **And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast,** that the image of the beast should



both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.”—*Revelation 13:14-15*.

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**“And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.” Revelation 17:11.**

*Locating the eighth: Now there are only “seven kings,” and the “eighth is of the seven.”* There are two keys to understanding the eighth. The first is that we must remain with what we have already learned in Revelation 13 in order to understand all eight. The second is that *the “eighth is of the seven”*; that is, it is one of the seven. It is the fifth, revived to full power.

**This lamblike beast will cause the earth to worship the “first beast” of Revelation 13, the leopard-like beast, the papacy—whose wound is healed by this worldwide worship.**

“And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.”—*Revelation 13:12*.

It will do this by requiring them to make the image of the beast and worshipping that image. In so doing, they are honoring and worshipping the papacy.

“And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.”—*Revelation 13:15*.

***Here is a summary of this unusual two-verse prophecy:***

“And there are seven kings. Five [1-5] are fallen, and one [6] is. And the other [7] is not yet come, and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.”—*Revelation 17:10*.

“And the beast [8] that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdi-

tion.”—*Revelation 17:11.*

*Here, in brief, is the entire explanation of this puzzle of Revelation 17:10-11. Notice that all of it exactly fits what we learned in Revelation 13—which is the key to the puzzle:*

**The first four** are Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Pagan Rome, which fell (Dan. 7:2-7).

**The fifth** is Papal Rome; and, in 1798 upon receiving the “wound,” it also became “fallen” (Daniel 7:8; Revelation 13:3).

**The sixth** is the U.S., which arose in 1776-1783 and became a great world power (Revelation 13:11, 13).

**The seventh** is the image power which “is not yet come.” The U.S., with the aid of satanic miracles, will coerce the nations of earth into making and worshiping this image power (Revelation 13:14-15).

**The seventh (the image power) constitutes this powerful, worldwide coalition of nations which will support Sunday sacredness.**

**This image-power (the seventh) is also the “beast” of Revelation 17—upon which the “woman” rides.**

**“The eighth”:** This woman, riding upon this worldwide beast, is the revived papacy which has had its wound healed. This symbol of the papacy, sitting above the kings of earth, is the eighth.

**The eighth in more detail:** It is the papacy revived to full strength, when its wound is eventually healed; because, under U.S. coercion, all the world will at that time be worshiping the image and thereby, through the keeping of the Sun day, will be worshiping the papacy (Revelation 13:3). It is by the setting up of the image that the papal wound is healed. **The eighth is the fifth restored to its former place of majesty before the kings of the earth.** This is the “healing of the wound” (Revelation 13:3); and, **through the help of enthusiastic Protestant support coercing U.S. governmental backing, the National Sunday Law and**

the miracle working power of demons—will enable the papacy to be catapulted to worldwide prominence.

We are told, first, that **there are only “seven kings.”** We are told, second, that **the eighth is one “of the seven.”** The **“eighth” is not a power separate and subsequent to the seven.** We are told that *it is “of the seven.”* That is the key that unravels the puzzle of the “eighth.” **The eighth** (of verse 11) **is actually the fifth** (of verse 10) revived again.

**The crucial chapters are Daniel 7 and 8, and Revelation 12 and 13. They provide us with the major powers which form the basis of these eight “kings” of Revelation 17:10-11.**

**“Continue a short space”:** **“And when he [the eighth] cometh, he must continue a short space”** (Rev. 17:10). When all the world wonders after the beast, and only a tiny remnant refuse to worship him, then his deadly wound will be healed; but **almost immediately after that, human probation will close.** At that time this vast coalition of powers, which is united with the papacy, pass a worldwide decree that, at a certain time, all of God’s faithful ones will be put to death.

**With the close of probation and the signing of the death decree,—the world is then immediately plunged into the seven last plagues. Thus the papacy, with its fully healed wound, only continues a “short space”—before God, who is pouring out the plagues, delivers His people.**

**“Goeth into perdition”:** But he “goeth into perdition.” **The climax of Revelation 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18 (as well as Daniel 2, 7, and 11)—are all focused on the final fall of Babylon, which is the papacy and its supporters.**

*Why do we know that this is true?*

**1 - This is the pattern which Bible prophecy consistently leads up to in Daniel 2, 7, 8. Revelation 13 and 14 describes, in detail, how this occurs at this point, in Revelation 17:10.**

**2 - This is the natural sequence we would expect, when we carefully compare Revelation 17:10 and 11.**

3 - *Very important:* There are no other world kingdoms or powers mentioned in the books of Daniel and Revelation! *That is a crucial fact!* After stating and restating and continually enlarging on the same pattern of five powers, God would not suddenly introduce a brand-new one, with essentially no further information describing it! The “eighth” is not communism, the United Nations, the European Union, NATO, Russia, nor China (although they will all be part of that final coalition).

4 - The plan of action of end-time events is simple; and it is carefully explained in Revelation and *Great Controversy*, chapters 25 through 42. This explanation, of Revelation 17:10-11, is in full agreement with both.

Why, then, is Revelation 17:11 written in such an obviously mysterious way? The answer is also simple: The Lord knew that this information would be needed by God’s people at the end of time, but He planned that it not be discovered earlier. So He used mysterious wording here.

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**“And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.”**  
*Revelation 17:12-13.*

*“The ten horns which thou sawest”:* These refer to Revelation 17:3.

“I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, **having seven heads and ten horns.**” *Revelation 17:3.*

Almost the same description of this ten-horned beast is given in Revelation 13:1. That passage is referring to the first beast of that chapter, which is the papacy. For over a thousand years, the papacy’s greatest power has been in the subdivisions of pagan Rome, which (as we learned in Daniel 2 and 7) were the divisions of Europe which arose out of the former territory of pagan Rome. The seventh angel is here speaking about the period down at the end of

time, when there are no longer true kings in Europe. Yet, **during the dramatic revival of papal influence which occurs following the worldwide enactment of Sunday Laws, these nations will gain a new importance for a time.** But we are told that it will be very brief.

**“One hour”**: How brief? The Greek word for “hour” is *hora*. It is frequently translated as “time” (Matt. 18:1; John 16:2, 4; Rev. 14:15). Therefore, Revelation 17:12 can be translated: “They receive power with the beast for a time.” Croly clarifies this:

“The prediction defines the epoch of the papacy by the formation of the ten kingdoms of the western Empire. ‘They shall receive power one hour with the beast.’ **The translation should be, ‘in the same era’** (*mian horan*). **The ten kingdoms shall be contemporaneous** [all rule at the same time], **in contradistinction to the ‘seven heads,’ which were successive** [one after the other].”—*George Croly, The Apocalypse of John, pp. 264-265.*

**“One mind”**: This word is *gnome*, which means **intention, purpose, or decree.** During this brief time, **these powers will do all they can to extend the influence of the papacy as widely as possible.** This will be done through promoting the enactment of national Sunday laws by governments throughout the world.

**“Give their power and strength”**: “Power” (*dunamis*) is capability and “strength” (*exousia*) is “authority.”

**God permits a worldwide coalition of nations to be formed, through the aid of evil spirits, with the objective of blotting out God’s faithful commandment-keeping people from the earth.**

“The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ.”—*Acts 4:26.*

**God has held in check such a plan for the universal destruction of His people ever since the days of Babel** (Gen. 11:4-8; Dan. 2:43; Rev. 14:8); **but now He with-**

draws His restraining hand (Rev. 17:17) and permits the wicked to actually plan to do it.

**“There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan’s forces. ‘And shall give their power and strength unto the beast.’ Thus is manifested the same arbitrary, oppressive power against religious liberty, freedom to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, as was manifested by the papacy, when in the past it persecuted those who dared to refuse to conform with the religious rites and ceremonies of Romanism.**

**“In the warfare to be waged in the last days there will be united, in opposition to God’s people, all the corrupt powers that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah. In this warfare the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will be the great point at issue; for in the Sabbath commandment the great Law-giver identifies Himself as the Creator of the heavens and the earth.”—7 Bible Commentary, 983.**

It is during this time that **the nations of Europe will play an important part in promoting a worldwide enactment of such laws.**

Although there are other possible interpretations of Revelation 17:12-13, the one presented here not only is in agreement with the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, but perfectly fits in with them. It does appear that this is not a lengthy period of time.

***Brief overview of the progression—Here is how this crisis will develop:***

First: The U.S. government will enact a National Sunday Law. This will begin the formation of the image. Then it will extend to the other nations of Christendom, and finally to all the other nations on earth. When it becomes universal, and all nations not only enact strict Sunday laws, but also pass a law to slay the Sabbathkeepers,—God will step in; probation will end and the plagues will be poured out.

“Our people have been regarded as too insignificant to be worthy of notice, but a change will come. **The**

Christian world is now making movements which will necessarily bring commandment-keeping people into prominence.”—*5 Testimonies*, 546.

“Every position of truth taken by our people will bear the criticism of the greatest minds; the highest of the world’s great men will be brought in contact with truth, and therefore every position we take should be critically examined and tested by the Scriptures. . . We must individually know for ourselves what is truth, and be prepared to give a reason of the hope that we have with meekness and fear, not in a proud, boasting, self-sufficiency, but with the spirit of Christ. We are nearing the time when we shall stand individually alone to answer for our belief.”—*Evangelism*, 69.

“Human enactments, laws manufactured by satanic agencies under a plea of goodness and restriction of evil, will be exalted, while God’s holy commandments are despised and trampled underfoot. And all who prove their loyalty by obedience to the law of Jehovah must be prepared to be arrested, to be brought before councils that have not for their standard the high and holy law of God.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 977.

“The United States is the power represented by the beast with lamblike horns, and this prophecy will be fulfilled when the United States shall enforce Sunday observance, which Rome claims as the special acknowledgment of her supremacy. But in this homage to the papacy the United States will not be alone. The influence of Rome in the countries that once acknowledged her dominion is still far from being destroyed.”—*Great Controversy*, 579.

“Romanism in the Old World, and apostate Protestantism in the New, will pursue a similar course toward those who honor all the divine precepts.”—*Great Controversy*, 616.

“The so-called Christian world is to be the theater of great and decisive actions. Men in authority will enact laws controlling the conscience, after the example of the Papacy. Babylon will make all nations drink of

the wine of the wrath of her fornication. **Every nation will be involved.**”—3 *Selected Messages*, 392.

**“There will be a universal bond of union**, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan’s forces.”—3 *Selected Messages*, 392.

“History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image at Babylon. **All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath.**”—7 *Bible Commentary*, 976.

“As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, **the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example.**”—6 *Testimonies*, 18.

“As we near the close of time, **there will be greater and still greater external parade of heathen power; heathen deities will manifest their signal power, and will exhibit themselves** before the cities of the world.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, 117-118.

**“This small remnant, unable to defend themselves in the deadly conflict** with the powers of earth that are marshaled by the dragon host, **make God their defense. The decree has been passed by the highest earthly authority that they shall worship the beast and receive his mark under pain of persecution and death.**”—5 *Testimonies*, 213.

“The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama. **When this substitution becomes universal, God will reveal Himself. He will arise in His majesty to shake terribly the earth.** He will come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity, and the earth shall disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain.”—7 *Testimonies*, 141.

*Another brief summary will be found in Early Writings*, 258.



*Brief event summary*—Here is another brief summary, to help us see the larger picture: After the enactment of the **first National Sunday Law in America**, and before the final close of human probation, several events will occur: (1) The **sealing** and outpouring of the **latter rain** falls upon the faithful, as they begin to give the **loud cry warning of the Three Angels** (Revelation 14:6-12) to the world, telling everyone about the issues involved. (2) The **miracle-working power of Satan** is manifest, in support of Sunday laws, and strongly affects the thinking of those not concerned about obedience to the Bible (Rev. 13:13-14; 16:13-14). (3) There is a dramatic expansion of this proclamation, as the **Fourth Angel adds his message to that of the Second Angel**. (*This will be discussed in Revelation 18:1-5*). (4) As men learn the issues and make their decisions, the **mark of the beast** is placed on the rejecters of God's law (Rev. 13:16-17). (5) There is a rapid extension of **additional Sunday laws throughout the world**, as other nations enact similar edicts (Rev. 13:3, 8).

After **human probation ends**, the wicked are totally hardened and the **death decree** is enacted against Sabbath-keepers (Rev. 13:15). The **plagues** begin to be poured out (Rev. 16:1-11). The **battle of Armageddon** between the forces of good and evil is reaching its climax (Rev. 16:16). As **judgments fall on Babylon** and those who have been in coalition with it (Rev. 18:7-24), the former **supporters of great Babylon turn against her** (Rev. 17:16-18). Then **God directly intervenes to deliver His faithful ones** (Rev. 16:16-20) and the **Second Advent occurs** (Rev. 19:11-16). Many other references between Revelation 12 and 18 could be cited.

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**“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” Revelation 17:14.**

*“War with the Lamb”*: This returns us to the battle of

Armageddon; they are making open war against Christ. **They do this by opposing the law of God and trying to utterly slay everyone of His children on earth.** But at the time of the Flood, when only a few were still faithful to God, He stepped in—and the worldwide Flood blotted out the wicked. **When, in the end of time, it appears that the wicked will finally gain total control of the planet, God will step in again.** He will personally fight the battle in defense of His frail children.

“He shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: **he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken** without hand.”—*Daniel 8:25*.

**“Shall overcome them”:** No one can successfully withstand God. Yet men have tried to do this for thousands of years. May everyone who reads this book make his or her decision to prove loyal to God, regardless of what may come!

“Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, **How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!** The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers.”—*Isaiah 14:4-5*.

**“The eye of God, looking down the ages, was fixed upon the crisis which His people are to meet,** when earthly powers shall be arrayed against them. Like the captive exile, they will be in fear of death by starvation or by violence. **But the Holy One who divided the Red Sea before Israel, will manifest His mighty power and turn their captivity.**”—*Great Controversy, 634*.

**“Lord of lords”:** Revelation 17:14 is one of a number of times in the Bible where this glorious title (“Lord of lords and King of kings”) is found: Another is in Revelation 19:16: “King of kings, and Lord of lords.” How very thankful we are that God is the supreme Ruler!

**“They that are with Him”:** While Jesus is in heaven, His faithful ones are on earth. Yet, thankfully, **by faith they**

are with Christ and sheltered by Him.

We were warned of this coming battle long ago; so that, when it comes to pass, we might know that God will safely protect us.

**“The path where God leads the way may lie through the desert or the sea, but it is a safe path.”**—

*Patriarchs and Prophets, 290.*

**“Called, chosen, faithful”**: Literally “invited, selected, and worthy of trust.”

**“And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” Revelation 17:15.**

**“Waters”**: We have frequently found Revelation 17:15 to be a key verse, identifying the symbol of “waters” and “sea” in Daniel and Revelation as densely populated areas (Dan. 7:2-3; Rev. 10:2, 5, 8; 13:1; 17:1).

“The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves. **The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.** Thy testimonies are very sure.”—*Psalms 93:3-5.*

It had been predicted that **the confederacy of nations would only support the papacy for a time** (Rev. 17:12). With one mind, they gave “their power and strength unto the beast” (Rev. 17:13).

Urged on by Satan’s agents, **when probation ends and the plagues begin, their hatred of God’s faithful ones only deepens. A decree is enacted to kill the faithful in one night.**

“When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, **there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction.** As the time appointed in the decree draws near, the people will conspire to root out the hated sect. It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of

dissent and reproof.”—*Great Controversy*, 635.

But just when that terminal point in the decree arrives, the Voice of God delivers His people,—and suddenly realizing that they have been duped by the leaders, the people turn on them.

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**“And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.” Revelation 17:16-17.**

**“Shall hate”:** At this point in this chapter, the coalition falls apart and the supporters of the papacy turn against it. This occurs because God will have delivered His people and the wicked suddenly realize the truth of the situation: Those who faithfully have kept the commandments of God, by faith in Jesus, are approved of God,—and the wicked realize that they, themselves, are lost!

**“When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life . . . The wicked are filled with regret, not because of their sinful neglect of God and their fellow men, but because God has conquered. They lament that the result is what it is; but they do not repent of their wickedness. They would leave no means untried to conquer if they could.”—*Great Controversy*, 654.**

**“The cry bursts forth from lips so lately scoffing: ‘The great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?’ The wicked pray to be buried beneath the rocks of the mountains rather than meet the face of Him whom they have despised and rejected.”—*Great Controversy*, 642.**

**“It is impossible to describe the horror and despair of those who have trampled upon God’s holy requirements. The Lord gave them His law; they might have compared their characters with it and learned their**

defects while there was yet opportunity for repentance and reform; **but in order to secure the favor of the world, they set aside its precepts and taught others to transgress.** They have endeavored to compel God's people to profane His Sabbath. **Now they are condemned by that law which they have despised.** With awful distinctness they see that they are without excuse."—*Great Controversy*, 639-640.

"The enemies of God's law, from the ministers down to the least among them, have a new conception of truth and duty. **Too late they see that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the seal of the living God.** Too late they see the true nature of their spurious sabbath and the sandy foundation upon which they have been building. They find that they have been fighting against God. **Religious teachers have led souls to perdition while professing to guide them to the gates of Paradise.** Not until the day of final accounts will it be known how great is the responsibility of men in holy office and how terrible are the results of their unfaithfulness."—*Great Controversy*, 640.

**While the nations and peoples of the earth had been in solid agreement to support and exalt the papacy,—they are suddenly in agreement to destroy it!** Realizing that they have been deluded, **the wicked now turn upon their priests and pastors** with anger and even violence.

"The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but **all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers.** Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. **Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception.** The multitudes are filled with fury. 'We are lost!' they cry, 'and you are the cause of our ruin;' and they turn upon the false shepherds. **The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them.** The very hands that once crowned them with

laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed."—*Great Controversy*, 655-656.

**The ten horns suddenly turn against the papacy, and against all the religious leaders of all denominations and religions which supported it.** The supporters of all these false religions now seek to desolate and destroy them all! The word, "flesh," literally means "flesh pieces." They want to rip to pieces the entire religious coalition, called Great Babylon.

**"And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Revelation 17:18.**

**"That great city":** There is only one city in the history of mankind, reaching down to the end of time, to which this can apply. In Revelation 17:18, the "woman" is clearly defined as **"that great city which reigneth over" earthly kings.** Once again, this has to be the papacy. A "woman" in prophecy is a church or religious power. —No other church claims the authority to reign over the kings of earth.

**"Over the kings":** Revelation 17:12-13 speaks of sovereign powers dedicating themselves to helping the papacy. It is obvious, from those verses, that the nations and peoples of the entire world will have been on the side of the papacy.

*The next chapter presents us with an additional view of the final end of Babylon.*

## **Revelation 18**

# ***The Judgment of Mystery Babylon***

**Brief overview**—This chapter first gives an urgent warning to flee from Babylon, then presents additional identifying marks of Babylon; and, near the end, it again

mentions that it will be destroyed.

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**“And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” Revelation 18:1-2.**

*This chapter is focused on the fall of Babylon. It provides additional information on Revelation 17:16.*

**“Great Babylon”:** This “Great Babylon” comprises the leopard beast of Revelation 13:1-2 (the papacy) and the papal coalition of powers symbolized by the beast that the woman sits on, in Revelation 17:1. The headquarters of this Babylon is “that great city, Babylon” (Rev. 17:18; 18:10).

While papal Rome is Babylon (GC 382), it is also true that “the fallen denominational churches are Babylon” (TM 61).

**“Her [Babylon’s] daughters must be symbolized by the churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world.”—*Great Controversy*, 382-383.**

**“Another angel”:** A special angel, the fourth angel, comes down and strengthens the message of the second angel of Revelation 14:8, which says: “Babylon is fallen is fallen.”

The immense power provided by this fourth angel greatly magnifies the convicting strength of the first and second angels’ messages—and the impact of the “Loud Cry” message of the third angel—as it is given by the power of the Holy Spirit in an increased outpouring of what we call the “latter rain” (Zech. 10:1; Joel 2:23; James 5:7).

The second angel (Rev. 14:8) warns that Babylon has fallen. But, in addition, **this fourth angel warns everyone**

to flee out of Babylon, or they will be destroyed with her. The warnings in this chapter are astounding (Rev. 18:1-7): **God declares that Babylon has become “the habitation of devils” (18:2).**

*The decision everyone must make*—The crucial issue in the final crisis will be over obedience to the law of God. Heaven has a government; and, like every other government, it must be obeyed by its citizens.

**But the pope has claimed to be above God and His law.** The pope has claimed to be able to change that law—and make new laws! **The key issue in the final crisis will be over the Bible Sabbath,** which is the Fourth of the Ten Commandments, the only one which identifies God as our Creator. To reject that commandment is to reject the One who made us.

**In the final crisis, everyone on earth will be brought to the point of understanding this crucial issue—and will decide for or against obeying God on this special point.**

The day of weekly worship is indeed a simple one. The Bible says to worship Him on the seventh day of the week; the pope says this worship day is the first day of the week. Even a child can understand this. Scientists and historians have shown that the weekly cycle has not changed since the beginning of time.

**Nothing is clearer in the Bible than the fact that the seventh day is the Bible Sabbath and Sunday is a common working day (Ex. 20:8-11).**

Everyone who determines to remain with the majority, the traditions of men, and worship on Sunday will receive the mark of the beast.

**The warnings given are clear. The identity of the remnant people of God is equally clear.** At the end of the Dark Ages of persecution, shown in Revelation 12, we are told:

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, **and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God,** and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”—*Revelation 12:17.*



The Third Angel of Revelation 14:9-12 warns men against receiving the mark of the beast, and concludes by clearly identifying those who will be approved of God in that crisis:

“Here is the patience of the saints: **here are they that keep the commandments of God**, and the faith of Jesus.”—*Revelation 14:12*.

While the Third Angel warns men against receiving the mark of the beast and tells us, instead, to keep the law of God, the Second Angel warns them to beware of the fallen churches.

*Now, in chapter 18, we find an addition to the Second Angel's message.* It is a lengthy one, and warns men to flee from those religious bodies and related groups which keep Sunday holy. These verses are found in Revelation 18:1-5.

**“Great power”**: This is “great authority.” **This angel comes from heaven, with the last message of mercy, and warns the inhabitants of earth of the danger of remaining in Babylon.**

**“Earth was lightened”**: The message of this fourth angel of Revelation 18 adds great power to the first three messages.

**“Cried mightily”**: This message will go to the entire world.

**“Is fallen, is fallen”**: This means “it is totally fallen.”

“And he answered and said, **Babylon is fallen**, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.”—*Isaiah 21:9*. “Babylon is suddenly fallen . . . **We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her.**”—*Jeremiah 51:8-9*.

**“Habitation of demons”**: Literally “the house of demons.” According to this, **Babylon the great has come to the point where it is totally controlled by Satan.**

“Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens, in token of the power of miracle-working demons. **The spirits of devils will**

go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven. By these agencies, rulers and subjects will be alike deceived. Persons will arise pretending to be Christ Himself, and claiming the title and worship which belong to the world's Redeemer. They will perform wonderful miracles of healing and will profess to have revelations from heaven contradicting the testimony of the Scriptures."—*Great Controversy*, 624.

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**"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."** Revelation 18:3.

*Most of Revelation 18 focuses attention on the vast income and finances of the Vatican. So some attention will now be given to this special subject:*

**"All nations and kings"**: We are told that the time will come when every nation and ruler on earth will have imbibed the deadly poison in Babylon's cup. They have been fatally deceived by the false teachings of this power which determines to be opposed to the God of heaven.

**"Babylon hath been a golden cup . . . that made all the earth drunken:** the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed."—*Jeremiah 51:7-8*.

**"With whom the kings of the earth . . . have been made drunk with the wine."**—*Revelation 17:2*.

**"The merchants of the earth"**: We are here told that the merchants of the earth have become rich because of Babylon's bounties.

**Worship of images**—Down through the centuries, an immense amount of money was spent on images, crucifixes, holy days, pilgrimages, and confessional payments.

“**Pictures of Christ, Mary, and the saints**, had already been worshipped from the fifth century with greetings, kisses, prostration, a renewal of ancient pagan practices. In the naive and confident conviction that Christians no longer ran any risk of idolatry, the Church not only tolerated, but promoted, the entrance of paganism . . . **A brisk trade was carried on in the seventh and beginning of the eighth centuries in images**, especially by monks; churches and chapels were crowded with pictures and relics; the practice of heathen times was revived.”—*Adolph Harnack, History of Dogma, Vol. 4, pp. 318-319 (1898).*

**The worship of images in churches continues to be required in this our day!**

“*From the very earliest days of the Church there has been a tradition whereby images of our Lord, his holy Mother, and of saints are displayed in churches for the veneration of the faithful . . . **The practice of placing sacred images in churches so that they will be venerated by the faithful is to be maintained.***”—*Austin Flannery, gen. ed., Vatican Council II (1962-1965): The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, Vol. 1, pp. 35, 193.*

*Very important, in the pagan religions, were **small stones and images attached to a thread or chain and hung about the neck.** These drove away the devils (Will Durant, *Our Oriental Heritage*, p. 243). Later, shortly after the time of Constantine, **small crosses and crucifixes** were placed on walls and hung around the neck.*

**The motion of the hand in the “sign of the cross”** also became a powerful means of supposedly protecting people from demons:

“*Why is the sign of the cross so very beneficial and efficacious?—**The sign of the cross is so very beneficial and efficacious because it drives away the devil who fears the cross . . . The sign of the cross is particularly efficacious when a bishop or priest, in the name of the Church, makes it over persons or things; because thereby they are blessed and made holy.***”—*W. Faerber,*

*Catechism for the Catholic Parochial Schools of the United States, p. 101.*

**Veneration of Relics**—There was money to be made in relics; and, for over a thousand years, the Church has made use of the opportunity.

John Calvin (1509-1564) mentioned the inconsistency of various relics of his day. Several churches and monasteries claimed to have the **crown of thorns** worn by Jesus during His crucifixion. Many had the **water pots** filled at the miracle of Cana. Some of the **wine** was at Orleans, France. The **crib of Jesus** was at St. Mary Major's in Rome. Several churches had His **baby clothes**. One church had the **fish** that Peter offered Christ. The **hair of the Virgin** (some of it brown, some red, some black), the **body of Mary's mother**, the **empty purse of Judas**, **Mary's wedding ring**,—and even a **bottle of the milk** from her breast.

The "**Holy House of Loreto**" is one of the most famous shrines in Italy; for it was said to be the house that Mary lived in at Nazareth. **After her ascension to heaven, her house was gently carried, by angels, to Italy. This legend must be true; since 47 popes have honored the shrine.** Situated northwest of Rome on the Adriatic coast, and on the southwest part of Loreto, the "holy house" brings a large amount of the pilgrims' dollars to the papacy.

"An immense number of Bulls and Briefs proclaim without question the identity of the *Santa Casa di Loreto* with the Holy House of Nazareth."—*Encyclopedia, art. "Santa Casa di Loreto," Vol. 13, p. 454.*

The **veneration of dead bodies—and especially their bones**—was ordered by the Council of Trent, which condemned to death those who refused to believe and worship them.

"The holy bodies of holy martyrs . . . are to be venerated by the faithful, for through these bodies many benefits are bestowed by God on men."—*Ibid., art. "Relics," Vol. 12, p. 734.*

Because so many "benefits" came to those who wor-

shipped the relics and paid money to the priests in charge of them, the manufacture and sale of such relics was also very profitable.

By the year 750, graves were regularly plundered for their bones at night, then sorted, and sold to monasteries as relics of "canonized saints" (*H.B. Cotterill, Medieval Italy, p. 71*).

"[The use] of some objects, notably part of the body or clothes, remaining as a memorial of a departed saint [was in existence] before the propagation of Christianity and the veneration of relics. In fact, it is to some extent a primitive instinct associated with many other religious systems besides that of Christianity."—*Catholic Encyclopedia, art. "Relics," Vol. 12, p. 734*.

A **feather from the wing of Gabriel** was on display at a cathedral in Spain for centuries; but, upon examination, it was found to be a perfect ostrich feather (*Lorraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, p. 290*).

"Many of the more ancient relics duly exhibited for veneration in the great sanctuaries of Christendom or even at Rome itself must now be pronounced to be either certainly spurious or open to grave suspicion . . .

"No dishonor is done to God by the continuance of an error which has been handed down in perfect good faith for many centuries . . . Hence **there is justification for the practice of the Holy See in allowing the cult of certain doubtful ancient relics to continue.**"—*Catholic Encyclopedia, art. "Relics," Vol. 12, p. 738*.

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**"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." Revelation 18:4, 5.**

**"Come out of her, My people":** Many faithful souls have been in Babylon. Born into that religion, they lived the best they could. **God is calling them to come out.**

**"Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver**

**every man his soul:** be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; He will render unto her a recompense."—*Jeremiah 51:6*.

As God called His people in ancient times to flee out of Babylon, so He is calling them today.

"Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans."—*Isaiah 48:20*. **"Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth** out of the land of the Chaldeans."—*Jeremiah 50:8*.

"And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up . . . **My people, go ye out of the midst of her,** and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord."—*Jeremiah 51:44-45*.

**"Be not partakers":** Those who partake in Babylon's sins have a share of responsibility for them.

In this chapter, Babylon is brought before the bar of divine justice on five charges: **Pride and arrogance, materialism and luxury, adultery, deception, and persecution** (Rev. 18:2-3, 5, 7, 23-24).

**"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate,** saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you."—*2 Corinthians 6:17*.

**"Her sins have reached unto heaven":** The criminal actions of great Babylon rise before God, calling for retribution.

"Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed . . . We would have healed **Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her** . . . For her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies."—*Jeremiah 51:8-9*.

**"When do her sins reach unto heaven? When the law of God is finally made void by legislation."**—*Last Day Events, 198*.

***The Inquisition is a source of wealth.*** —While agents were sent out to hunt down and slay Bible-believing Christians, **others were given the task of identifying Catholics of wealth and declaring them heretics!**

This became a source of great wealth to prelates, bishops, and popes who pretended to be concerned about preserving orthodoxy in the church.

Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) issued specific instructions concerning this. The *Corpus Juris*, the official law book of the papacy, provides details:

**“The possessions of heretics are to be confiscated. In the Church’s territories they are to go to the Church’s treasury.”**—*Fundationis Ecclesiastes (Ecclesiastical Foundations)*, M. Magdal p. 10.

For example, following the edict to authorities of Nimes and Narbonne, in 1228, Blache of Castille ordered that **any person who had been excommunicated “shall be forced to seek absolution by the seizure of all his property”** (*Annals of 1228*).

**The accused Catholics, regardless of how faithful they had earlier been, were never told who accused them or what evidence there was against them.** They were tortured until a confession was extracted. Most were then killed. But, even if they survived, their property was taken, sold, and the proceeds placed in the Vatican coffers (*Establishment Livery, Vol. 1, p. 123*).

The clergy, high and low, then began to practice another method for added income. **They forced the most faithful Catholics to purchase escape from excommunication.** This produced great sums of money to the clergy throughout Europe. So many Dominicans carried on this work of searching out people to be “inquisitioned,” that **the Dominicans were nicknamed *Domini canes* (“the hunting dogs”)**. In one day in 1289, Robert the Dominican sent 180 prisoners to the stake (*Will Durant, Age of Faith, pp. 779-780*).

**Innocent IV authorized the obtaining of confessions by torture**, and later pontiffs also approved of it (*Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 8, p. 32b*).

Often a part of the confiscated property was given to the secular ruler of the province; the rest went to the Church (*Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. 6, p. 723*). At any time,

the possessions of innocent persons might be seized on the charge that the original owner of them, although already dead, had been a heretic (*ibid.*). The bishop of Rodez boasted that he had made 100,000 sols (today this would equal about \$250,000,000 U.S. dollars) in his campaigns against heretics in his diocese (*Thompson, Economic History of the Middle Ages, p. 689*).

Millions died in secret; but, when this was done in the town square by burning at the stake, the entire procedure was called a *sermo generalis* (a general sermon) and the execution was termed an *auto-da-fé* (act of faith); this was because **it was proclaimed to the people that, after witnessing each one, the faith of the Catholics in the Church would be strengthened.**

In reality, the people lived in terror, never knowing when they would be next. If the authorities learned that they had some money hidden, they knew they would be next.

But the worst tragedies of the Inquisition were concealed in the dungeons rather than brought to light at the stake.

**“Compared with the persecution of heresy in Europe, . . . the persecution of Christians by Romans in the first three centuries after Christ was a mild and humane procedure. Making every allowance required of a historian, we must rank the Inquisition, along with the wars and persecutions of our time, as among the darkest blots on the record of mankind, revealing a ferocity unknown in any beast.”**—*Will Durant, The Story of Civilization, Vol. 4, p. 484.*

**“God hath remembered”:** His long-suffering is about to end. When applied to Him, the word, **“remembered,”** commonly denotes that **He is at the point of rewarding men for what they have been doing,** whether good or evil.

“For He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant. And He brought forth His people with joy, [and] His chosen with gladness: and gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people; that they might observe His statutes, and keep



His laws.”—*Psalm 105:42-45* (cf. *Gen. 8:1; Ex. 2:24*).

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**“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. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.”** Revelation 18:6, 7.

**“Reward her double”**: These evil powers constituting Babylon now receive double for all that they have done.

Jesus drank the cup of God’s wrath against sin (DA 690, 693, 696) for every man. But **those who refuse Christ’s great sacrifice and mediation will share with the woman on the beast in drinking the cup of God’s fury.**

“Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain.”—*Psalm 76:10*.

**“According to her works”**: Literally “according to her deeds.” Her reward will be paid in kind. **The punishment will fit the crime; that is, it will be appropriate to it.**

“Shout against her round about: she hath given her hand: her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down: for it is the vengeance of the Lord: **take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her.**”—*Jeremiah 50:15*.

“Call together the archers against Babylon: all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof escape: **recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her.**”—*Jeremiah 50:29*.

“**And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done.**”—*Jeremiah 51:24*.

**“She hath glorified herself”**: Arrogant self-confidence has made her assured of ultimate success in obliterating God’s commandments from the earth.

*Pilgrimages and shrines*—Pilgrimages were also a source of wealth. The papacy would appoint pageants to be held on certain dates and sometimes year-long ones at Rome. It helped bring in money. **Other destinations were the many holy places** tended by monks. The objective of those who traveled on pilgrimages was reducing several years from their forthcoming time in purgatory. **They went to fulfill a penance or a vow, or to seek a miraculous cure, or to earn an indulgence.**

“At the end of the thirteenth century there were some 10,000 sanctioned goals of Christian pilgrimage. The bravest pilgrims fared to distant Palestine, sometimes with cross, staff, and purse . . .

“In 1064 the archbishops of Cologne and Mainz, and the bishops of Speyer, Bamberg, and Utrecht started for Jerusalem with 10,000 Christians in their wake; 3,000 of them perished on the way; only 2,000 returned safely to their native lands.

“Other pilgrims crossed the Pyrenees or risked themselves on the Atlantic, to visit the reputed bones of the apostle James at Compostela in Spain.

“In England pilgrims sought . . . the shrine of Thomas Becket at Canterbury. France drew pilgrims to St. Martin’s at Tours, to Notre Dame at Chartres . . .

“Finally, **all the roads of Christendom led pilgrims to Rome**, to see the tombs of Peter and Paul, to earn indulgences by visiting the Stations or famous churches of the city, or to celebrate some jubilee or joyous anniversary in Christian history. In 1299, Pope Boniface VIII [1294-1303] declared a jubilee for 1300, and offered a plenary indulgence to those who should come and worship in St. Peter’s in that year. **It was estimated that on no day in those twelve months had Rome less than 200,000 strangers within her gates and a total of 2,000,000 visitors.** Each, with an offering, deposited such treasure before St. Peter’s tomb that **two priests, with rakes in their hands, were kept busy night and day collecting the coins.**”—*Will Durant, Age of Faith, p. 753.*

Another example is Lourdes, France, which is a small market town lying in the foothills of the Pyrenees, famous for the Marian apparitions of Our Lady of Lourdes that are reported to have occurred in 1858 to Bernadette Soubirous.

Since that time, many pilgrimages have been made there in order to pray to the Virgin Mary and St. Bernadette, and possibly receive physical healing. As usual, visitors would bring gifts.

**“The fabulous treasure of Lourdes, whose existence [the treasure] was kept secret by the Catholic Church for 120 years, has been unveiled . . . Rumors have been circulating for decades about a priceless collection of gold chalices, diamond-studded crucifixes, silver and precious stones donated by grateful pilgrims.**

“After an indiscreet remark by their press spokesman this week, church authorities agreed to reveal part of the collection . . . [Some] floor-to-ceiling cases were opened to reveal **59 solid gold chalices alongside rings, crucifixes, statues and heavy gold brooches, many encrusted with precious stones.**

“Almost hidden by the other treasures is the ‘Crown’ of Notre Dame de Lourdes, studded with diamonds.

**“Church authorities say they cannot put a value on the collection.** ‘I have no idea,’ says Father Pierre-Marie Charriez, director of Patrimony and Sanctuaries. ‘It is of inestimable value’ . . . Across the road is a building housing hundreds of [antique] ecclesiastical garments, robes, mitres and sashes—many in heavy gold thread . . .

**“‘The Church itself is poor,’ insists Father Charriez. ‘The Vatican itself is poor.’ ”**—*The European*, April 9-12, 1992, p. 1.

For more information on pilgrimages, see *Edward Gibbon, Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. 6, pp. 494-495.*

**“I sit a queen”:** In the second year of the reign of Pope Leo XIII (1879), a gold medal was issued. On the front side is the pope. On the back side is inscribed around the edge: *“Gens et regnum quod non servierit mihi peribit.”* That is

from Isaiah 60:12 in the Latin Vulgate; and it says, “The nation and kingdom that will not serve me will perish.” The figure on the reverse is that of the Church depicted as a papal tiara crowned queen, sitting on her throne.

*Hail the queen!*—Babylon the great has assured her supporters that she is enthroned a queen forever and that, should they cast their lot in with her, they too will enjoy endless dominion.

“We may imagine the exaltation of the tired and dusty pilgrims when at last they sighted the Eternal City, and burst into the *Pilgrims’ Chorus* of joy and praise:

“*‘O Roma nobilis, orbis et domina, cunctarum urbium excellentissima, roseo martyrum sanguine rubea, albis et virginum liliis candida; salutem dicimus tibi per omnia; te benedicimus; salve per saecula!’*”

“O noble Rome, of all this world the queen! Of all the cities the most excellent! O ruby red with martyrs’ rosy blood, yet white with lilies pure of virgin maids; we give thee salutation through all years; we bless thee; through all generations hail!”—*Will Durant, The Age of Faith, p. 753.*

*Indulgences*—There was an immense amount of money to be made in indulgences. An indulgence is a remission of the temporal punishment due to sin, the guilt of which has been forgiven through the payment of money. An official source explains that sins committed after baptism (which for a Catholic is usually from infancy onward) can be forgiven through penance; but “there still remains the temporal punishment required by Divine justice, and this requirement must be fulfilled either in the present life or in the world to come, *i.e.* in Purgatory. An indulgence offers the penitent sinner the means of discharging this debt during this life on earth (*Catholic Encyclopedia, art. ‘Indulgences,’ Vol. 7, p. 783.*)

Page 786 of the above article explains that, through the payment of money, this forgiveness comes through the “Treasury of merits” of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the

**canonized saints** “vastly exceeding any temporal punishment which these servants of God might have incurred.” This was first officially set forth in the Bull “*Unigenitus*” of Clement VI in 1343.

**In remarkable contrast, the Bible teaches that Christ “is the propitiation for our sins.” His blood “cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:7; 2:2).**

**As is well known, it was the sale of indulgences which aroused Martin Luther to nail his 95 theses to the door of the Castle church in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517,—starting the Protestant Reformation. Thesis 86, asked: “Why does the pope, whose wealth today is greater than the wealth of the richest Crassus, build the basilica of St. Peter with the money of poor believers rather than with his own money?”**

**Luther insisted that, since forgiveness was God’s alone to grant, those who claimed that indulgences absolved buyers from all punishments and granted them salvation were in error. Although John Tetzel, the seller of the indulgences, was not allowed in Wittenburg, people were going to a nearby town to purchase them. Luther was outraged that they had paid money for what was theirs by right as a free gift from God. He felt compelled to expose the fraud that was being sold to the people.**

**Tetzel carried with him a large picture of the devil tormenting souls in purgatory; he frequently repeated the words on his money box, “*Sobald der pfenning im kasten klinget, kie seel’ aus dem Fegfeuer springt.*” (“As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, the troubled soul from purgatory springs.”) Even before Tetzel arrived in Germany, Pope Leo X (1513-1521) published a list of prices for even the worst of crimes. Even murder had its price: 20 crowns. The “anointed malefactors,” once they had been pardoned in this way by the Church, could not be prosecuted by civil authorities. Leo X tore down an old church and built St. Peter’s with money from indulgences.**

“Under the plea of raising funds for the erection of St. Peter’s Church at Rome, **indulgences for sin were**

publicly offered for sale by the authority of the pope. **By the price of crime a temple was to be built up for God's worship**—the cornerstone laid with the wages of iniquity! But the very means adopted for Rome's aggrandizement provoked the deadliest blow to her power and greatness. It was this that aroused the most determined and successful of the enemies of popery, and led to the battle which shook the papal throne and jostled the triple crown upon the pontiff's head."—*Great Controversy*, 127.

**Surprisingly, indulgences are just as strongly urged today as ever. Yet this is to be expected; for they really do bring a lot of money into the Church.** However, at the present time, indulgences are more frequently given for donations (instead of sold, as Tetzel did it), and for plenary indulgences (instead of lifetime forgiveness in advance).

"The Church . . . teaches and commands that the usage of indulgences—a usage most beneficial to Christians and approved by the authority of the Sacred Councils—should be continued in the Church; and it condemns with anathema those who say that indulgences are useless or that the Church does not have the power to grant them."—*Vatican II (October 1962-December 1965). Official decision reaffirming the doctrine of indulgences; quoted in Austin Flannery, Vatican Council II: the Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, Vol. 1, p. 71.*

**First came indulgences for the pardon of the sins of the living.** The earliest record of a plenary indulgence was Pope Urban II's declaration at the Council of Clermont (A.D. 1095). He remitted all penance incurred by crusaders who confessed their sins, considering participation in the crusade equivalent to a complete penance (*F.L. Cross, ed. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, New York, art. Plenary Indulgence*).

**The next step was using indulgences to pardon the sins of the deceased.** The earliest record of indulgences for the dead was by Sixtus IV (1471-1484), which was used by popes after him to great advantage. He decided that he

could apply indulgences to the dead as well as the living. **This proved to be incredibly profitable—since now people could pay not only for themselves and others who were alive, but also to get their dead friends out of the flames of purgatory.** What surviving relative could refuse to purchase the release of a deceased mother, father, child, etc. from the tortures of purgatory? **And, of course, the richer they were, the more they had to pay.**

A twist on this was provided, under the rule of Henry VIII of England, by the Bishop of Lincoln, who offered **“an indulgence of forty days to good Christians who would carry a faggot to feed the fire of a burning Protestant”** (*Will Durant, The Story of Civilization, Vol. 6, pp. 576-577*).

“Catholics who have girded themselves with the cross, **for the extermination of the heretics**, shall enjoy the indulgences and privileges granted to those who go in defense of the Holy Land.”—*Decree of Fourth Lateran Council, November 1215.*

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**“Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. 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.” Revelation 18:8-10.**

**“Therefore shall her plagues come in one day”:** They will come suddenly.

“Thou saidst, I shall be a lady forever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: **But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day**, the loss of children, and wid-

owhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness . . . And thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me.”—*Isaiah 47:7-10*.

**“In one day . . . hour”**: The Greek form of the words here for “day” and “hour” suggest a point in time, rather than a period of time. **The suddenness and unexpectedness of the vengeance is here emphasized.** It does not mean that the total punishment will occur within a short period of time.

**“Desolation shall come upon thee suddenly,** which thou shalt not know.”—*Isaiah 47:11*.

**“All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be anymore.”**—*Ezekiel 28:19*.

**“Strong is the Lord God who judgeth”**: The Lord is well able to carry out His will upon Babylon.

**“When they shall see”**: The symbolism here in Revelation 18:8-10 is not only of the evil woman, but also those who help her to continue her wickedness, and those who lament in sympathy with her. **Their weeping is especially due to the fact that they are to perish with her.**

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**“And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise anymore: 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 odours, 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.”**  
**Revelation 18:11-13.**

**“Weep and mourn”**: Realizing, too late, their terrible loss from the gain they made from her doctrines and



riches, they bewail Babylon's fall. The powers of earthly governments will miss the backing it gave them and the merchants will miss all the money it helped them make. They have sold her doctrines and trinkets for money. However, **this is a symbolic word picture because no one who is part of Babylon will be able to stand back and watch her fall,—for they will all be caught up in the general ruin.** The only ones able to clearly see all that is involved in this final crash will be the people of God, the despised and afflicted remnant. This parabolic picture is given to help us understand how complete will be the final fall of this cruel power. This religious power had been buying and selling the “souls of men.”

**“For no man buyeth”:** Her followers are disillusioned and fearful.

“Behold the land of the Chaldeans . . . Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste.”—*Isaiah 23:13-14.*

“Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their brodered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling; **they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble at every moment, and be astonished at thee.** And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee, **How art thou destroyed!**”—*Ezekiel 26:16-17.*

“The merchants among the people shall hiss at thee; **thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt be any more.**”—*Ezekiel 27:36.*

**“Merchandise”:** The list of items mentioned in Revelation 18:11-13 is given to emphasize the extensive commercial interests of Babylon.

**Jubilees**—These provided a most wonderful river of gold flowing into the Holy City. In the book of Leviticus (Lev. 25:9-54; 27:17-24; Num. 36:4), a jubilee year is mentioned to occur every fifty years, in which slaves and prisoners would be freed and debts would be forgiven.

**The papal concept of the jubilee was far different:**

**It changed it into a special year of remission of sins and universal pardon.** The papacy started the first one in 1300, when Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) convoked a holy year.

“Perhaps to replenish the papal treasury after the decline of receipts from England and France, perhaps to finance a war for the recovery of Sicily as a papal fief, and another war to extend the Papal States into Tuscany (*Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. 7, pp. 7-8*), Boniface VIII proclaimed 1300 as a jubilee year. **The plan was a complete success. Rome had never in its history seen such crowds before;** now, apparently for the first time, traffic rules were enforced to govern the movement of the people . . .

**“It was an advantage for the pope that the great sums so collected were not earmarked for any special purpose,** but could be used according to his judgment.”—*Will Durant, The Age of Faith, p. 813.*

However, Boniface’s successors were deeply concerned. They did not want to wait till another century began before more jubilee money flowed into Rome again!

So, in January 1343, **Pope Clement VI issued a bull declaring that, in view of the shortness of human life, he had reduced the jubilee’s span from one hundred years to fifty** (*P. de Herenthale, Clement VI, pp. 584-587*).

Then, in order to make sure that the pilgrims would come in multitudes with lots of offerings, in June 1346, Clement issued another bull in which he asserted that he had complete control and power over the future life. He told the wondering crowds who read his bull that he had ordered the angels of heaven to liberate, from purgatory, the souls of any who might die on the road to Rome. The Black Death (today called the bubonic plague) was widespread at the time and many travelers were dying.

The next jubilee was held in 1390; and **Pope Urban VI (1378-1389) decreed that they should be held every thirty-three years,** as representing the period of the sojourn of Christ upon earth and also the average span of human life

at that time. In 1400, so many people came to Rome, that Pope Boniface IX granted them indulgences again, even though he had not decreed in 1399 that special indulgences would be given the following year.

Another jubilee was proclaimed by Pope Martin V (1417-1431) in 1423 (33 years after the last proclaimed jubilee in 1390); but Pope Nicholas V (1447-1455), in 1450, reverted to the fifty-year period, while **Pope Paul II** (1464-1471) **decreed that the jubilee should be celebrated every twenty-five years.** And this has been the normal rule ever since.

**“The jubilee of 1450 was an immense success.** The amount of gold collected from the pilgrims was so huge that Pope Nicholas V [1447-1455] struck a coin known as ‘the Jubilee.’ This coin was of such unusual size that it equalled three of the ordinary gold pieces issued at that time by the royal mints of Europe.”—*Avro Manhattan, The Vatican Billions, pp. 73-74.*

During the jubilee of 1500, Pope Alexander VI (1492-1503), whose love of money was as notorious as his profligate life, decided to add something new: **the ceremony of opening the “Holy Door.”** But the problem was that, search as hard as they might, no such door could be found. So one was constructed in haste, just in time for the travelers arriving in Rome to give their money and be able to walk through the door.

**So it is that after St. Peter’s was built, this “holy door” was added,** Normally the front of it is walled up with bricks, which are only removed at the time of a jubilee.

**“The *Porta Sancta* or Holy Door is only open during a Holy Year, also called a jubilee, which occurs every 25 years. On the first day of each holy year, the Pope walks up to it and strikes the brick wall with a silver hammer. The bricks are then removed and **it is opened to the pilgrims able to donate enough for the privilege of stepping through it.**”**—*Virgilio Cardinal Noè, ‘The Holy Door in St. Peter’s,*

**In 1501, Alexander decided to extend that jubilee—by**

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sending his legates all over Europe, collecting additional money. They sold “jubilee indulgences” at discount prices, without anyone having to make the journey to Rome.

Then Pope Leo X (1513-1521) used a variation of this idea in order to collect money to build St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. Then he hired a convicted criminal, Johnn Tetzel, to help him. —And, as you know, that got the Reformation started.

Since that time, ordinary jubilees have generally been celebrated every 25 years. “Extraordinary jubilees” are added on when extra money is needed. Catholic jubilees generally involve pilgrimage to a sacred site, normally the city of Rome. That was helpful; for it would bring the money directly to the papal coffers, without having to split any of it with other officials elsewhere.

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**“And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt 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!” Revelation 18:14-18.**

*“Fruits departed”*: The fruits she expected to enjoy the next season are lost to her. But there were also other fruits which she was thoroughly enjoying.

***Purgatory***—Because people were continually sinning and continually dying, both became an ongoing source of wealth to every local Catholic church.

Purgatory is said to be the condition or process of purification or temporary punishment in which, it is believed,

the souls of those who die in a state of grace are made ready (through purgatory) for Heaven (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, art. "Purgatory").

"Thus Plato, speaking of the future judgment of the dead, holds out the hope of final deliverance, but maintains that, of 'those who are judged,' 'some' must first sustain the punishment they have deserved . . . **In pagan Rome, purgatory was equally held up before the minds of men.**"—*Alexander Hislop, The Two Babylons*, p. 167.

"**The state in which souls exist for a time after death to work out the temporal punishment** due to venial sins or forgiven mortal sins. **The soul is purified in this state to prepare it** for its entrance into the delights of heaven and the Beatific Vision."—*Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary*, p. 474.

"**The expiation must be made in the next life through fire and torments or purifying punishments.** . . . The reason for their imposition is that our souls need to be purified . . . **Omissions are cleansed after death with punishments designed to purge away their debt.**"—*Austin Flannery, O.P., gen. ed., "Apostolic Constitution on the Revision of Indulgences," Vatican Council II: the Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, rev. ed., 1988, Vol. 1, pp. 63-64.

**What is adequate penance? No one knows.** The Church has never defined it. **Where does the Bible say that punishment purges from sin? It never does.**

**The doctrine of purgatory is purely pagan**, and cannot for a moment stand in the light of Scripture. For those who die in Christ no purgatory is, or can be, needed; for "**the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin.**"

"**If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:** But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and **the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and**

just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”—*1 John 1:6-9*.

“The people must be instructed that Christ is unto them salvation and righteousness. **It is Satan’s studied purpose to keep souls from believing in Christ as their only hope**; for the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin is efficacious in behalf of those only who believe in its merit.”—*Gospel Workers, 162*.

According to Church rule, **the payment of money for a mass helps a little toward eventually getting a soul out of purgatory**. The amount paid determines whether several priests will be present (high mass) or only mumbled in a low tone by one priest (low mass). As the Irish say, “high money, high mass; low money, low mass; no money, no mass!”

**Even today, those who die without anyone to pay for masses in their behalf are called the “forgotten souls in purgatory.”** However, the pope has mercifully permitted these to be remembered on one day each year: November 2, which is “All Souls’ Day.” This, we must say, is kind of him.

As Luther would say, “If purgatory really exists, why doesn’t the pope use some of the mountains of treasure he has in storehouses, and free everyone from purgatory?”

During World War II, the Archbishop of Winnipeg, in a letter dated March 1, 1944, urged Catholic mothers to guarantee the salvation of their sons from purgatory by the payment to him of \$40 for prayers and masses in their behalf (*Ralph Woodrow, Babylon Mystery Babylon, p. 69*).

What does the Bible say about this?

“Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; **but with the precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”—*1 Peter 1:18-19*.

“They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; **none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.**”—*Psalms 49:6-7 (cf. Matt. 19:23-24)*.

**The theory of giving offerings to avoid purgatory**

originally came from Babylon (*Cumont, Astrology and Religion, pp. 19-191*). The papal Church found the concept to be an excellent way to bring more money into the Church.

**“In Egypt, substantially the same doctrine of purgatory was inculcated.** But when once this doctrine of purgatory was admitted into the popular mind, then the door was opened for all manner of priestly extortions. **Prayers for the dead ever go hand in hand with purgatory; but no prayers can be completely efficacious without the interposition of the priests; and no priestly functions can be rendered unless there be special pay for them.** Therefore we find the pagan priesthood ‘devouring widows’ houses,’ and making merchandise of the tender feelings of sorrowing relatives, sensitively alive to the immortal happiness of the beloved dead.”—*Alexander Hislop, The Two Babylons, p. 168.*

**“Find them no more”:** The finality of the loss is repeated in similar words in Revelation 18:14-18.

“And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the Lord. Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out Mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain. And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolate forever, saith the Lord.”—*Jeremiah 51:24-26.*

**“Made rich by her”:** Partnership with Babylon had been mutually beneficial to both.

**“The company in ships”:** “Ships” in Bible prophecy often symbolizes economic interests and activities. The picture is a shipmaster taking his ship from one port to another, to engage in trade. But no longer will the shipmasters profit from the wares of Babylon.

“Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people was not . . . **Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste.**”—*Isaiah 23:13-14.*

***“The smoke of her burning”***: Over a thousand years of persecutions and slaughters, in order to control minds and accumulate riches;—yet now it is all gone for nought.

“I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more: though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord God.”—*Ezekiel 26:21*.

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**“And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness; for in one hour is she made desolate.”** Revelation 18:19.

***“Alas, that great city”***: It is with terrible sadness that the merchants and traders, the men on ships, say good-bye to her. They know they are to perish with her.

**But, in the midst of the crisis, the people of God have their eyes fixed on the heavens, from whence their deliverance is soon to come.**

“Thus saith the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: **For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry is in the ships.** I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.

**“Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters . . . The army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise: they are extinct, they are quenched as tow.** Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.

“Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? **I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.**”—*Isaiah 43:14-19*.

***“By reason of her costliness”***: Babylon’s extravagant requirements brought wealth to those who traded in the goods in which it was interested: gold, silver, precious



stones, beautiful clothes, candles, statues, and all kinds of trinkets.

**“Through the centuries the beliefs of the Chaldeans of Babylon eventually . . . spread to Syria, to Egypt, and over the whole Roman world.”**—*Franz Cumont, Astrol-ogy and Religion among the Greeks and Romans, p. 74.*

**“Things of pagan origin which the Church brought in recommend the new religion [the papacy] to the heathen, and included . . . temples dedicated to particular saints; lamps; candles; votive offerings; holy water; asylums [monasteries]; fields; sacerdotal vestments; the tonsure; the ring in marriage; turning to the East to the rising sun; and images . . .”**—*J.H. Newman, An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, p. 373.*

From Palmyra the papacy brought in the images of Helios, the Sun god, and Bel, the ancient patron god of Babylon (*Franz Cumont, The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism, pp. 114. (Also see pp. 115, 124).*

**From ancient Babylon also came the cult of the virgin mother goddess, with its statues of the “Queen of Heaven,” which was sold to the people to place in and near their homes.** This Babylonian Ishtar is identified with Astarte, Ashtoreth, Persephone, Artemis (Diana) of Ephesus, Venus, and Isis of Egypt (*S.H. Langdon, Semitic Mythology, pp. 12-13, 19-20. (Also see pp. 24-34).*

**Other pagan rites and practices which brought wealth to both the papacy and merchants included** the adoption of December 25, the birthday of Mithra, the “invincible Sun [god],” and Mithric Sunday sacredness (*ibid., pp. 161-163*). Even the nimbus (the circle around heads in paintings) came from paganism (*Gordon J. Laing, Survivals of Roman Religion, p. 246*). From Isis (mother goddess) worship in Egypt came holy water, votive offerings, elevation of sacred objects; this included the host, priest’s bell, decking of images with clothes and jewels, and the tonsure (circle of hair around a bald center on the head) in honor of the Sun god with the moon goddess (*Laing, pp. 92-95, 123-124, 129-131, 238-241*).

“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 . . . **And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.**”—*Revelation 17:2, 4.*

While the ancient Babylonian religion was steeped in immorality, **modern Babylon also commits spiritual fornication, polluting the Church with false doctrines and pagan practices, and having illicit connection with the secular powers to enforce her teachings.** Like her ancient namesake, Roman Babylon has made many nations drink impure wine from her cup.

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**“Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.” Revelation 18:20.**

**“Rejoice”:** Oh, thank you, kind Father in heaven; **Thou art going to save us from the power of the enemy!** We know this is coming soon!

“The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance . . . **So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily He is a God that judgeth in the earth.**”—*Psalms 58:10, 11.*

**“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.”—Revelation 19:2.**

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**“And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.” Revelation 18:21.**

**“Great millstone”:** This is a millstone of immense size, as was anciently turned by an ox to grind out grain, in contrast with small millstones that could be turned by hand.

**“Cast it into the sea”**: Like a great millstone dropped into the sea, Babylon sinks to rise no more.

“And Thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; and their persecutors Thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters.”—*Nehemiah 9:11*.

“The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation; my father’s God, and I will exalt Him. The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is His name.”—*Exodus 15:2-3*.

Thus, with finality, will Babylon sink into oblivion and is “found no more.”

“His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone.”—*Exodus 15:4-5*.

The various profitable arts and crafts that have been made to exalt her glory, which have lured her followers and ministered to her desires, are now all gone. The crucifixes, the beads, the bells, the holy clothes, the sacred rituals, the embroidered symbols, the engravings, and fine statuary; all have forever passed away.

“And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant . . . that they may . . . sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the Lord.”—*Jeremiah 51:37, 39*.

**“Thrown down”**: That great mountain which ruled over all the earth has been burned with fire, and is now cast into the sea.

“And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea.”—*Revelation 8:8*.

Compare this with the fate of ancient Babylon (Jer. 51:63-64; also see Isa. 13:19). Thus, with finality, will Babylon sink into oblivion, or “perdition” (Rev. 17:8; Jer. 51:42, 64; Eze. 26:19-21).

“Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and He will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with

fire.”—*Zechariah 9:4*.

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**“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 anymore in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.”**  
**Revelation 18:22-23.**

**“*Heard no more*”:** The voices of the musicians have ceased (Isa. 24:8; Eze. 26:13). In that final crisis, Babylon no longer receives nor gives support to its former backers, the great men of the earth (Rev. 17:16; Eze. 26:17-21). **No more light from candles offered to the dead; no more solemn festivals; it is all over.**

**“Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed . . . We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies.”**—*Jeremiah 51:8-9*.

**“*By thy sorceries*”:** *All the pagan enchantments of all the ancient religions were gathered together into papal Babylon.* By them, the people were fascinated as they observed the hypnotic sacrifice of the mass and followed in the processions as the idols were carried.

**“But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments.**

**“For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me.**

“Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and **desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know.**”—*Isaiah 47:9-11.*

“**Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.**

“Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. **Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee.**

“Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame.”—*Isaiah 47:12-14.*

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**“And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.” Revelation 18:24.**

**“The blood of all that were slain”:** All the sufferings ever experienced by God’s people have been rolled back upon Babylon in this final crisis.

“And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in Me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.”—*Mark 9:42 (Luke 17:2).*

**God is calling each one of us to return to Him and repent of our sins.** Strengthened by the enabling grace of Christ, we must study and obey the Bible and all ten of the commandments. We must totally separate ourselves from the worldliness, the paganism, and idolatry of that terrible power.

“**Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord’s vengeance; He will render unto her a recompense.**”—*Jeremiah 51:6.*

*There is now the sound of a great silence; for Babylon is gone!*

**“And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.”—Isaiah 13:19-20.**

As we now near the close of this book, we are given the conclusion of the whole matter:

**“When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words; then shalt thou say, O Lord, Thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate forever.**

**“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 51:61-64.**

*—And, with the end of that evil power, the time has come for the Second Coming of Christ!*

## **Revelation 19**

# ***The Second Advent of Christ***

**Brief overview—**This chapter first shows the angels of heaven rejoicing that soon Christ will take His people to Himself. Then we are symbolically shown the Second Coming of Christ to earth, to complete His battle against the wicked who have hated Him and sought to destroy His people.

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**“And after these things I heard a great voice of much**

people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are His judgments: for He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up forever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; alleluia.” Revelation 19:1-4.

*“After these things”*: This chapter occurs immediately after viewing the astonishing scenes in chapters 17 and 18.

*“Alleluia!”*: This song is sung after judgment has been executed on the woman,—an event which has takes place under the seventh plague (Rev. 17:16-17; 18:4-23). According to *Testimonies to Ministers*, 432, the singing of this song of praise occurs immediately after the work of the seventh plague.

**This song is an expression of great rejoicing! The centuries of sin and misery are coming to their end!** In this chapter, we are given a symbolic view of the return of Christ for His people. Oh, what a happy experience it will be for those, who in spite of all their trials on earth, have clung to Christ and determined to remain faithful to the end!

**“Alleluia”** is a transliteration of *Halelu-Yah*. (We say, **hallelujah**, which means **“Praise ye the Lord!**) **The only occurrence in the New Testament is in Revelation 19:1, 3-4, 6.** In the Old Testament, it is generally written “praise the Lord” and occurs at the beginning of eleven Psalms (106, 111-113, 117, 135, 146-150) and at the close of twelve (104-106, 113, 115-117, 135, 147-150). Christ sang one of those (the *Passover hallel*, Psalm 117) with His disciples before leaving the Upper Room (Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26; DA 672).

**“Hebrew hallelujahs”** will **“mingle with Gentile hosannas, and the voices of the redeemed as a mighty host shall swell the acclamation, Crown Him Lord of**

all!” (*Desire of Ages*, 830).

**“True and righteous”**: Everything God does is always right! This includes His judgments on the wicked. He never does wrong; He never makes a mistake. Never.

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**“And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”** Revelation 19:5-6.

**“Praise our God”**: One of the best things we can do, now, and later in heaven, is to praise our wonderful heavenly Father and Jesus Christ His Son.

**“Voice of a multitude”**: All unite in praising what Jesus has done and is doing to complete the work of bringing His people home *to live forever with Him*. It appears, from this verse, that this praise is voiced by all the angels and all of God’s beings throughout the universe.

*This passage is referring to a brief period of time as Jesus is about to return to earth for His own.*

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**“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And He saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And He saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.”** Revelation 19:7-9.

**“The marriage of the Lamb”**: We are told that “the bride, the Lamb’s wife” is “that great city, the holy Jerusalem” (Rev. 21:2, 9-10). The New Jerusalem, which will be the capital of the new earth, symbolically represents all those who will live in the earth made new.



“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, **The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.**”—*Revelation 11:15.*

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. **And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.** 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.”—*Revelation 21:1-3.*

“The coming of the bridegroom, here brought to view, takes place before the marriage. **The marriage represents the reception by Christ of His kingdom.** The Holy City, the New Jerusalem, which is the capital and representative of the kingdom, is called ‘the bride, the Lamb’s wife.’”—*Great Controversy, 426.*

**The wedding here referred to consists of the reception by Christ of His kingdom** (represented by the New Jerusalem) which occurs at the close of His priestly ministry, when human probation closes and before the plagues are poured out (GC 427-428).

**From heaven He came and sought her,  
To be His holy bride;  
With His own blood He bought her;  
And for her life He died.**

—Samuel J. Stone

**“Hath made herself ready”:** It is often said that we need make no preparation in order to forever live with Christ in heaven. The truth is that, **through the enabling grace of Christ, we must daily cling to Him; obey His law; and live clean, godly lives.**

“To His faithful followers Christ has been a daily companion and familiar friend. **They have lived in**

close contact, in constant communion with God. Upon them the glory of the Lord has risen. In them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ has been reflected. Now they rejoice in the undimmed rays of the brightness and glory of the King in His majesty. **They are prepared for the communion of heaven; for they have heaven in their hearts . . .** [Rev. 19:6-9 quoted].—*Christ's Object Lessons*, 421.

**“The marriage supper”**: While the marriage occurs at the close of probation, the marriage supper occurs in heaven after the Second Advent. It will be a glorious wedding gathering, when we are invited as guests to the marriage of Christ to His Kingdom.

“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 and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.**”—*John 14:2-3*.

Looking forward to that time, **Jesus said, Ye shall “eat and drink at My table in My kingdom”** (Luke 22:30). It is the time when we shall eat in the kingdom of God, after the resurrection of the just (Luke 14:12-15). It is the time when we shall drink of the fruit of the vine with our Redeemer in His heavenly kingdom (Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18). **Jesus will come forth and serve us** (Luke 12:37).

“But I say unto you, **I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.**”—*Matthew 26:29*.

As soon as Jesus, our High Priest, finishes His intercession at the close of human probation, He comes before the Father to receive His kingdom; and “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ” (Rev. 11:15). It is then that the wedding takes place. **Jesus then returns to earth to take His people to heaven—where they share in the marriage supper of the Lamb.** Jesus told us:

“Let your loins be girded about, and your lights

burning; and ye yourselves [be] like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding.”—*Luke 12:35-36*.

**“The righteousness of saints”**: The word used here is *dikaionata* (righteous deeds), not *dikaiosune* (righteous character). There is a difference. Those who are redeemed will, through the grace of Christ, have pure words and godly conduct.

**“They which are called”**: The Investigative Judgment has just ended; and it has been decided who will be redeemed from among men.

**“Every case has been decided for life or death. Christ has made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The number of His subjects is made up; ‘the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,’ is about to be given to the heirs of salvation, and Jesus is to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.”**—*Great Controversy, 613-614*.

At the close of probation, “every case has been decided” and “the number of His subjects is made up.” It is at that time that the actual number composing the symbolic 144,000 (12,000 from each symbolic tribe) is determined. (*For more on identifying this group and the number composing it, see the comments about the 144,000 under Revelation 7:4.*)

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**“And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, see thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”** Revelation 19:10.

**“Fell at his feet”**: In deepest gratitude that the great controversy between Christ and Satan is going to have an end, John falls down in worship.

**“Do it not”**: But the angel reminds him that he, himself, is only an angel—a created being, like John.

“And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.”—*Acts 10:25-26*.

**What a privilege that we may be co-workers with the angels!**

“All who would be sons and daughters of God must prove themselves co-workers with God and Christ and the heavenly angels.”—*Christ's Object Lessons, 283*.

“*Testimony of Jesus*”: The Holy Spirit was sent to bear testimony of Jesus (John 15:26); and His witness is equivalent to that of Jesus in person. **The Spirit of Prophecy is one of the gifts of the Spirit** (1 Cor. 12:10; Eph. 4:11). **It was predicted that, in addition to keeping the commandments of God, God's faithful ones, the “remnant” living in the last days, would have the “testimony of Jesus” (Rev. 12:17).** The book of Revelation was given to John by our Lord for us, His children living in these last days of earth's history. **It is also a “testimony of Jesus” (Rev. 1:1-2).** This gift was manifested all through Old and New Testament times, as dedicated children of God spoke by divine inspiration.

“Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.”—*Proverbs 29:18*.

**It was predicted that, in the last days, there would once again be “dreams and visions” (Joel 2:28-29).** We can be thankful that we can always test them by the Bible.

“To the law and to the testimony: **if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.**”—*Isaiah 8:20*.

**We can test them by their lives and also by the effects their messages have on the lives of others.** “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”—*Matthew 7:20*.

Here is another test of a true prophet:

“When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, **if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath**

spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.”—*Deuteronomy 18:22*.

**An important test is when a false prophet tries to lead you away from keeping God’s commandments.**

“If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, **Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known**, and let us serve them; **thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet**, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. **Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear Him, and keep His commandments, and obey His voice**, and ye shall serve Him, and cleave unto Him.”—*Deuteronomy 13:1-4*.

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**“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.” Revelation 19:11-12.**

*The scenes described in verses 11-21 constitute the climax of “the battle of that great day of God Almighty,” also called the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:12-19).*

**“Heaven opened”**: Literally **“standing open.”** Heaven was open when John’s attention was first directed to it, and remained open throughout this extended vision (Rev. 4:1; 11:19; 15:5).

**“White horse”**: When used symbolically in the Bible, the horse is usually a symbol of battle (Ex. 15:21; Isa. 43:17; Jer. 8:5-6; Eze. 38:15-16; Zech. 10:3; Rev. 14:20). **White typifies holiness** of character.

As King of kings, **Jesus figuratively rides forth as a conqueror to recover His faithful ones and take them home with Him, to the marriage supper (Rev. 19:9).**

**“Faithful and true”**: What a beautiful name for Jesus! And how accurate it is.

**Christ has four names in this chapter**: (1) Faithful and true (19:11); for He now appears, according to His promise (John 14:1-3).

“And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.”—*Isaiah 25:9*.

(2) He has a “name written, that no man knows but He alone” (19:12). In the performance of His “strange work” (Isa. 28:21), Christ returns as the avenger of His people.

(3) He remains “the Word of God” (19:13), carrying out the will of the Father, formerly in mercy, and now in judgment.

(4) The title, “King of kings and Lord of lords” (19:16), especially applies to this arrival of Jesus, to vindicate His own.

**“In righteousness”**: Unlike the wars of mankind, Christ’s mission is totally unselfish and just.

**“Judge and make war”**: He judges by overcoming the wicked who are intent on destroying His faithful children. (See Revelation 13:15; 16:13-14, 16-17).

Those who have given their support to the beast and received his mark are now face to face with the Lamb, against whom they have actually been warring.

**“Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence**: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth . . . **Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.** And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is judge Himself.”—*Psalms 50:3-6*.

**“His eyes were as a flame of fire”**: His eyes see everything; His decisions are totally accurate. Everyone on earth will see Him come. All the godly are delivered; all the wicked die.

**“Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him.”—*Revelation 1:7.***

**“Many crowns”:** On Christ’s head is *diadema*, the **crown of royalty** (in this instance, many of them), which is never the reward given to the redeemed. They receive the *stephanos*, given to the victors in the race (the overcomers in the battle against sin).

***Christ’s Second Coming—Let us briefly review what the Bible teaches about the Second Advent of Christ.*** Christ has promised that He will return for His faithful ones. When He does, everyone in the world will see Him come in all His glory, with all the angels. He will raise the righteous dead and take them, along with the righteous living, to heaven. (In chapter 20, we will learn how the wicked who are alive will die at that time.)

The promise is given that **Christ is going to return for His own:**

**“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. 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 and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”—*John 14:1-3.***

**“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.”—*Philippians 3:20-21.***

**“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”—*Titus 2:13-14.***

Everyone on earth will see Christ when He returns in great power and glory, and accompanied by millions of angels. It is important that we understand this; because, when Satan personates Christ, he is only permitted to appear here and there. Satan does not arrive in the skies accompanied by millions of angels.

**“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.”—*Matthew 25:31*.**

**“Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him.”—*Revelation 1:7*.**

**“And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”—*Luke 21:27-28*.**

**“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 the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with 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*.**

**When Christ comes, He will reward every man.**

**“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.”—*Matthew 16:27*.**

**“And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”—*Revelation 22:12*.**

**“For thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.”—*Luke 14:14*.**

**When Christ comes, He will take His faithful ones to heaven.**

**“And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our**



God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us.”—*Isaiah 25:9*.

“Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, **Death is swallowed up in victory.** O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”—*I Corinthians 15:51-55*.

“**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 Thessalonians 4:16-17*.

“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but **unto all them also that love His appearing.**”—*2 Timothy 4:8*.

**Lo! He comes, with clouds descending,**

**Once for favored sinners slain;**

**Countless angels, Him attending,**

**Swell the triumph of His train:**

**Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

**Jesus comes, and He will reign.**

**“Every eye shall now behold Him**

**Robed in dreadful majesty!**

**Those who set at nought and sold Him,**

**Pierced, and nailed Him to the tree,**

**Deeply wailing, deeply wailing,**

**Shall the true Messiah see!**

—Charles Wesley

**“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.” Revelation 19:13-14.**

**“Vesture dipped in blood”:** This symbol refers to Christ’s own blood, and is keyed to the prophecy of Isaiah 63:

**“Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.**

**“Wherefore art Thou red in Thine apparel, and Thy garments like Him that treadeth in the winefat [vat of red grapes]? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with Me: for I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My raiment. For the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed is come.”—Isaiah 63:1-4.**

**“Word of God”:** As in the first verse in John’s Gospel, “upholding all things by the word of His power” (Heb. 1:3), He is again called the “Word of God.”

**“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”—John 1:1.**

**“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.**

***We must have the Word of God, study it, and be constantly renewed by it—or we perish!***

**“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.”—Luke 4:4.**

**“The seed is the Word of God.”—Luke 8:11.**

**“My mother and My brethren are these which hear the Word of God, and do it.”—Luke 8:21.**

**“Blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and**

keep it.”—*Luke 11:28*.

“They spake the Word of God with boldness.”—*Acts 4:31*.

“So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed.”—*Acts 19:20*.

“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”—*Romans 10:17*.

“The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.”—*Ephesians 6:17*.

“For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.”—*Hebrews 4:12*.

“The worlds were framed by the Word of God.”—*Hebrews 11:3*.

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.”—*1 Peter 1:23*.

“The Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.”—*1 John 2:14*.

“**Armies in heaven**”: For six thousand years, the angels of heaven have helped mankind; and **now they accompany Jesus at this hour of triumph**. They are thrilled that He is taking His redeemed home with Him!

“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 24:31*.

“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.”—*Matthew 25:31-32*.

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“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.” *Revelation 19:15*.

**“Out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword”:** By the Word of Christ, the heavens and the earth were made, and by it He will give rewards to the righteous and judge and punish the wicked.

**“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. . . For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.”—Psalm 33:6, 9 (2 Peter 3:5; Heb. 1:3).**

**“For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword.”—Hebrews 4:12 (Eph. 6:17).**

**“With righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked.”—Isaiah 11:4.**

**“Sharp sword”:** This is the *rhomphaia*, the large assault weapon, in contrast with the *machaira*, the short stabbing sword used in self-defense.

**“Rod of iron”:** This recalls that famous prophecy in Psalm 2:

**“Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.”—Psalm 2:9-12 (Psalm 110:1-2, 5-6).**

**“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.”—Daniel 2:44.**

**“Winepress”:** This was covered in much detail in Revelation 14:19-20. The devastation which will be produced here on earth at this time will be immense.

**“I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the**

people there was none with Me: for I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury . . . For the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed [to be delivered] is come.”—*Isaiah 63:3-4*.

The works of sinful man will be destroyed. **“The towers shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground”** (Eze. 38:20, margin). Every **“high tower”** and every **“fenced wall”** and **“all the ships”** and **“the idols”** will be destroyed **when the Lord ariseth to “shake terribly the earth”** (Isa. 2:12-21). In that great day the earth, with all its boasted grandeur, its lovely palaces, and its earthquake-proof buildings, will be reduced to ruin and rubble.

**“And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.” Revelation 19:16.**

**“King of kings”**: This is the second of the two times that this title appears in Revelation. While the pope in the Vatican tried to obtain this title, its true possessor now returns to vindicate His children.

“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings.”—*Revelation 17:14*.

**What a wonderful name! Our wonderful Lord is omnipotent; nothing can withstand Him.** For this we rejoice. He is the true King of kings! (Rev. 17:14; 19:15-16).

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**“And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.” Revelation 19:17-18.**

**“Standing in the sun”**: The brilliant light of the sun behind Him is symbolic of the **glorious light of the divine presence flowing from Him** as Jesus returns in the skies.

“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:** even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.”—*2 Thessalonians 2:8-9*.

**The wicked are filled with terror at the sight of the Lord’s coming.**

“And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, **hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;** and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”—*Revelation 6:15-17*.

**“Fowls . . . supper”:** In this symbolism, the birds of prey are called to come eat the bodies of the wicked. **This “supper” is in contrast to the marriage supper of the Lamb** (Rev. 19:9).

This call, to the ravenous birds (to prepare to feast), was given long ago as a warning to the wicked of their approaching fate.

“But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all His commandments . . . **thy carcass shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them away.**”—*Deuteronomy 28:15, 26 (Eze. 39:17; Jer. 7:32-33)*.

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**“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.” Revelation 19:19.**

**“Beast and kings”:** The great coalition of the wicked and their forces have gathered together to destroy God’s people. This is their way of warring against God.

“These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. **These shall make war with the Lamb**, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.”—*Revelation 17:13-14*.

**“To make war”**: This is part of the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:14). God will defend His helpless, faithful children on earth. He is riding to their rescue. (*For a full coverage of Armageddon, see comments on Revelation 16:16.*)

“Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; **Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near**; let them come up.”—*Joel 3:9*.

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**“And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of Him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of His mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”** Revelation 19:20-21.

**“Beast and false prophet”**: The beast is the papacy (Rev. 17:3-5); and the false prophet is the Protestant churches which have united with the beast in the worship of the image on Sunday (Rev. 13:11-17). A **“prophet”** speaks on behalf of someone else (Matt. 11:9-10). This “prophet” speaks on behalf of the first beast (Rev. 13:1-2), in connection with the healing of its “deadly wound” (Rev. 13:12; 17:8), to persuade the world to unite in allegiance to it.

**“And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity**; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.”—*Isaiah 13:11*.

**“Lake of fire”**: This fire represents the final destruc-

tion of the wicked, including Satan and his angels. *It is explained more fully in the next chapter (Rev. 20:9-15).*

**“Wrought miracles”:** The miracle-working power of spiritualism is the convincing evidence that brings so many into union with the beast and the false prophet (Rev. 13:13-14; 16:14; 17:2; 18:2-3, 23).

**“Mark of the beast”:** This is first mentioned in Revelation 13:16-18. The message of the Third Angel warns all men not to receive it (Rev. 14:9-11). They may avoid it by uniting with the commandment-keeping people of God (Rev. 14:12).

**“Lake of fire”:** This is “the lake which is fire.” *This phrase leads us directly into chapter 20.*

### Revelation 20

## *The Millennium and the Final Judgment*

**Brief overview**—This chapter begins after Christ’s Second Advent, when the wicked people have been slain and the redeemed have been taken to heaven. Satan is then “bound” to this earth, with his angels, and given time to think. Meanwhile, in heaven, the redeemed are assigned the work of judging the wicked—and determining the sentence they will receive. Then we are shown events after the millennium and the final judgment, at which time the wicked are forever destroyed.

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**“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no**



**more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.” Revelation 20:1-3.**

*This chapter tells us of events which occur after the Second Advent of Christ.*

**“Having the key”:** Heaven has complete control of events. Men and devils are no longer in charge.

**“Bottomless pit”:** The Greek word, *abussos*, is where we get our English word, “abyss.” It is translated as “deep,” in Romans 10:7, and is applied to the grave. Almost the same language is employed by Jeremiah when he says, “I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form and void” (Jer. 4:23). This follows the coming of the Lord.

“I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. **I beheld, and, lo, there was no man**, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and **all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by His fierce anger. For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate.**”—*Jeremiah 4:24-27.*

**“The earth looked like a desolate wilderness. Cities and villages, shaken down by the earthquake, lay in heaps.** Mountains had been moved out of their places, leaving large caverns. Ragged rocks, thrown out by the sea, or torn out of the earth itself, were scattered all over its surface. Large trees had been uprooted and were strewn over the land.

**“Here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years.** Here he will be confined, to wander up and down over the broken surface of the earth and see the effects of his rebellion against God’s law. **For a thousand years he can enjoy the fruit of the curse which he has caused.**”—*Early Writings, 290.*

**“Set a seal”:** This seal may be compared with that placed on the tomb of Jesus (Matt. 27:66). **The sealing symbolizes that Satan will be effectively restrained for the thousand years.**

**“Deceive the nations no more”**: Satan cannot tempt and deceive the wicked during this time; for they were all slain at Christ’s return for His people.

And there will also be others which he can no longer bother.

“Here he [Satan] will be confined, to wander up and down over the broken surface of the earth and see the effects of his rebellion against God’s law. For a thousand years he can enjoy the fruit of the curse which he has caused. **Limited alone to the earth, he will not have the privilege of ranging to other planets**, to tempt and annoy those who have not fallen . . .

“I heard shouts of triumph from the angels and from the redeemed saints, which sounded like ten thousand musical instruments, because they were to be no more annoyed and tempted by Satan and **because the inhabitants of other worlds were delivered from his presence and his temptations.**”—*Early Writings*, 290.

“Here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years. **Limited to the earth, he will not have access to other worlds to tempt and annoy those who have never fallen.** It is in this sense that he is bound: there are none remaining, upon whom he can exercise his power. He is wholly cut off from the work of deception and ruin which for so many centuries has been his sole delight.”—*Great Controversy*, 659.

This is actually the third fall of Satan. **The first fall occurred when Satan was literally cast out of heaven** (PP 42). **The second fall happened at the death of Christ**, when Satan could no longer accuse God’s faithful ones to the angels.

“But the work of human redemption is not all that is accomplished by the cross. The love of God is manifested to the universe. **The prince of this world is cast out. The accusations which Satan has brought against God are refuted.** The reproach which he has cast upon heaven is forever removed.”—*Desire of Ages*, 626.

**“By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he**

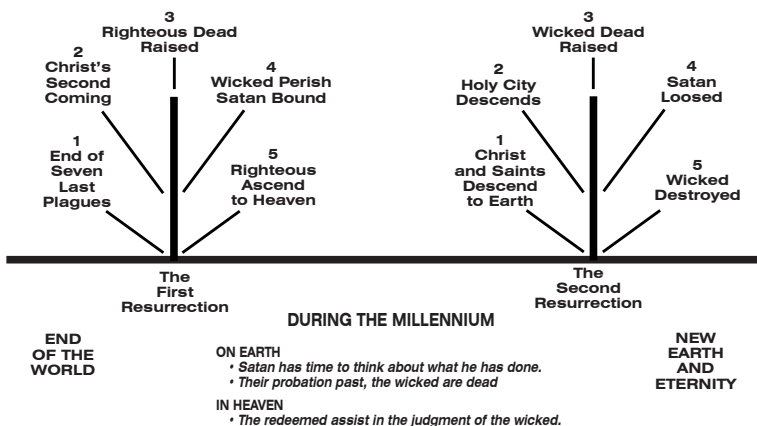
[Satan] had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. Henceforth his work was restricted. Whatever attitude he might assume, he could no longer await the angels as they came from the heavenly courts, and before them accuse Christ's brethren of being clothed with the garments of blackness and the defilement of sin. The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken."—*Desire of Ages*, 761.

The third casting down occurs at the beginning of the millennium, when Satan is restricted to this planet. (See quotations above: *EW* 290; *GC* 659).

**"Loosed":** Satan will be loosed for a little period of time at the end of the millennium.

*The Second Advent before the millennium*—The "thousand years" is mentioned in the Bible only in this chapter; it occurs six times in Revelation 20:1-7. It is also called the "millennium."

It is important to clearly understand that *the Second Advent of Christ precedes the millennium*; for the narrative



of Revelation 19 and 20 is continuous.

*The Second Advent is a single event, visible to everyone alive when He comes* (Matt. 24:30-31; Rev. 1:7). Christ does not touch the earth at His Second Coming, but slays the wicked with His brightness (2 Thess. 2:8). He raises the righteous dead to life and takes them, together with the righteous living, to heaven.

*The wicked are slain at His Advent* (Rev. 19:20-21).

*The righteous dead are raised at His Advent; and, with the living righteous, ascend with Him to heaven* (1 Cor. 15:51-55; 1 Thess. 4:16-17).

**The group that is caught up to meet the Lord in the air includes both the righteous dead, who are raised at the time of the advent, and the righteous living who are “changed;” that is, translated.**

“Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”—*1 Corinthians 15:51-52.*

“**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.**”—*1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.*

While the wicked are all destroyed at the coming of Christ, *the righteous are “caught up . . . in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air”* (1 Thess. 4:17). Paul’s language shows that, **at His second coming, Christ does not establish His kingdom on earth; why else would He remove His faithful ones from the earth? He does not return to earth until after the millennium is completed**, when the New Jerusalem comes down (Rev. 21:1-3). Christ’s statement, in John 14:1-3, also implies that He is going to take His

people to heaven. Jesus told them He was going to heaven to prepare dwellings for them and He would return again for them. (*cf.* John 17:24). Those dwellings are probably in the New Jerusalem, and are not transferred to earth until after the thousand years (Rev. 21:1-3).

***Here on earth during the Millennium***—The world is in a chaotic condition, devoid of life during the millennium (Jer. 4:23-26), with only Satan and his angels here.

The second resurrection (John 5:28-29; Rev. 20:6) will occur after the millennium, when the wicked dead will be raised to life (Isa. 24:21-22) to receive their final punishment and eternal death. (*More on this later in this chapter*).

The above passages clearly show that the millennium is not an earthly thousand years of peace, as some speculate.

We have observed a gradual progression of events which were climaxed by the awesome scene of the Second Advent of Christ, to gather His faithful children to Himself and take them to heaven.

The earth has been emptied of inhabitants. There are no longer any people to tempt. And Satan and his angels are not permitted to leave this world. (All four names for Satan are given here again; so there can be no doubt as to his identity. See Revelation 12:9.)

“And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.”—*Revelation 20:2*.

Symbolically, it is as if he is chained to this planet. He is forced to remain in this empty, deserted world, which to him is like a “bottomless pit.” For six thousand years, he has feverishly tempted people; but now he and his demons have no one to annoy; all they can do is think about all the wickedness they have done and contemplate the terrible future ahead of them.

“For a thousand years, Satan will wander to and fro in the desolate earth to behold the results of his rebellion

against the law of God. **During this time his sufferings are intense. Since his fall his life of unceasing activity has banished reflection;** but he is now deprived of his power and left to contemplate the part which he has acted since first he rebelled against the government of heaven and **to look forward with trembling and terror to the dreadful future**, when he must suffer for all the evil that he has done and be punished for the sins that he has caused to be committed.”—*Great Controversy*, 660.

**It is now, during this present time of probation, before the end comes, that you and I must make our decision to remain loyal to God regardless of the suffering and persecution we may encounter.**

Listen not to the devil’s temptations, that you can live by disobeying the commandments of God; for that is not what God’s Word teaches!

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: **Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment**, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”—*Ecclesiastes 12:13-14*.

“**See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments** and His statutes and His judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.”—*Deuteronomy 30:15-16*.

The Bible warns us of many things we should totally avoid. Stubbornly remaining with any of them will later destroy us.

“**There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.**”—*Proverbs 14:12*.

For six thousand years the earth and its inhabitants have been groaning under the curse of sin. **The millennium, the seventh thousand year, will be a Sabbath of rest and release; for, says the prophet concerning the land, “as**

long as she lay desolate she kept the Sabbath (2 Chron. 36:21). Just as there was a “sabbatical year” every seventh year (Ex. 23:10-11), when the land could rest, so the entire world will rest during the seventh thousand year since the Creation of our world.

“**The whole earth appears like a desolate wilderness.** The ruins of cities and villages destroyed by the earthquake, uprooted trees, ragged rocks thrown out by the sea or torn out of the earth itself, are scattered over its surface, while vast caverns mark the spot where the mountains have been rent from their foundations.”—*Great Controversy*, 657.

**The Scapegoat transaction**—There is an interesting passage in the Old Testament. At the end of the day of the atonement service, after the cleansing of the sanctuary had been completed, the Bible tells us that this occurred:

“**And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place,** and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar [*the atonement was completed*], he shall bring the live goat: **And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel,** and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, **and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness.**”—*Leviticus 16:20-21*.

*Let us consider this briefly:*

- We are here dealing with something stated in Scripture. **This is a Biblical concept**, and we must understand it.

- Careful Bible students have concluded that this goat, the scapegoat (*Azazel*, in the Hebrew; see the margin of the KJV), **represents Satan**.

- **The atonement in the sanctuary was already completed—totally finished**—before the high priest walked over to the scapegoat (Lev. 16:20-21).

- Azazel was not a sin-bearer. **The sins of Israel had been earlier placed on the head of the goat which was slain.** “. . . and offer him for a sin offering” (Lev. 16:9).

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- **The slain goat represents Christ, who died on Calvary** and paid the debt for the sins of all who will accept and obey Him.

- The use of the preposition “*for*,” in the Hebrew of Leviticus 16:8, implies that **each of the lots were cast for a person**—one for God and one for Azazel. So Azazel must be a person. (It is not an impersonal name for evil.) He must be a person, a spirit being who stands in opposition to the Lord; and therefore Azazel is Satan.

- **The scapegoat produced no perfection of life or character.** It never afterward did anything involving dignity or honor.

- **The records of the evil deeds of God’s people have been cleansed** from the heavenly Sanctuary, **and therefore blotted out.** God’s people are forever freed from them.

- These sins are **all borne from the Sanctuary before Satan is called** into requisition at all.

- God simply uses him as the vehicle **by which to make a final disposition of these sins** in the lake of fire.

- Thus, **so far as the work of atonement itself is concerned** (the plan and work of mercy by which God’s people are forgiven their sins), **Satan has no part** to act.

- He is not, in any way, involved in the atonement for sins. **Christ’s atonement was full and complete for all! He alone bore the sins of the righteous and atoned for them.**

- Satan has to pay his part for all the sins which he tempted God’s people to commit.

**“When the work of atonement in the heavenly Sanctuary has been completed, then in the presence of God and heavenly angels and the hosts of the redeemed the sins of God’s people will be placed upon Satan; he will be declared guilty of all the evil which he has caused them to commit. And as the scapegoat was sent away into a land not inhabited, so Satan will be banished to the desolate earth, an uninhabited and dreary wilderness.**



**“The revelator foretells the banishment of Satan and the condition of chaos and desolation to which the earth is to be reduced, and he declares that this condition will exist for a thousand years.”—*Great Controversy*, 658.**

*Next, we come to the second part of chapter 20, as we are shown what happens after Jesus takes His faithful ones to heaven.*

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

**“Thrones”:** In Revelation the word, “throne,” is found 39 times; and “thrones” is found only here.

**In the Bible, usually only one sits on a throne, but there are exceptions.** Aside from 1 Kings 2:19, in Acts 2:30, God raised up Christ to sit on His throne. In Revelation 22:3, both the Father and the Son are on the throne (EW 54-55; 92). In another passage, the overcomers will sit on the throne with both of them!

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

**In three passages, the redeemed will sit on thrones, judging the wicked:** Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30; and here in Revelation 20:4. Psalm 122:5 also mentions “thrones of judgment.”

**Jesus has promised to take His faithful ones to be with Him** (John 14:1-3). It is a promise that will be fulfilled (1 Thess. 4:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:51-52). **And, now, at the beginning of the millennium, Christ has done it.** This is the “first resurrection” (Rev. 20:5).

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Having arrived in heaven, the redeemed rejoice that they are now with Jesus,—and He gives them a special work to do.

“I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and **judgment was given to the saints of the most High**; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.”—*Daniel 7:21-22*.

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and **judgment was given unto them.**”—*Revelation 20:4*.

**The redeemed open the record books of heaven and learn why those who are lost are not in heaven.** Many a discovery will be made! In each case, **they clearly find that the person who lost out on heaven had, by his or her own choice, made salvation impossible.**

When the great controversy is ended and the wicked are forever blotted out of existence,—**throughout all eternity, there will never be a question as to why any of the lost were not saved.**

**“Judgment is given to them”:** But there is another reason why God’s people in heaven examine the books of record: “Judgment is given to them” (Rev. 20:4). The word here is *krima*, which means a sentence, verdict, or decision rendered. “Judgment was given to the saints of the most High” (Dan. 7:22).

Each life must be examined; and—before they forever perish, nevermore to come to life—**the amount of time of final punishment that each person must suffer must be determined.** This sentence is written opposite each name.

**Not only lost humans, but wicked angels and even Satan himself are judged during this time.**

“Do ye not know that **the saints shall judge the world?** And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? **Know ye not that we shall judge angels?** How much more things that pertain to this life?”—*1 Corinthians 6:2-3*.

**Christ and the redeemed analyze the books together.**

“Then I saw thrones, and Jesus and the redeemed

**saints sat upon them**; and the saints reigned as kings and priests unto God. **Christ, in union with His people, judged the wicked dead**, comparing their acts with the statute book, the Word of God, and deciding every case according to the deeds done in the body. Then they meted out to the wicked the portion which they must suffer, according to their works; **and it was written against their names in the book of death. Satan also and his angels were judged by Jesus and the saints.**—*Early Writings, 290-291.*

You will recall that, from 1844 to the close of probation, there is an *Investigative Judgment*, by Jesus in the Sanctuary, to determine who of those who professed faith in Christ will be saved.

The examination during the thousand-year millennium is the *Sentencing Judgment*.

After the thousand years will come the *Executive Judgment*; at this time the wicked, including Satan and his angels, will fully understand why they must perish—and will then be forever destroyed.

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

**“Rest of the dead”:** This obviously refers to the **wicked dead**—not only those who died at Christ’s Second Advent but also all those who died throughout the long centuries before.

**“First resurrection”:** Just as **all the righteous dead will arise at the Second Advent** (1 Thess. 4:13-17, called the “*first resurrection*” in Revelation 20:5-6), so **all the wicked will arise at the Third Advent**—the “*second resurrection.*” These two resurrections are also mentioned in John 5:28-29 and Acts 24:15.

If the nations of earth are to unite with Satan in the final assault on the holy city after the millennium (Rev. 20:8), they must be raised to life when the millennium ends.

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Therefore, Satan deceives the nations no more until the thousand years are finished (Rev. 20:5-8).

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**“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.” Revelation 20:6-8.**

**“Blessed”**: The Greek is *“makarios,”* which means happy, or blessed, in Matthew 5:3-11.

**“Second death”**: *There are two deaths.* The first death normally comes to everyone as a result of accident, terminal illness, or old age (1 Cor. 15:22).

**“It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”—Hebrews 9:27.**

The wicked will experience the second death at the close of the thousand years (Rev. 21:8). In Revelation 20:14, it is called “the second death.”

***There are also two resurrections:***

“There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”—*Acts 24:15.*

“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.*

**At Christ’s Second Coming, the righteous come forth from their graves immortal** (1 Cor. 15:52-55), and are taken to heaven (1 Thess. 4:16-17).

**At the Third Advent, the wicked are raised to receive their final punishment—and die an eternal death** (Rev. 20:9; 21:8). God destroys them, both body and soul, in hellfire (Matt. 10:28). This is not continued life—but final

annihilation. **The second death—is death; it is an eternal blotting out of existence, oblivion.** It is the exact opposite of the error that teaches that it is an endless, tortured life. (*More on this when we come to verse 9.*)

**“When the thousand years are expired (The third advent of Christ)”:** The return of Christ to the earth is inferred here, but not stated. But it is stated in the next chapter:

“And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”—*Revelation 21:2.*

“He [the angel] 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.”—*Revelation 21:10.*

The fact that the “beloved city” is being surrounded (in Rev. 20:9) clearly shows that it has descended, although the actual descent is not described until the next chapter. Even though this event is described with extreme brevity, the sequence of events is clear when the entire context is examined.

**When, after the millennium, Christ returns at His Third Coming, His feet touch the Mount of Olives and it splits in half, forming a great plain, according to this fulfillment of prophecy.** Then the Holy City (the New Jerusalem) comes down from heaven to earth and settles on this vast plain.

“**And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south . . . And the Lord shall be king over all the earth:** in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one.”—*Zechariah 14:4, 9.*

**“Satan loosed”:** What is it that causes Satan to be loosed out of his prison? It is the return of Jesus to the

earth and the resurrection of the wicked. Satan will then once again have subjects upon whom to practice his deceptive guile.

**“At the close of the thousand years, Christ again returns to the earth. He is accompanied by the host of the redeemed and attended by a retinue of angels.**

**“As He descends in terrific majesty, He bids the wicked dead arise to receive their doom. They come forth, a mighty host,** numberless as the sands of the sea. What a contrast to those who were raised at the first resurrection! The righteous were clothed with immortal youth and beauty. The wicked bear the traces of disease and death . .

**“As the New Jerusalem, in its dazzling splendor, comes down out of heaven, it rests upon the place purified and made ready to receive it, and Christ, with His people and the angels, enters the Holy City.”—*Great Controversy*, 662-663.**

**“Gog and Magog”:** Gog, of the land of Magog, is the name by which Ezekiel calls the leader of the heathen hosts who would attack the restored Jewish nation after the return of the exiles from Babylon (Eze. 38:2, 14-22). **Secular historians and archaeologists have never found any people who match that name.** This name does not match any group in the Old Testament. **But a careful reading of that passage in Ezekiel 38 reveals that it closely parallels the effort of Satan and the wicked, after the millennium, to destroy the people of God within the New Jerusalem (Rev. 20:8-9).**

The occurrences in Ezekiel (38:2-3, 14, 16, 18; 39:1, 11, 15) describe the leader of a vast coalition of heathen nations and the immense army accompanying him. It matches the description given in Revelation 20.

**Gog will come up against the city with a “mighty army” as a “cloud” for multitude (Eze. 38:15-16). But God will rain fire down upon them, destroying them.**

**“I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing**

rain, and great hailstones, **fire, and brimstone.** Thus will I magnify Myself, and sanctify Myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and **they shall know that I am the Lord.**—*Ezekiel 38:22-23.*

“*Hamon-gog*” means the “multitude of Gog.” In Eze. 39:11, 15, the valley of “*Hamon-gog*” is mentioned as the burying place of the vast army of the wicked, after divine justice has destroyed them. The symbolism there is of a truly immense army that is buried.

**Notice that this army, after death, is gone! It does not live on forever in hellfire!**

“*To gather them together to battle*”: Literally “for the battle.” (There is a difference; for no actual battle occurs.) **This is the final attempt to destroy the righteous, just before the wicked are forever annihilated. It is actually the last part of the battle of Armageddon** when, at the end of time, Satan tries to totally wipe out all of God’s faithful people. That battle began before the Second Advent (Rev. 16:16). However, in a very real sense, the battle between the forces of good and evil, between Christ and Satan, has continued in this world since the Garden of Eden.

“*As the sand of the sea*”: **The number of wicked who are raised, at the end of the thousand years, is incredibly large!** It includes billions upon billions of people! John, viewing the scene, is astounded at the sight of the vast number of people.

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**“And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city.” Revelation 20:9a.**

**Satan recognizes this as his opportunity!** Unable to tempt anyone for a thousand years,—now he has untold millions ready to do his bidding. And what is it that he wants them to do? —**Just what he has tried to do for thousands of years: kill all of God’s people!**

The wicked come forth from their graves just as they went in. But, **in spite of their weaknesses, Satan is per-**

mitted to energize and inspire them to prepare for battle against the city. *As usual, he starts lying to them:*

**“Now Satan prepares for a last mighty struggle for the supremacy.** While deprived of his power and cut off from his work of deception, the prince of evil was miserable and dejected; but **as the wicked dead are raised and he sees the vast multitudes upon his side, his hopes revive, and he determines not to yield the great controversy.** He will marshal all the armies of the lost under his banner and through them endeavor to execute his plans.

“The wicked are Satan’s captives. In rejecting Christ they have accepted the rule of the rebel leader. They are ready to receive his suggestions and to do his bidding. Yet, **true to his early cunning, he does not acknowledge himself to be Satan. He claims to be the prince who is the rightful owner of the world** and whose inheritance has been unlawfully wrested from him. **He represents himself to his deluded subjects as a redeemer, assuring them that his power has brought them forth from their graves** and that he is about to rescue them from the most cruel tyranny.

“The presence of Christ having been removed, Satan works wonders to support his claims. He makes the weak strong and inspires all with his own spirit and energy. **He proposes to lead them against the camp of the saints and to take possession of the City of God.** With fiendish exultation he points to the unnumbered millions who have been raised from the dead and declares that as their leader he is well able to overthrow the city and regain his throne and his kingdom.”—*Great Controversy*, 663.

“With fiendish exultation,” **Satan intends to kill everyone in the city!** We are told that Satan will “gather them together to battle” (Rev. 20:8). **There is a lot involved in that one phrase; for extensive preparations have to be made.**

“As they come forth from their graves, they resume the current of their thoughts where it ceased in death. **They possess the same desire to conquer which ruled**



**when they fell.** Satan consults with his angels, and then with those kings and conquerors and mighty men. Then he looks over the vast army, and tells them that the company in the city is small and feeble, and that they can go up and take it, and cast out its inhabitants, and possess its riches and glory themselves.

**“Satan succeeds in deceiving them, and all immediately begin to prepare themselves for battle. There are many skillful men in that vast army, and they construct all kinds of implements of war.”**—*Early Writings*, 293.

**“They lay their plans to take possession of the riches and glory of the New Jerusalem. All immediately begin to prepare for battle. Skillful artisans construct implements of war. Military leaders, famed for their success, marshal the throngs of warlike men into companies and divisions.”**—*Great Controversy*, 664.

*A couple of facts should be noted here: First: The righteous have examined all the cases of the wicked during the millennium and decided the amount of punishment that each will receive. (Many may receive only a little, before eternally perishing.)*

—**The redeemed now have opportunity to view a living evidence of the hatred of those people.** The wicked are so filled with hatred (and, frankly, murder) in their hearts that they are determined to help Satan try to slay all of the redeemed in the Holy City!

*Second: Christ is going to give Satan as much time as he needs to prepare for this final battle.*

**“It was God’s purpose to place things on an eternal basis of security, and in the councils of heaven it was decided that time must be given for Satan to develop the principles which were the foundation of his system of government.** He had claimed that these were superior to God’s principles. **Time was given for the working of Satan’s principles, that they might be seen by the heavenly universe.”**—*Desire of Ages*, 759.

**“Yet Satan was not then [at Calvary] destroyed. The**

angels did not even then understand all that was involved in the great controversy. **The principles at stake were to be more fully revealed.** And for the sake of man, Satan's existence must be continued. **Man as well as angels must see the contrast between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness.**"—*Ibid.*, p. 761.

*Third: Satan is determined to be totally prepared; for he knows that he will have only one chance to destroy those in the city. This is an extremely important point!* Satan is not going to give the order to begin the battle at the walls until he feels certain that his army is prepared for a powerful, rapid, overwhelming onslaught against the city.

**Therefore, we can know that many years will be spent preparing armaments and weapons of war.** This will take time; but Satan has a vast host of brilliant scientists, research technicians, factory workers, able generals, trained soldiers, and other helpers on his side. He also has thousands of highly intelligent giants who lived before the Flood.

**Yet the earth is in a desolate condition; and everything must be designed, built, and fabricated.** Steel mills must be constructed, atomic facilities erected, and ammunition factories built and set in operation. All this will take time.

"The earth looked like a desolate wilderness. Cities and villages, shaken down by the earthquake, lay in heaps. Mountains had been moved out of their places, leaving large caverns. Ragged rocks, thrown out by the sea, or torn out of the earth itself, were scattered all over its surface. Large trees had been uprooted and were strewn over the land."—*Early Writings*, 290.

—**Yet, all the while, the redeemed and the angels will be watching it all—well aware of the deadly purpose for which the wicked are preparing.** In addition, they also are stunned at the utter vileness of their characters as they do it. While the redeemed are filled with extreme happiness at being with Jesus, the wicked are consumed with anger and disgust with one another, as they work.

Close to a description of the New Earth (Isa. 66:22-24),

there is a strange verse which may refer to this preparation time that Satan needs, before attacking the Holy City:

“The child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.”—*Isaiah 65:20.*

Many small children quickly copy the wicked attitudes of their parents; yet there will be other unsaved who die in infancy and never will be raised to immortality or to punishment and eternal death. There is much that we do not know.

**However, we know that no children will die in the New Earth. So the above verse may indicate that Satan will need one hundred years in preparing for the onslaught against the city.**

**He will be determined to have all types of advanced weapons; and he has the experts on his side who know how to prepare them.** However, earth’s infrastructure was reduced to ruins by that immense earthquake which occurred before the Second Advent. That slows their efforts.

**Armaments of all kinds are gradually produced,** very likely including nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles. The city which they plan to conquer is rather large.

**Christ gives them all the time they need in order to feel they are fully prepared.** And, in order to make sure that he is prepared, Satan does not rush this preparation. *He knows this will be his only opportunity to succeed!*

**Soldiers are trained under the experienced guidance of lifetime military men who almost never lost a battle.** Thutmose III, Darius I, Julius Caesar, Attila the Hun, Genghis Khan, Napoleon Bonaparte, and all the other great conquerors of the ages will be there.

Yet, throughout those many years of preparation, *the righteous in the city and the good angels—have a final view of the depth of evil to which the wicked sink!* **There will never, never again be a doubt as to whether anyone who was lost—should have been lost!** For everyone outside the walls was dedicated to the work of destroying the godly.

**When Satan finally decides that they are fully pre-**

pared, with him at their head, they march across the broken surface of the earth and surround the Holy City. It is not until that moment that Christ orders that the twelve gates in the walls be shut.

**“Then with Satan at their head, the multitude moves on.** Kings and warriors follow close after Satan, and the multitude follow after in companies. Each company has its leader, and order is observed as they march over the broken surface of the earth to the Holy City.”—*Early Writings*, 293.

**Notice that not only is Satan and billions upon billions of the wicked in that army,—but all of Satan’s angels are also!**

**“At last the order to advance is given, and the countless host moves on—**an army such as was never summoned by earthly conquerors, such as the combined forces of all ages since war began on earth could never equal. **Satan, the mightiest of warriors, leads the van, and his angels unite their forces for this final struggle.** Kings and warriors are in his train, and the multitudes follow in vast companies, each under its appointed leader. With military precision the serried ranks advance over the earth’s broken and uneven surface to the City of God. **By command of Jesus, the gates of the New Jerusalem are closed, and the armies of Satan surround the city and make ready for the onset.**”—*Great Controversy*, 664.

**“Compass the camp”:** Literally “encircle.” **The armies of the wicked totally surround all four sides of the city.** From this, we can know that they have modern, portable communication devices (probably cell phones or something similar). When Satan gives the order to begin firing, all his forces will instantly know it.

**As the wicked surround the New Jerusalem, they set up their armaments and place their armies in preparation for the assault.** They probably intend not only to smash the walls with huge cannon fire, but also shoot warheads inside the city to decimate those inside.

Satan is just about to give the order for those on all sides of the Holy City to begin firing artillery at the walls and missiles over them,—*when suddenly everyone freezes*. No orders to attack are given, no triggers are pulled. (We will discuss the last part of Revelation 20:9 shortly.)

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**“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. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.”**  
**Revelation 20:11-13.**

**“A great white throne”:** This throne is white, indicating the just sentences that proceed from it.

This is the only time that “white throne” is found in the Bible. It means that an intense, glorious light is flowing forth from the throne and from Deity. (cf. Isa. 6:1-4). Light ever surrounds the throne (DA 112), and rays of light emanate from it (2T 619). Glory flashes from it (GC 637, 414).

**It is at this point that the *Executive Judgment* occurs.** Here, once again in brief review, are all three Judgments:

The ***Investigative Judgment***, before human probation ends, determines who will be saved.

The ***Sentencing Judgment***, during the millennium, decides the length of punishment in the lake of fire that each of the lost will receive.

Now finally comes the ***Executive Judgment***. The objective is to clearly reveal the wickedness of the wicked—to the wicked themselves, and to convince them that they deserve the second death.

## Millennium and Final Judgement 541

As Satan is about to give the order to begin firing, everyone is stopped in his tracks—for all behold an astounding sight!

**“Him that sat on it”:** Just then, accompanied by the redeemed, Christ rises above the city walls in full view of everyone outside. His glory and majesty flood out past the walls and fill the earth.

“Now Christ again appears to the view of His enemies. Far above the city, upon a foundation of burnished gold, is a throne, high and lifted up. Upon this throne sits the Son of God, and around Him are the subjects of His kingdom. The power and majesty of Christ no language can describe, no pen portray. The glory of the Eternal Father is enshrouding His Son. The brightness of His presence fills the City of God, and flows out beyond the gates, flooding the whole earth with its radiance.”—*Great Controversy*, 665.

**“Fled away”:** Amid the overmastering brilliance of the glory of Christ, the wicked feel totally out of place, and they wish they could flee far away.

**“The dead”:** The wicked around the city are already as good as dead. They are raised to face the Judgment; then they will perish very soon, nevermore to exist.

Paralyzed with fear, unable to man their weapons of war, the wicked realize that their situation is hopeless.

Now occurs the *Executive Judgment*, which has two phases. First the wicked are shown exactly what they did that was wrong. Then the fire falls; and, within a relatively short period of time, nearly all of them are burned up. Some suffer longer, and Satan and his angels suffer the longest. Here is the first part of this final Judgment:

**“They stand before God”:** The books of record are opened and the wicked stand there transfixed. None of the wicked can avoid appearing in person before God on His throne. There is not a word that any can speak in his own defense; for, as their lives pass before them, they see that God had repeatedly given them opportunity to

repent and live in a godly manner.

“As soon as the books of record are opened, and the eye of Jesus looks upon the wicked, **they are conscious of every sin which they have ever committed.** They see just where their feet diverged from the path of purity and holiness, just how far pride and rebellion have carried them in the violation of the law of God. **The seductive temptations which they encouraged by indulgence in sin, the blessings perverted, the messengers of God despised, the warnings rejected,** the waves of mercy beaten back by the stubborn, unrepentant heart—all appear as if written in letters of fire.”—*Great Controversy*, 666.

***And they were judged:*** And the wicked are judged out of those books. **No sentence passed upon any wicked person will be arbitrary, biased, or unfair.**

“The whole wicked world stand arraigned at the bar of God, on the charge of high treason against the government of heaven. They have none to plead their cause; they are without excuse; and the sentence of eternal death is pronounced against them.

“**It is now evident to all that the wages of sin is not noble independence and eternal life, but slavery, ruin, and death.** The wicked see what they have forfeited by their life of rebellion. **The far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory was despised when offered them; but how desirable it now appears.**”—*Story of Redemption*, 425.

“***According to their works***”: It is their own lives—their thoughts, their decisions, their words, and their actions—which decide their fate.

In the *Sentencing Judgment* during the millennium, all of the unsaved had been judged “according to their works.” **It was conduct (thoughts, words, and actions) that decided the fate of each one**—not profession or fame or wealth or position.

Now, in the *Executive Judgment*, all this is clearly shown to them. **They do not read what is in those books,**

nor is it read to them. Instead, each person visually sees it all. His entire life passes before his or her eyes—and every evil deed passes before them. They grasp it all as they view one crucial scene after another. They see all the ways they rejected God's pleadings and veered off into sin.

**“As soon as the books of record are opened, and the eye of Jesus looks upon the wicked, they are conscious of every sin which they have ever committed.** They see just where their feet diverged from the path of purity and holiness, just how far pride and rebellion have carried them in the violation of the law of God. The seductive temptations which they encouraged by indulgence in sin, **the blessings perverted, the messengers of God despised, the warnings rejected, the waves of mercy beaten back** by the stubborn, unrepentant heart—all appear as if written in letters of fire.”—*Great Controversy*, 666.

**The wicked are next shown a panoramic view of the life, sufferings, and death of Christ.** He went through terrible agony in order to provide them with salvation which, in their lives, they had rejected (GC 666-667).

**“A sense of the treasure and glory which they have lost rushes upon them, and they realize that the wages of sin is death.** They see the holy, happy company whom they have despised, clothed with glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life, while they are outside the city with every mean and abominable thing.”—*Early Writings*, 294.

As soon as all this is shown to them, **they fall down before Christ and confess that He has always been right and they deserve a death that is eternal.** At this juncture, **Satan also yields;** and, prostrating himself, he makes the same confession that God was right and he was wrong.

**But then, rising, Satan once again determines to continue the warfare! Springing to his feet, he tries to enlist the wicked into instant battle.** This might seem to be a foolish thing to do, *but keep in mind that all they have to do is push those buttons.* Satan knows that, as soon as



they do so, those nuclear-tipped rockets and missiles will immediately fire.

**Yet Satan's influence is at an end. The wicked realize that their case is hopeless;** and now those evil people turn on Satan and one another.

**“He [Satan] rushes into the midst of his subjects and endeavors to inspire them with his own fury and arouse them to instant battle. But of all the countless millions whom he has allured into rebellion, there are none now to acknowledge his supremacy.** His power is at an end. The wicked are filled with the same hatred of God that inspires Satan; but they see that their case is hopeless, that they cannot prevail against Jehovah. **Their rage is kindled against Satan and those who have been his agents in deception,** and with the fury of demons they turn upon them.”—*Great Controversy*, 672.

At this moment, it is clear to every mind throughout the entire universe that God and Christ are totally good in all they do, and the rebellion of Satan and his followers has always been without excuse and totally evil.

**All see that their punishment is just.** They did not want redemption when God repeatedly offered it to them; and now it is lost to them forever.

**“The whole wicked world stand arraigned at the bar of God on the charge of high treason against the government of heaven. They have none to plead their cause; they are without excuse; and the sentence of eternal death is pronounced against them.”**—*Great Controversy*, 668.

***At this moment the great controversy between Christ and Satan and his followers has ended!*** Everyone in the entire universe fully understands the issues. There is no longer any reason for the wicked to have further existence. —**And the fire falls.**

**“Some were quickly destroyed, while others suffered longer.** They were punished according to the deeds done in the body. Some were many days consuming . . . **Satan and his angels suffered long.** Satan

bore not only the weight and punishment of his own sins, but also of the sins of the redeemed host, which had been placed upon him; and he must also suffer for the ruin of souls which he had caused . . . **Satan and all the wicked host were consumed, and the justice of God was satisfied . . .** They are now consumed root and branch. **They have died an everlasting death. They are never to have a resurrection . . .** God's entire universe was clean, and the great controversy was forever ended."—*Early Writings*, 294-295.

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**“. . . and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.” Revelation 20:9b.**

**“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.” Revelation 20:10.**

**“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Revelation 20:14-15.**

**“*Whosoever was not found*”:** Whoever is not in the book of life will perish. Only the names of God's faithful ones will be kept in it.

**“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.*”—Revelation 3:5.**

**“*And fire came down*”:** This fire does not bring them renewed life; instead, it **“devours them.”** In the Greek, this word means “ate down.” The form of the verb indicates action completed. The fire does not chew on them forever; **it consumes them and they are gone. The wicked are annihilated. They suffer the “second death”** (Rev. 20:6). There is no hint here of endless torture in an ever-burning hell. ***God would not impose an eternity of suffering to a person, as punishment for the actions of the few years of his earthly life!***

**“Lake of fire”**: So much fire comes down that it produces a “lake of fire” everywhere on the earth, except where the New Jerusalem is located. **This lake is on the surface of the earth;—yet the redeemed have been promised that they will inherit the earth!** But they cannot claim it if the wicked will be burning on its surface forever!

“Blessed are the meek: for **they shall inherit the earth.**”—*Matthew 5:5.*

“**But the meek shall inherit the earth;** and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.”—*Psalms 37:11.*

**Hellfire is real; yet it will only occur on the surface of the earth and will not last very long.**

This “lake of fire” is a sea of flames that not only destroys the wicked, *but totally purifies the earth.* The righteous, inside the city, are perfectly safe throughout this event.

“Fire comes down from God out of Heaven. The earth is broken up. **The weapons concealed in its depths are drawn forth.** Devouring flames burst from every yawning chasm. The very rocks are on fire. The day has come that shall burn as an oven. The elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein are burned up. Malachi 4:1; 2 Peter 3:10. **The earth’s surface seems one molten mass,**—a vast, seething lake of fire. **It is the time of the judgment and perdition of ungodly men,**—the day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion.” Isaiah 34:8. [Also see Proverbs 11:3.]—*Great Controversy, 672-673.*

As soon as the wicked have been consumed and the fire burns out,—**the Lord will remake our planet into a most beautiful paradise!** (*More on that in the next two chapters.*)

**“Forever and ever”**: “Unto the ages of the ages” is what the phrase means. **It is not the fire, but the eternal results that are here indicated.** “Forever and ever” means as long as their life lasts. It does not mean everlasting life in an eternally burning hell. **The wages of sin are death,**

not eternal life.

In the beginning, God said that those who sinned would die (Gen. 2:17); but **Satan said that, if they sinned, they would not die** (Gen. 3:4). There still are those who claim that those who sin will never die (perish), but have life without end. But that is not true. **Only the redeemed will never die (never perish).**

**“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”—Romans 6:23.**

**“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him *should not perish, but have everlasting life.*”—John 3:16.**

**The amount of time for the punishment of each person and evil angel in the lake of fire had been decided by God and the heavenly court earlier during the millennium** (Rev. 20:4). Some suffer as in a moment and then cease to exist. Others live many days; but Satan suffers the longest. All eventually enter into eternal death and are as if they had never existed. **It is not eternal life in fire, but eternal death in oblivion.**

**“Death and hell”:** Death and hell (*hades*, the grave) are cast into the lake also. That means that **death and dying also eternally end at that time!** It means that **hellfire is about to stop, nevermore to occur again** throughout all eternity! Both are the last to be destroyed. “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (*1 Cor. 15:26*). *Death itself will be forever gone.*

**“Then the end will come. God will vindicate His law and deliver His people.** Satan and all who have joined him in rebellion will be cut off. **Sin and sinners will perish, root and branch** (Malachi 4:1)—Satan the root, and his followers the branches. The word will be fulfilled to the prince of evil, ‘Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; . . . **I will destroy thee,** O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. . . Thou shalt be a terror, and **never shalt thou be any more.**’ Then ‘the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt

diligently consider his place, and it shall not be;’ **‘they shall be as though they had not been.’** Ezekiel 28:6-19; Psalm 37:10; Obadiah 16.”—*Desire of Ages*, 763.

**“Satan’s work of ruin is forever ended.** For six thousand years he has wrought his will, filling the earth with woe and causing grief throughout the universe. The whole creation has groaned and travailed together in pain. **Now God’s creatures are forever delivered from his presence and temptations.** “The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they [the righteous] break forth into singing.” Isaiah 14:7. And a shout of praise and triumph ascends from the whole loyal universe.”—*Great Controversy*, 673.

***This final fire—Here are additional Bible facts about the final death of the wicked:***

The question is asked: “What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” (1 Peter 4:17). The answer is that they will die the second death, and only God’s faithful ones will inherit eternal life:

**“For the wages of sin is death;** but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”—*Romans 6:23*. **“The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”**—*Ezekiel 18:4*.

The first death is the death that comes to all (1 Cor. 15:22; Heb. 9:27). And, we are told, that both the righteous and the wicked will be raised from death (John 5:28-29). The wicked will be raised to receive their punishment and to die an eternal death (Rev. 20:9; 21:8). **God “will destroy [not keep alive] both soul and body in hell”** (Matt. 10:28). This means annihilation.

The second death—is death, not life! It is the exact opposite of an endless life under torture, which some teach will be the fate of the wicked. **The wicked are annihilated. They suffer the “second death.”**

**“He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”**—*Revelation 2:11*. **“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power.”**—*Revelation 20:6*. **“And death**

and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the **second death.**”—*Revelation 20:14*.

**This is the same fire from God out of heaven that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah,—yet neither one are still burning today. It is a fire that totally accomplishes its purpose, and then goes out.**

“Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, **suffering the vengeance of eternal fire [fire with eternal effects].**”—*Jude 7*.

That fire turned “the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes” (*2 Peter 2:6*).

**The wicked will be rewarded for their lives of sin with endless death.** The wages are death, not eternal life.

“**For the wages of sin is death.**”—*Romans 6:23*.

“**The soul that sinneth, it shall die.**”—*Ezekiel 18:4*.

The wicked shall be punished with “**everlasting destruction,**” a destruction with everlasting effects (*2 Thess. 1:9; Ps. 37:20*). The Bible repeatedly says that the righteous will “not perish,” but, in stark contrast, it also says that the wicked will “perish.”

The wicked shall “**utterly perish** in their own corruption” (*2 Peter 2:12*).

“*Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*”—*Luke 13:3*.

“**The wicked shall perish,** and the enemies of the Lord shall be **as the fat of lambs; they shall consume, into smoke** shall they consume away.”—*Psalms 37:20*.

**Nothing burns up as quickly as “fat”** (quoted above, *Ps. 37:20*) or “**chaff**” (quoted below, *Matt. 3:12; Mal. 4:1*).

You have read in newspapers about fires in buildings that are “unquenchable;” that is, the firemen could not put them out until the structures burned down. The fire that consumes the wicked will also be “unquenchable.” That is, **it cannot be quenched until it has finished its work; then it will go out by itself.**

“He [Christ] will thoroughly purge His floor, and

gather His wheat into the garner; but **He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire [fire that cannot be put out until its work is done].**—*Matthew 3:12*.

After they are burned up, the wicked will no longer exist.

**This fire is called “everlasting” (Greek, *aionion*, “age lasting”) because of the everlasting effects it produces. It is called “unquenchable” (Greek, *asbestos*) because it cannot be put out; however the fire will go out when its work is done. “Eternal fire” reduced Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes (Jude 7; 2 Peter 2:6); yet they are not burning today.**

**Like stubble (short pieces of dry hay), the wicked will burn up quickly.**

“For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and **all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up**, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.”—*Malachi 4:1*.

“And ye shall tread down the wicked; for **they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet** in the day that I shall do this.”—*Malachi 4:3*.

“**They shall be as though they had not been.**”—*Obadiah 16*. “As the whirlwind passeth, so is the **wicked no more.**”—*Proverbs 10:25*.

“For yet a little while, **and the wicked shall not be**; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.”—*Psalms 37:10*.

This work of final destruction of the wicked is called God’s “strange act” and “strange work.”

“He shall be wroth . . . that He may do His work, **His strange work**; and bring to pass His act, **His strange act.**”—*Isaiah 28:21*.

**This final destruction of the wicked is both necessary and merciful.** It is necessary to eliminate those who hate God and His people. **It is merciful to the wicked to put them out of their miserable existence**; and it surely is merciful to the universe to have them gone.

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*Who has immortality?*—Men wish they could live forever, but they are mortal. The word, “mortal,” means “subject to death, destined to die.” In contrast, the word, “immortal,” means “not mortal; exempt from liability to die; imperishable; everlasting” (*Webster’s New International Dictionary*).

Did God plan that sinless man, created in the image of God, should die? All will agree that He did not. God made man to live.

But our Creator did not purpose that man should live if he sinned. This is how it was explained to Adam:

“Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”—*Genesis 2:17*.

The Hebrew original reads “dying thou shalt die.” This means **the day you eat it you will begin to die; and, after a time, you will be entirely dead.** The sentence of death would be pronounced the day that man sinned, and the process of dying would immediately begin.

**Denying this definite statement of God’s, Satan told Eve, “Ye shall not surely die” (Gen. 3:4). But Christ said the devil is a liar (John 8:44).**

**Eve believed the words of Satan because they seemed more pleasant than the words of God.** Men and women are still doing that.

Mark this in your mind: **The Bible teaches that God did not intend that sinners should live forever.** Even though it may be taught from a thousand pulpits, and printed in an equal number of books, the Bible says sinners will not live forever.

So, from what we have learned already, **man was created with the possibility of immortality, on condition that he meet the test of obedience. But he was not created with inherent immortality.** He was “subject to death” if he sinned, and was therefore “mortal.” **There are no immortal sinners and never will be,** regardless of what anyone tells you.

About man, the Bible says, “Shall mortal man be more



just than God?" (Job 4:17).

About God, the good Book says, "Who only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6:16).

In other words, God is immortal and man is mortal. In fact, **the word, "immortal," is found but once in the Bible and is applied to God:**

"Now unto the King eternal, **immortal**, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory forever and ever."—*1 Timothy 1:17*.

Man does not have innate (inherent) immortality. **The theory of the natural immortality of the soul originated in paganism, and was adopted into the Christian church by the apostate church in the Dark Ages.** Martin Luther said it was one of the "monstrous fables that form part of the Roman dunghill of decretals" (quoted in E. Petavel, *The Problem of Immortality*, p. 255). Commenting on the words of Solomon in Ecclesiastes 9:5-6, that "the dead know not anything," the Reformer wrote:

"[This is] another place proving that the dead have no . . . feeling. There is, saith he, no duty, no science, no knowledge, no wisdom there. Solomon judgeth that **the dead are asleep, and feel nothing at all.** For the dead lie there, accounting neither days nor years, but **when they are awaked, they shall seem to have slept scarce one minute.**"—*Martin Luther, Exposition of Solomon's Book Called Ecclesiastes*, p. 152.

**When the end comes**—As powerful and important as the rebellious powers of earth may seem now, in that day things will be very different. **It is now** (while mercy still lingers, while Jesus still pleads in the Heavenly Sanctuary for us, and everyone has access to His forgiving and enabling grace) **that we must come to Him and abide in Him!** All who do not do so will be left without excuse!

**Some had made a "profession" of faith in Jesus, but had never surrendered their hearts fully to Him and, in His enabling strength, overcome sin.** They had not chosen a life of obedience to God's moral Ten Commandment Law.

**The Bible is very clear that the idea of “once saved always saved” is just not true.** It is not enough to profess faith in Christ. **Day after day, the thoughts, words, and actions must be godly.** This is not a mysterious process, something beyond our capacity to do. **God will help every one of us to be overcomers if we will decide that, by His powerful, enabling grace, we will do it.** How thankful we can be that Jesus cooperates fully with our determination to obey Him. **More than this, by His Spirit, He lives in us and we work His works.**

**“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”—*Philippians 2:12-13.***

**“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.”—*2 Corinthians 3:5.***

**“Now the God of peace . . . make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever.”—*Hebrews 13:20-21.***

The wicked will receive their fiery punishment on the surface of the earth. The fire that destroys the wicked renews the entire earth, and the “meek shall inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5). The earth is made new (GC 674).

*How long before death comes?* How long do the wicked suffer in hellfire? Here is a clear statement: Notice that Satan and his angels suffer far longer than any people. Also notice that, as the scapegoat, Satan suffers for all the sins he incited the redeemed to commit,—but also for his part in tempting the wicked to sin.

“Some were quickly destroyed, while others suffered longer. They were punished according to the deeds done in the body. Some were many days consuming . . . Satan and his angels suffered long. Satan bore not only the weight and punishment of his own sins, but also of the sins of the redeemed host, which had been placed upon him; and he must also suffer for the ruin of souls which

he had caused.

“Then I saw that Satan and all the wicked host were consumed, and the justice of God was satisfied; and all the angelic host, and all the redeemed saints, with a loud voice said, ‘Amen!’” *Early Writings*, 294-295.

***The entire universe rejoices! The horrible meanness and terrible acts of violence of the wicked are forever at an end.***

**“Satan’s work of ruin is forever ended.** For six thousand years he has wrought his will, filling the earth with woe and causing grief throughout the universe. The whole creation has groaned and travailed together in pain. **Now God’s creatures are forever delivered from his presence and temptations.** ‘The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they [the righteous] break forth into singing.’ Isaiah 14:7. **And a shout of praise and triumph ascends from the whole loyal universe.** ‘The voice of a great multitude,’ ‘as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings,’ is heard, saying: ‘Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.’ Revelation 19:6.”—*Great Controversy*, 673.

**“There the redeemed greet those who led them to the Saviour,** and all unite in praising Him who died that human beings might have the life that measures with the life of God. The conflict is over. Tribulation and strife are at an end. **Songs of victory fill all heaven** as the ransomed ones take up the joyful strain.”—*Acts of the Apostles*, 602.

***Sin and rebellion will never again arise! It will be finished forever!*** We can have total certainty of this!

**“He will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time.”**—*Nahum 1:9*.

Christ’s life on earth and His sufferings and death on Calvary—fully reveal the character of the Father and of Christ, and the enduring nature of their law. This fact is the guarantee that sin will never again arise.

It is Christ’s revelation on earth and at Calvary of the character and love of God, and the enduring nature of His

law, that will forever guarantee this.

“Well, then, might the angels rejoice as they looked upon the Saviour’s cross; for though they did not then understand all, **they knew that the destruction of sin and Satan was forever made certain, that the redemption of man was assured, and that the universe was made eternally secure.** Christ Himself fully comprehended the results of the sacrifice made upon Calvary. To all these He looked forward when upon the cross He cried out, ‘It is finished.’”—*Desire of Ages*, 764. (Read this entire chapter.)

“**The whole universe will have become witnesses to the nature and results of sin.** And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonor to God, will now vindicate His love and establish His honor before the universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. **Never will evil again be manifest.** Says the Word of God: ‘Affliction shall not rise up the second time.’ Nahum 1:9. **The law of God, which Satan has reproached as the yoke of bondage, will be honored as the law of liberty. A tested and proved creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him** whose character has been fully manifested before them as fathomless love and infinite wisdom.”—*Great Controversy*, 504.

“**The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death,** who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; **the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God.** That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven . . .

“The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for **even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy.** Without the cross they would be no more

secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven. Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss. **All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God.**”—*5 Bible Commentary, 1132.*

## Revelation 21

# *The New Jerusalem*

*Brief overview*—Satan, his angels, and the wicked have perished, never again to disturb the happiness of heaven. We are now provided with a description of the New Jerusalem here on earth.

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**“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” Revelation 21:1-2.**

*“And I saw”*: John says, **I myself saw it!** John is shown a most glorious sight: the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven.

**“We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.** Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”—*2 Peter 3:13-14.*

**In a few brief words, we are given a careful description of Christ’s return to our earth, surrounded by angels, with the redeemed following behind: Then the New Jerusalem comes down and settles on earth.**

“Then Jesus and all the retinue of holy angels, and all the redeemed saints, left the city. **The angels surrounded their Commander and escorted Him on His way, and the train of redeemed saints followed.** Then, in terrible, fearful majesty, Jesus called forth the wicked dead; and they came up with the same feeble, sickly

bodies that went into the grave.”—*Early Writings*, 292.

“As the New Jerusalem, in its dazzling splendor, comes down out of heaven, **it rests upon the place purified and made ready to receive it, and Christ, with His people and the angels, enters the Holy City.**”—*Great Controversy*, 663.

**“New”**: This word is not *neos*, which is “new in point of time” (Matt. 9:17; 1 Cor. 5:7; Col. 3:10); but it is *kainos*, meaning **new in quality. The earth has been entirely re-made into something far better** than what we once had. Keep in mind that the Flood greatly damaged our world and produced vast oceans, deserts, large areas of ice, and tropical jungles.

**“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. . . And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water.”—Isaiah 35:1, 7.**

**The earth made new will be even more glorious than the original paradise. But this will give you an idea of what it will be like:**

“As the earth came forth from the hand of its Maker, it was **exceedingly beautiful**. Its surface was diversified with **mountains, hills, and plains, interspersed with noble rivers and lovely lakes**; but the hills and mountains were not abrupt and rugged, abounding in terrific steeps and frightful chasms, as they now do; the sharp, ragged edges of earth’s rocky framework were buried beneath the fruitful soil, which everywhere produced a luxuriant growth of verdure. There were **no loathsome swamps or barren deserts. Graceful shrubs and delicate flowers** greeted the eye at every turn. The heights were crowned with **trees more majestic** than any that now exist. **The air, untainted** by foul miasma, was clear and healthful. The entire landscape outvied in beauty the decorated grounds of the proudest palace.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 44.

***The dominion lost and restored*—“The first domin-**

ion” over all the world was given to Adam and Eve in Eden (Gen. 1:26).

“Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness: **and let them have dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth.”—*Genesis 1:26*.

“Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: **and have dominion** . . . over every living thing.”—*Genesis 1:28*.

“Thou madest him **to have dominion** over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet.”—*Psalms 8:6*.

**Satan captured our parents and gained the dominion. But Christ regained it.**

“Continually they were reminded also of their **lost dominion**. Among the lower creatures Adam had stood as king, and so long as he remained loyal to God, all nature acknowledged his rule; **but when he transgressed, this dominion was forfeited**. The spirit of rebellion, to which he himself had given entrance, extended throughout the animal creation.”—*Education 26*.

“**Satan, by means of his success in turning man aside from the path of obedience, became ‘the god of this world.’** 2 Corinthians 4:4. **The dominion that once was Adam’s passed to the usurper.** But the Son of God proposed to come to this earth to pay the penalty of sin, and thus **not only redeem man, but recover the dominion forfeited**. It is of this restoration that Micah prophesied when he said, ‘O Tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto Thee shall it come, even **the first dominion.**’ Micah 4:8. The apostle Paul has referred to it as ‘**the redemption of the purchased possession.**’ Ephesians 1:14. And the psalmist had in mind the same final restoration of man’s original inheritance when he declared, ‘**The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.**’ Psalm 37:29.”—*Prophets and Kings, 682*.

“**There was given Him [Christ] dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and**

languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”—*Daniel 7:14*.

**“After tempting man to sin, Satan claimed the earth as his, and styled himself the prince of this world. Having conformed to his own nature the father and mother of our race, he thought to establish here his empire. He declared that men had chosen him as their sovereign. Through his control of men, he held dominion over the world. Christ had come to disprove Satan’s claim. As the Son of man, Christ would stand loyal to God. Thus it would be shown that Satan had not gained complete control of the human race, and that his claim to the world was false. All who desired deliverance from his power would be set free. The dominion that Adam had lost through sin would be recovered.”**—*Desire of Ages, 114-115*.

**“Thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly . . . and His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.”**—*Zechariah 9:9-10*.

**In the earth made new, the dominion of the earth will return to those who are in Christ.**

**“The earth originally given to man as his kingdom, betrayed by him into the hands of Satan, and so long held by the mighty foe, has been brought back by the great plan of redemption. All that was lost by sin has been restored.”**—*Great Controversy, 674*.

**“Unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.”**—*Micah 4:8*.

**“And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.”**—*Daniel 7:27*.

**Forever shall Christ reign, and His dominion will be without end.**



“All that prophecy has foretold as coming to pass, until the present time, has been traced on the pages of history, and **we may be assured that all which is yet to come will be fulfilled in its order. The final overthrow of all earthly dominions is plainly foretold in the Word of truth.**”—*Education, 178-179.*

“He is the living God, and steadfast forever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and **His dominion shall be even unto the end.**”—*Daniel 6:26 (4:34).*

“**To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.**”—*1 Peter 5:11 (Rev. 1:6).*

“***New heaven and a new earth***”: Everything will be wonderfully fresh and new! **Our world will have been entirely renovated by the fire that destroyed the wicked.**

As for the other worlds, they will no longer have to view the horrors that occurred down here for centuries.

“The fire that consumes the wicked purifies the earth.

**Every trace of the curse is swept away.** No eternally burning hell will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin.”—*Great Controversy, 674.*

“***No more sea***”: The wild oceans will be gone. **In their place, there will be “ever-flowing streams, clear as crystal”** (*Great Controversy, 675*). The oceans and seas, as we know them, will no longer exist. This means that **far more of the earth will be occupied by the redeemed; because the oceans now cover 71% of the earth’s surface.** Add to this **the deserts, mountain ranges, and polar regions—which brings the total of uninhabitable areas up to about 90%.**

“The sea divides friends. It is a barrier between us and those whom we love. Our associations are broken up by the broad, fathomless ocean . . . **In the earth made new there will be no fierce torrents, no engulfing ocean, no restless, murmuring waves.**”—*7 Bible Commentary, 988.*

“***The Holy City, new Jerusalem coming down***”: *This*

*will be discussed in more detail below, under verse 10.*

Hebrews 11:10 tells us that Abraham looked for a city, whose builder and maker is God. **The cities of earth tend to be crowded and full of wickedness. But the city that God has prepared for us will be very different!**

**“Prepared”**: The form of the word means that **the preparation of the city, itself, had been completed earlier in the past**; so the perfection of the city is fully ready for God’s people.

**“I go to prepare a place for you.** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”—*John 14:2-3.*

**This little world will be honored above all the other worlds in the universe; for Jesus will dwell here with His people!**

“The work of redemption will be complete. In the place where sin abounded, God’s grace much more abounds. **The earth itself, the very field that Satan claims as his, is to be not only ransomed but exalted.** Our little world, under the curse of sin, the one dark blot in His glorious creation, **will be honored above all other worlds** in the universe of God.

“Here, where the Son of God tabernacled in humanity; where the King of glory lived and suffered and died,—**here, when He shall make all things new,** the tabernacle of God shall be with men, ‘and **He will dwell with them,** and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.’ And through endless ages as the redeemed walk in the light of the Lord, they will praise Him for His unspeakable Gift,—*Immanuel, ‘God with us.’*” —*Desire of Ages, 26.*

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**“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.” Revelation 21:3.**

**“A great voice”:** This may be the voice of God, either the Father or the Son; for **the announcement is important: Jesus Christ is going to dwell on our planet with His people!**

We will be with Him forever! As close as children living with their parents! **It will be wonderful! You and I must be there!**

“Then Jesus looked upon His redeemed saints; their countenances were radiant with glory; and as He fixed His loving eyes upon them, He said, with His rich, musical voice, ‘I behold the travail of My soul, and am satisfied. **This rich glory is yours to enjoy eternally. Your sorrows are ended.** There shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.’ ”—*Early Writings, 288-289.*

**“The tabernacle”:** Literally tent (*skenoo*). When Jesus came to earth, we are told that “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” (John 1:14). In that verse, the word, “dwelt,” also means “to tent.” **Christ puts up His tent; and, right now by faith, we live in it with Him! When He returns, we will live even more closely with Him—**and forever the happiness of being with Him will increase!

“My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, **I will be their God, and they shall be My people . . . My Sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.**”—*Ezekiel 37:27-28.*

“God commanded Moses for Israel, ‘Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them’ (Ex. 25:8), and He abode in the sanctuary, in the midst of His people. Through all their weary wandering in the desert, the symbol of His presence was with them. **So Christ set up His tabernacle in the midst of our human encampment. He pitched His tent by the side of the tents of men, that He might dwell among us,** and make us familiar with His divine character and life. ‘The Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth.’ John 1:14, R.V.,

margin.”—*Desire of Ages*, 23-24.

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**“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.” Revelation 21:4.**

**“Wipe away all tears”**: Literally “every tear.” Prophecy after prophecy, given all through the Bible,—is fulfilled here in the book of Revelation!

“For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and **God shall wipe away all tears** from their eyes.”—*Revelation 7:17*.

“And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people; and **the voice of weeping shall be no more heard** in her, nor the voice of crying.”—*Isaiah 65:19*.

**“No more death”**: This means **“death was taken away.”**

“The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”—*1 Corinthians 15:26*.

**“He will swallow up death in victory**; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: **this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.**”—*Isaiah 25:8-9*.

**“Neither sorrow”**: All of the many causes for sorrow will have been completely removed. There will never again be rebellion or death.

“And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, **and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.**”—*Isaiah 35:10*.

**“The former things”**: All the conditions, problems, and crises that we live with here and now—will be forever gone.

**“And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be His God, and he shall be My son.” Revelation 21:5-7.**

**“I make all things new”**: The word, “new,” is found eight times in Revelation. We are told about a **new name** (2:17), a **new song** (5:9; 14:3), a **new heaven** (21:1), a **new earth** (21:1), and a **new Jerusalem** (3:12; 21:2). In Revelation 21:5, we are told that **all things will be new**.

**“These words are true”**: God considers it important that we understand that these words are true and will come to pass. This wonderful assurance is repeated again a few verses from the end of the book: “These sayings are faithful and true” (Rev. 22:6).

**“It is done”**: This is “**it is finished.**” The past will then be behind us—forever!

**“Fountain”**: Literally “**spring.**” This living water will just keep springing up forever. **It will flow forth from the throne of God into the river of life. The river will then flow by the tree of life** (Rev. 22:2).

“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him **a well of water springing up into everlasting life.**”—*John 4:14.*

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And **whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.**”—*Revelation 22:17.*

**“Him that is athirst”**: Heaven will only be for those who crave the presence of God and thirst for the water of life.

**“He that overcometh”**: We have now come to the

**eighth “overcomer” passage** in Revelation. The others are in Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, and 21. To “overcome” means more than to profess faith in Christ or to have faith that He exists. —*To overcome means to resist and overcome temptation and sin through the enabling grace of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour!* He died on Calvary, so we would have enabling strength to live clean, godly lives.

The true child of God is continually overcoming. If he falls, he immediately comes back to God, and continues on down the path to heaven.

**“Inherit all things”:** The overcomers will inherit all things. I have no idea of all that is included here, nor does anyone else. It probably refers to a fullness of happiness, a home in the new earth, eternal life with Christ, and always able to talk with Him and with a multitude of other happy beings, plus the freedom to travel to and visit other worlds.

**We may have it all freely, “without money and without price”** (Isa. 55:1).

We will be able to enjoy the animals and birds and beautiful flowers and plants. We will work in gardens and travel to distant planets. All the true sciences will be open to us. **We will be able to share with others all that Christ has done for us. They will have much to share with us.**

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**“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.” Revelation 21:8.**

**“Fearful and unbelieving”:** In tragic contrast are those who did not choose to become God’s little children, but insisted on doing things their own way. They did not, each day, plead for Jesus to live in their hearts and help them change their lives. We must cling to Christ and, in His strength, move forward. We dare not draw back and unite with the worldlings in their pleasures.

**“Murderers”:** These include the gossipers and back-

biters.

**“Sorcerers”**: Those practicing magical arts. It would also include those who enjoy reading books and watching movies about witchcraft. We become identified with that which we enjoy.

**“Idolaters”**: Those who love things far more than they love Jesus.

**“Liars”**: Those who love fables and falsehoods which are pleasing and excuse their continuation in sin.

**“The lake”**: This was discussed in detail in the previous chapter (Rev. 20:9-15).

**“The second death”**: Once again, we are assured that this is a terminal event. It ends in an endless death without any possibility of reawakening. The lake of fire will be a pool of oblivion.

**“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 to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” Revelation 21:9-11.**

**“The holy Jerusalem”**: The new Jerusalem is found two times in Revelation (Rev. 3:12; 21:2). The word, **“city,”** is found in Revelation 3:12 and thirteen times in Revelation 20-22.

**The size of the New Jerusalem**—We are told that “the length is as large as the breadth,” that the city is “twelve thousand furlongs,” and “the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal” (Rev. 21:16).

The word, **“furlongs,”** is found in Luke 24:13; John 6:19; 11:18; Revelation 14:20; 21:16.

*What is the length of a “furlong”?* The Greek of “furlong,” in Revelation 21:16, is “*stade* or *stadion*” (*stadia*,

plural, from which we get our word, stadium), but it is translated “furlong” in the KJV.

In the Jewish system, each *stade* was 606 feet, 6 inches (*5 Bible Commentary*, p. 50).

In both the Roman and modern system, there are 625 feet to the *stade*, eight *stades* to our modern mile. A furlong is equal to one-eighth of a mile, or 220 yards, or 660 feet.

If the dimensions given in Revelation 20 are exact and not symbolic, then, according to the **Roman stade**, the New Jerusalem will be:

**12,000 x 660 ft = 7,920,000 ft. on each side.**

**7,920,000 divided by 5,280 ft. = 1,500 miles on each side.**

According to the **Jewish stade** (606 ft., 6 in.) we have:

**12,000 x 606 ft., 6 in. = 7,272,000 ft. on each side.**

**7,272,000 divided by 5,280 ft. = 1,377 miles on each side** (actually 1,377.27 miles).

*The first* question is whether it is the Roman or Jewish *stade* that is to be used for these measurements. We do not know which it might be.

*The second* question is whether the measurement in Revelation 21:16 is 12,000 furlongs to each side or the total circumference. No authorities seem to know and the text does not say.

At any rate, it has to be large enough to contain all the redeemed of all the ages during the millennium.

**Some say that the New Jerusalem is about the size of the State of Colorado**—which is also rather square. But, based on measurements given above and below, that might not be correct. **The total length of all four sides of Colorado is 1,307 miles. The average of each side would only be 326.75 miles.**

“Colorado ranks eighth in size among the 50 states.

The total length of Colorado’s boundaries is 1,307 mi (2,103 km). The state’s total area is 104,091 sq mi (269,596 sq km), of which 103,595 sq mi (268,311 sq km) consists of land and 496 sq mi (1,285 sq km) comprise inland water. Shaped in an almost perfect rectangle,



Colorado extends 387 mi (623 km) E–W and 276 mi (444 km) N–S.”—*Colorado official statistics*.

But there is a *third* question: Is the “12,000 furlongs” (Rev. 21:16) the distance along one side—or along all four sides—of the Holy City? Once again, no one knows *and the text does not tell*.

(1) *In the Roman/modern furlong (660 ft. stade/furlong) system*, if Revelation 21:16 is a side measurement, this would yield 1,500 miles on each side of the city. If it is circumference (all four sides), it would be 6,000 miles around the city.

(2) *In the Jewish furlong (606½ ft. stade/furlong) system*, if Revelation 21:16 is a side measurement, this would yield 1,377.27 miles on each side of the city. If it is circumference (all four sides), it would be 5,509.08 miles all the way around the city.

Having said all that, **there is the strong possibility that the measurement of the New Jerusalem is symbolic instead of literal.** The citizens of the New Jerusalem will live in heaven during the millennium, and then down here in the city on earth until the fire ends and the earth is made new. It is of interest that Enoch, after translation, went to live in the New Jerusalem (EW 40; PP 87; 8T 331). Moses and Elijah probably did also. We know that Moses opened the gate for Christ when He ascended to heaven (PP 476).

***Here are several reasons why the measurement of the city, given in Revelation 21:16-17, may be symbolic:***

**The length of the furlong seems too short.** Will there be enough space for the millions of redeemed ones?

All of the redeemed from throughout the six thousand years of earth’s history will be inside the New Jerusalem for one thousand years during the sentencing judgment. It definitely does not seem that this vast number of the saved would be living crowded together in an area which is only the size of Colorado. One person suggested that it could be done if they were placed in high-rise apartment complexes or condominiums!

I suggest that the 12000 x 1200 x 12000 furlongs is a symbolic set of numbers (does it not look symbolic?), and that the area covered by the New Jerusalem could easily be the size of the United States or larger.

**First, the numbers sound symbolic.** (Twelve is said to be God's *kingdom number*. In ancient Israel there were 12 tribes; 12 rods; 12 stones gathered from the Jordan River; 12 stones in the high priest's breastplate, etc. In the New Testament there are 12 apostles; 12 gates in the New Jerusalem; 12 foundations to the Holy City, which are the names of the 12 Apostles. Also the height of the walls is 144 cubits [12 x 12], while each side is 12,000 furlongs. The number, 144,000, is the square of 12 multiplied by 1,000.)

**Second, the number of the redeemed will not be known until the close of probation.** We are told that it is not until that event that the number of people redeemed from all the ages is determined:

**“Every case has been decided** for life or death. Christ has made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. **The number of His subjects is made up;** ‘the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,’ is about to be given to the heirs of salvation.”—*Great Controversy*, 613-614.

It is of interest that the present writer did an overlay measurement (based on the Roman *stade* with 1,500 miles to each side) and was startled to discover that, if the Holy City alights directly centered above the Mount of Olives (which Zech. 14:4 says it will; also see EW 17-18; GC 662-663), then (assuming the Roman furlong side measurement calculation) **the entire city should settle down above all the area mentioned in the Bible, except the city of Rome.** It would extend from central Egypt northward to the landing site of Noah's Ark, and from Babylonia westward to all of Asia Minor and probably covering Patmos, Macedonia, and Greece as well.

**In summary, there are details about the dimensions of the city which we do not have.** Someday we will find out—and, when that happens, we will find the city to be

more glorious than we can now imagine!

***What will be in the New Jerusalem?***—The only things mentioned in the Bible that are inside the Holy City are the throne of God, the river of life flowing from it past the tree of life; and the Garden of Eden. The Sanctuary, or its basic elements, will be there also; since it has the throne of God and probably contains the records prepared during the Investigative Judgment. We are told that Jesus is preparing “dwellings” for us (John 14:1-3).

God’s faithful ones tend to like gardens far more than they like cities; and it appears that this is primarily what we will find inside the City of God. **There is not one mention of any major building there, with the exception of the Sanctuary, which has the throne of God;** and we would expect to find this in the Holy City. There is no “temple” inside the city, but there will be a memorial temple of the 144,000 outside of the city. See *Early Writings, 18-19*.

“**And I saw no temple therein:** for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.”—*Revelation 21:22*.

***A street or a square?***—Our first parents were placed in a garden. God’s Word rarely speaks favorably about cities. (For example, three of the first cities in the Bible were Cain’s city: Genesis 4:17; Babel: Genesis 11:4-5, 8; and Sodom: Genesis 18:24-19:21.) **The only phrase which gives people the idea that the new Jerusalem is built like a modern city with thousands of buildings and streets is “streets of gold.”** But, in the Bible, the word is singular (“street”), not plural; and it is composed of transparent gold.

“**The street of the city** was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.”—*Revelation 21:21*.

A few verses later (Rev. 22:1-2) is **the only other reference to this one “street;”** and it is by the river of life, where the tree of life is located. This is close to the throne of God.

“**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.”—*Revelation 22:2*.

*Plateia* is the word for “street” in both of these two verses. **It can be translated as “street,” “open square,” or “plaza.”** (Some European town squares are called “plats.”) The word, “plate”—something as broad as it is wide—also comes from this same Greek word.

**We are told that the tree of life is in the “midst of the street” (Rev. 22:2), and both are in front of the throne of God (EW 17, 289).** That would be more understandable if in front of the throne was **a large central square** (not the middle of a city street), **where the redeemed gather once a month to worship God and eat the latest type of fruit** of the “twelve manner of fruits” grown on that tree. (*More on this gathering when we study Revelation 22:2.*)

Three facts are important here: First: The tree of life, on both sides of the river of life, is very close to the throne of God. Second: The redeemed gather here to worship God quite frequently. Squares, as gathering places for people, even down here on earth, are not uncommon. So it should not be surprising that *plateia*, translated “street” in Revelation 21:21 and 22:2, is actually a square.

In addition, **we know that there will also be a second large square just outside the main entrance to the New Jerusalem**, which also appears transparent:

“We . . . were seven days ascending to the sea of glass, when Jesus brought the crowns, and with His own right hand placed them on our heads. He gave us harps of gold and palms of victory. **Here on the sea of glass the 144,000 stood in a perfect square.**”—*Early Writings, 16 (GC 645; EW 288)*.

It would appear that the square just in front of the entrance to the New Jerusalem has the appearance of transparent crystal (EW 16), while the one before the throne consists of transparent gold (Rev. 21:21).

*A vast Garden of Eden*—The Garden of Eden is the

“model home,” after which we should pattern our homes (Ed 22; PP 49). **The Garden of Eden will definitely be in the New Jerusalem** (GC 646). The Sabbath recalls to mind the peace and happiness of the Garden of Eden (DA 289). We know that, **while on earth, Jesus would leave the cities to worship God outside in a garden or quiet grove.**

*Apparently, the New Jerusalem is one vast Garden of Eden!*

“Before the ransomed throng is the Holy City. Jesus opens wide the pearly gates, and the nations that have kept the truth enter in. ***There they behold the Paradise of God***, the home of Adam in his innocency. Then that voice, richer than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, is heard, saying: ‘Your conflict is ended.’ ‘Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’”—*Great Controversy, 646 (PP 62)*.

“As His [Christ’s] feet touch the mountain, it parts asunder, and becomes a very great plain, and is prepared for the reception of the holy city ***in which is the paradise of God, the garden of Eden***, which was taken up after man’s transgression. Now it descends with the city, more beautiful, and gloriously adorned than when removed from the earth.”—*3 Spiritual Gifts, 83-84*.

“. . . **Eden, which was heaven in miniature.**”—*1 Bible Commentary, 1082*.

***“The bride, the Lamb’s wife”***: In vision, John is shown the scene following the millennium, when the New Jerusalem comes down from heaven to earth. It was more beautiful than the most sparkling gems he had ever seen.

**This bride is the New Jerusalem** (Rev. 21:2, 9-10). The symbolism is that, **while all of God’s redeemed will be guests at the wedding, the New Jerusalem collectively represents them all.** This bride has prepared herself (19:7) by remaining humble and obediently close to Christ in this present life. The New Jerusalem will be the capital of the new earth and, as such, replaces the “kingdoms of this world.”

“The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.”—*Revelation 11:15*.

**The wedding is the reception by Christ of His kingdom, His church, which is represented by the New Jerusalem.**

As in the parable of the Ten Virgins, **the waiting saints are represented as guests** invited to the wedding (Rev. 19:9; GC 426-427).

**“Clear as crystal”**: The word, “crystal,” is from *krustal-lizo*, “to flash forth light,” “to scintillate.” The sight of the New Jerusalem coming down must have been most awe-inspiring to behold. To step inside it and live there must be even more awe-inspiring.

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**“And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And He that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and He measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And He measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.” Revelation 21:12-17.**

**“The wall”**: This is a remarkably detailed description of an outside view of the City of God. **Our minds cannot grasp the breathtaking glory of the scene; but, if faithful, we will soon see it.** This is the “city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:10).

“God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city.”—*Hebrews 11:16*.

Later, after the “fire fall” is past and the earth is made new, the redeemed will be given lovely dwelling places all over the world. There will be no oceans, no deserts, no jungles, and no polar regions.

“They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. **They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat:** for as the days of a tree are the days of My people, and **Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.**”—*Isaiah 65:21-22.*

From week to week in “the new earth,” they will come up to the New Jerusalem to worship God every Sabbath.

“From one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord.”—*Isaiah 66:23.*

“**Twelve**”: The number, “twelve,” is given five times here in Revelation 21:12-14.

“**Names**”: The foundations are named after the twelve apostles, and show that all who enter the city are Christians. Because the gates are named after the twelve tribes, it has been speculated that therefore all the saved symbolically belong to one or the other of the twelve tribes, and each will initially enter the city through a different gate! That is stretching the symbolism quite a bit. It should not have to be necessary for people “from different tribes” to only enter through specific gates!

“**Gates**”: There are twelve gates; and each one consists of a single giant pearl.

“The twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl.”—*Revelation 21:21.*

**Jesus opens one of those gates and all the redeemed enter the city with Him** (EW 17, 288; 1T 61). At the same time that He opens that one gate for the redeemed to initially enter through, He also opens all the others (EW 35). The wicked, as soon as they are raised, will be able to look through those gates until Jesus shuts them all just before the final attack (EW 293; GC 664). (*For more on these gates, see comments for Revelation 21:21 and 22:14.*)

**“Three gates”:** There are also different ways you can assign names to these gates. The city has three gates on each side of the city, with each one named after a tribe. Here are the original locations assigned to the tents of each tribe in the wilderness:

**Middle (by the central tabernacle):** Levi (Num. 2:17).

**East:** Judah, Isachar, Zebulun (Num. 2:3-9).

**South:** Reuben, Simeon, Gad (Num. 2:10-16).

**West:** Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin (Num. 2:18-24).

**North:** Dan, Asher, Naphtali (Num. 2:25-31).

Several different lists of the tribes are in the Bible (Gen. 49; Deut. 33; 1 Chron. 2; Eze. 48; Rev. 7). Perhaps you can figure out who should be assigned to which gate.

Here are the names that Ezekiel placed on each gate:

**North:** Reuben, Judah, Levi (Eze. 48:31).

**East:** Joseph, Benjamin, Dan (Eze. 48:32).

**South:** Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun (Eze. 48:33).

**West:** Gad, Asher, Naphtali (Eze. 48:34).

**“Length, breadth, height”:** How high is the city? Some suggest that the words, “are equal” (*isos* in Greek, meaning “are proportionate”), must mean that the height is not equal to the length and breadth, but proportionate to them (*i.e.*, less than them). The definitions in Liddell and Scott’s exhaustive *Greek Lexicon* is in agreement with this. This concept is strengthened by the fact that, while the length which is as large as the breadth is 12,000 furlongs (Rev. 21:16), the wall is said to be only 144 cubits high (Rev. 21:17). If *isos* means identical, then the city may be approximately 1,500 feet high.

**“144 cubits”:** On the basis of the New Testament cubit, which is about 17½ in., 144 cu. would be about 210 ft. John does not say that this measurement represents the height of the wall. Some suggest this may be its thickness.

Others suggest that **“height”** (*hupsos*) may mean **“high part”** (top of) the wall, indicating that the mea-



surement along the top of the wall is the same as at the bottom. This would agree with the “144 cubits” for the height of the wall. This view may be the answer to the puzzle about that stupendous height.

**“Twelve foundations”:** We are symbolically “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone” (Eph. 2:20).

We are not looking forward to an imaginary holy city in which to live, but one “which hath foundations” (Heb. 11:10)—only one which is real!

**“Foursquare”:** There is an inherent beauty in right proportion and perfect balance of form. Here are other “foursquare” things in the Bible: Ex 27:1; 28:16; 30:2; 39:9; 2 Chron. 3:8; Eze. 41:21; 43:16; 45:2; 48:20.

**“Furlongs”:** This was discussed earlier.

**“Measure of a man, that is of an angel”:** It is not known whether or not this is a human measurement. In the Greek (“which is of angel”), there is no definite article with the word, “angel.” So it is an “angelic measurement,” instead of a measurement made about an angel’s height.

**“And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.” Revelation 21:18-20.**

**Colors of the stones**—The colors of the precious stones in the foundation walls seem to form an intricate rainbow pattern; the city appears to float on a rainbow of color.

Unlike other listings, the twelve foundation stones are here arranged from the bottom up; this is the order in

which they will be viewed in the layered “foundations of the wall” (beneath the wall?). Notice that the wall tends to divide into three groups of colors. *Here, briefly, are the colors of these twelve foundation stones, as best as we know:*

12 - *Amethyst*, light blue with reddish tint (violet).

11 - *Jacinth (Hyacinth)*, deep reddish-blue (purple) or brown.

10 - *Chrysoprasus*, apple-green and transparent.

9 - *Topaz*, yellow gold color or transparent red.

8 - *Beryl*, sea-green or light yellow.

7 - *Chrysolite*, yellow or gold color and translucently clear.

6 - *Sardius*, vivid red with light streaks in it.

5 - *Sardonyx*, red and brown layers.

4 - *Emerald*, vivid green.

3 - *Chalcedony*, bluish white or pink.

2 - *Sapphire (lapis lazuli)*, almost transparent blue.

1 - *Jasper*, red with dark veins and usually opaque.

Researchers say that this bottom layer, “*jasper*,” is different than the modern, opaque stone by this name. It probably describes a bright, flashing light that is more notable for its brilliance than its color.

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**“And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.” Revelation 21:21.**

**“Gates of pearl”:** These pearls are iridescent and glowing with beautiful colors reflected from the foundations. Pearls are produced by suffering. When a grain of sand works its way into the oyster shell, the little creature slowly builds layer upon layer of pearl over it. Thus the trial is turned into a blessing. By the abundant grace of God, all who enter that city will pass through a gate of pearl, a symbol of the suffering Christ experienced so they could live there.

**“Street of gold”:** The street is said to be of gold like transparent glass. Everything outside and inside is magnificent. The structure of the city appears to have the transparency of glass. Its flashing beauty doubtlessly changes with every ray of light falling upon it. Yet there will be no glare, nothing difficult to gaze upon.

The word, “street,” can be translated as “path.” The word, “streets,” is not found in Revelation; but “street” is. The word is used twice in reference to the Holy City (Rev. 21:21; 22:2). **It would appear that in this gigantic garden, called “the Holy City,” there is only one street—the one that leads to the throne of God, from whence flows the river of life which goes directly to the tree of life and beyond.**

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**“And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. 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 honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.” Revelation 21:22-26.**

**“No temple”:** The word for temple here is *naos*, which was the inner part of the earthly Temple, including the first and second apartments. The word for the complete outer courts and related buildings is *hieron* (Luke 2:46).

**There are two possible solutions to this statement of “no temple therein” (that is, not in the New Jerusalem).**

The most likely solution is that, **while the original Sanctuary is in heaven, it was never located inside the New Jerusalem**, which will be the special home of the redeemed when they are first taken to heaven (EW 16-17, 35, 286-288; GC 645-648). The redeemed will, throughout the millennium, be in this city judging the wicked (EW 51-54). At the end of the millennium, it will descend to earth (EW

17-18, 51-54, 291-295; GC 662-663). When the wicked are destroyed (EW 52-53, 293-295; GC 662-673), the redeemed will then leave the city and inherit the entire world.

**The law of God, the foundation of His government, will always be beneath the throne of God, wherever that throne may be.**

**A building (temple) will no longer be needed; for the presence of the Father and the Son will personally be with the redeemed forever!** The entire verse explains this:

“And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.”—*Revelation 21:22*.

Revelation 3:12 mentions both a “temple” and the “New Jerusalem.” But the phrases, “pillar in the temple” and “name of the city,” are probably figurative and not literal.

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple [*naos*] of My God, and He shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God: and I will write upon him My new name.”—*Revelation 3:12*.

It should be mentioned that, in Ezekiel’s vision, **we are told that the river of life proceeds out from the Sanctuary** (Eze. 47:1), which, of course, would contain the throne of God. The river then flows by the tree of life which is on both sides of the river:

“And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because **their waters they issued out of the Sanctuary**: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.”—*Ezekiel 47:12*.

**According to this, the Sanctuary is in the Holy City, close to where the tree of life is located.** (*More on this in the next chapter.*)

**“No need of the sun”:** The sun and moon will still exist, but **the brilliant glory of Christ in the Holy City will**

provide an abundance of light.

**“Nations of them which are saved”:** All the noble and godly people who have ever lived on earth will be in the earth made new. What a nice place in which to live! Is it worth the (apparent) sacrifice you may experience now, so you can later live in such a place forever?

Heaven will be filled with peaceful, loving people who will have a variety of pleasant things to do. **They will work in the gardens, orchards, and vineyards. There will be interesting conversations and trips to far worlds, to share the wonders of redeeming love with others.** There will be so many people to meet; and the study of the natural sciences will provide fascinating discoveries for eternal ages. Praising God and sharing our happiness with others; what a wonderful way to live! All the hurtful and dangerous people, places, and activities will be forever gone.

All the faithful of all the ages will live in the Holy City during the millennium; and we can know that its dimensions will be large enough that they will not be the least crowded. Then, **after the final destruction of the wicked, the people of God will be given homes all over the planet.** Because the oceans, deserts, extensive mountain ranges, and polar regions will be gone, they will have over nine-tenths more space in which to dwell on Planet Earth.

**The “nations of the saved” will only include those who have been redeemed from earth.** You will recall that, while He was here, Christ told us that **there will be no marriages in heaven:**

“Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.”—*Matthew 22:29-30.*

In the earth made new, the closeness of our affections for one another, the angels, and Christ—will be far greater than the transitory happiness we had prior to the Second Advent.

The number of the redeemed has been made up and there is no more aging and death; so there will be no further need to increase the number of those who will be saved. But **there will be children there who will grow up.**

“You inquire in regard to your little one being saved. Christ’s words are your answer: ‘Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God’ [Matt. 19:14]. Remember the prophecy, ‘Thus saith the Lord: A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted . . . Thus saith the Lord: **Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy.** And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border’ [Jer. 31:15-17].

“This promise is yours. **You may be comforted and trust in the Lord . . .** Many little ones are to be laid away before the time of trouble. **We shall see our children again.** We shall meet them and know them in the heavenly courts. Put your trust in the Lord, and be not afraid.”—*Child Guidance*, 555-566.

“**Gates of it shall not be shut**”: The gates will not be shut by day; and, since there will be no night, those gates will never be closed!

“**No night**”: There will be no night in the city. (*Also see Revelation 22:5.*)

“The light of the sun will be superseded by a radiance which is not painfully dazzling, yet which immeasurably surpasses the brightness of our noontide. **The glory of God and the Lamb floods the Holy City with un fading light.** The redeemed walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day.”—*Great Controversy*, 676.

But the question may be asked: Will that light flood the entire planet with perpetual day?

**“The brightness of His presence fills the City of God, and flows out beyond the gates, flooding the**

whole earth with its radiance.”—*Great Controversy*, 665.

Created light cannot outshine the uncreated glory of the divine presence. The atmosphere encircling the world will, at that time, be far thicker and deeper. Light from the presence of God could thus be seen everywhere. **The air will be richer. Scientists have suggested that if the atmosphere was heavily saturated with oxygen, we would be far stronger and have clearer minds.**

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

**“Nothing that defileth”**: The wicked, on earth, who refuse to repent and change will not be there; they could not find happiness around such happy people! On earth, their satisfaction was found in gaining things for themselves, regardless of how much misery it brought to others. That is why they will not enter heaven.

How thankful we can be that God is in charge, and nothing that defileth will be there!

**“They which are written in the Lamb’s book of life”**: Heaven will be a place of joy and freedom such as you and I have never experienced down here. There will be no more fear or oppression.

**“To His faithful followers Christ has been a daily companion and familiar friend. They have lived in close contact, in constant communion with God. Upon them the glory of the Lord has risen. In them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ has been reflected. Now they rejoice in the undimmed rays of the brightness and glory of the King in His majesty. They are prepared for the communion of heaven; for they have heaven in their hearts.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 421.**

## Revelation 22

*Eternity with Christ*

*Brief overview*—This chapter first provides us with a description of life in the New Earth. Then, beginning at verse 7, we are given a warning to remain steadfast in the faith.

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**“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. 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.”**  
**Revelation 22:1-2.**

*In Revelation 21, we were primarily shown the outside of the New Jerusalem; now we will be given a brief view of what is inside the city.*

*What is in the city?*—As mentioned earlier, it is significant that **all that we are told about the interior of the Holy City—appears to be a description of a garden!** The only exception is the throne of God (Rev. 21:5) and the statement about the “street of . . . gold” (Rev. 21:21). The word, “street” (Rev. 21:21; 22:2), can also be translated as “path.” The first home that God gave to our first parents was a beautiful garden. If they had not sinned, their children would have gone out from there and established homes in additional gardens. Just as the Garden of Eden was “heaven in miniature” (1BC 1082), so everywhere we live in the new earth and the Holy City will be like the Garden of Eden.

Just before the Flood, the tree of life was taken to heaven (PP 62); and, today, it is in the “paradise of God” (Rev. 2:7). God’s people on earth have longed to be able to go to “the lost paradise” (GC 299). If faithful, soon we will have that opportunity. But we can have a paradise-like



atmosphere in our homes right now!

“Mutual kindness and forbearance will make home a paradise and attract holy angels into the family circle.”—*1 Testimonies*, 386-387.

**As soon as Jesus opens the gate of the Holy City, the redeemed will walk in—and they will see the Paradise of God, the restored Garden of Eden, more beautiful than before.**

The throne of God and other wonderful things will also be in the city. But it appears that a very large part of it will consist of a vast, beautiful garden with dwellings (John 14:1-3) scattered here and there for the redeemed.

“As His [Christ’s] feet touch the mountain, it parts asunder, and becomes a very great plain, and is prepared for the reception of **the holy city in which is the paradise of God, the garden of Eden**, which was taken up after man’s transgression. Now it descends with the city, more beautiful, and gloriously adorned than when removed from the earth.”—*3 Spiritual Gifts*, 83-84.

“Before the ransomed throng is the Holy City. Jesus opens wide the pearly gates, and the nations that have kept the truth enter in. **There they behold the Paradise of God, the home of Adam in his innocency . . .**

**“Adam is reinstated in his first dominion.** Transported with joy, he beholds the trees that were once his delight—the very trees whose fruit he himself had gathered in the days of his innocence and joy. He sees the vines that his own hands have trained, the very flowers that he once loved to care for. His mind grasps the reality of the scene; **he comprehends that this is indeed Eden restored, more lovely now than when he was banished from it.** The Saviour leads him to the tree of life and plucks the glorious fruit and bids him eat. He looks about him and beholds a multitude of his family redeemed, **standing in the Paradise of God.**”—*Great Controversy*, 646, 648.

**Will Eve be saved?**—The above passage specifically states that Adam will be redeemed. But what about Eve?

The following passages indicate that she will be also:

“Although gloom and darkness hung, like the pall of death, over the future, yet in the promise of the Redeemer, the Star of hope lighted up the dark future. The gospel was first preached to Adam by Christ. **Adam and Eve felt sincere sorrow and repentance for their guilt. They believed the precious promise of God, and were saved from utter ruin.**”—*I Bible Commentary, 1084.*

“**Heavenly angels more fully opened to our first parents the plan that had been devised for their salvation. Adam and his companion were assured that notwithstanding their great sin, they were not to be abandoned to the control of Satan.** The Son of God had offered to atone, with His own life, for their transgression. A period of probation would be granted them, and through repentance and faith in Christ they might again become the children of God . . . **In their remorse and anguish they pleaded that the penalty might not fall upon Him** whose love had been the source of all their joy; rather let it descend upon them and their posterity.

“They were told that, since the law of Jehovah is the foundation of His government in heaven as well as upon the earth, even the life of an angel could not be accepted as a sacrifice for its transgression . . . As Adam’s transgression had brought wretchedness and death, so the sacrifice of Christ would bring life and immortality.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 66-67.*

“Eve believed the words of Satan, and the belief of that falsehood in regard to God’s character changed the condition and character of both herself and husband. They were changed from good and obedient children into transgressors, and **it was only by repentance toward God and in the promised Messiah that they could hope ever to regain the lost image of God.**”—*Review, January 5, 1886.*

“**Pure river of water of life**”: In Ezekiel’s description of this river (Eze. 47:1), we are told that **it flows forth from the Sanctuary which, of course, would contain the throne**

of God. This river then flows by the tree of life which is on both sides of the river:

“And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because **their waters they issued out of the Sanctuary**: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.”—*Ezekiel 47:12*.

*Here is an outstanding description of this:*

“Here we saw the tree of life and the throne of God. Out of the throne came a pure river of water, and on either side of the river was the tree of life. On one side of the river was a trunk of a tree, and a trunk on the other side of the river, both of pure, transparent gold. At first I thought I saw two trees. I looked again, and saw that they were united at the top in one tree. So it was the tree of life on either side of the river of life. Its branches bowed to the place where we stood, and the fruit was glorious; it looked like gold mixed with silver.”—*Early Writings, 17*.

“**Tree of life**”: In the Bible, the tree of life is mentioned in Genesis 3:1-24 and Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 14.

Here are several statements which clarify the condition of access to the tree of life and the effects of eating from it:

“**Obedience, perfect and perpetual**, was the condition of eternal happiness. **On this condition he [Adam] was to have access** to the tree of life.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 49*.

“They [Adam and Eve] were full of **the vigor imparted by the tree of life, and their intellectual power was but little less than that of the angels.**”—*Patriarchs and Prophets, 50*.

“The **fruit** of the tree of life in the Garden of Eden possessed supernatural virtue. To eat of it was to live forever. Its fruit was the antidote of death. Its **leaves** were for the sustaining of life and immortality.

“But through man’s disobedience, death entered the

world. Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the fruit of which he had been forbidden to touch. His transgression opened the floodgates of woe upon our race. After the entrance of sin, the heavenly Husbandman transplanted the tree of life to the Paradise above.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 988-989.

**“Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will ‘grow up’ to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory.”**—*Great Controversy*, 645.

“In the midst of the street of life, 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.**”—*Early Writings*, 31.

**“Fruit every month”**: There will be an unending supply of fruit which sustains immortality, because **a fresh new, and very abundant variety will appear on the tree of life every month.** How thankful we are that the fruit of the tree of life will perpetuate life throughout the eternal ages!

***The redeemed go to the throne each month***—According to Revelation 22:2, **the tree of life bears twelve kinds of fruit and yields its fruit every month. This fact helps us understand the meaning of Isaiah 66:22-23, which is a parallel passage:**

“For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that **from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me,** saith the Lord.”—*Isaiah 66:22-23.*

According to this, there are two special gatherings. **On two different type of occasions, the redeemed from all over the planet will gather to the throne of God in the Holy City. Whenever they gather there, they will, of course, worship God.**

Not only will “all flesh” (all human beings) gather about the throne of God for **a special worship service each Sabbath** (once every week), but **they will also come at the**

**beginning of each month** for another praise and worship service. Why? Because **it is time to partake of the latest, new variety of fruit which will have appeared at the beginning of that month on the tree of life!** Each new variety of fruit will be utterly delicious.

Someone may say, “Well, they gather there for the feast of the new moon.” But that is not the true meaning of **Isaiah 66:23**. *Revelation 22:2 is the key that unlocks the meaning of Isaiah 66:23* (“. . . the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month”).

The Hebrew of Isaiah 66:23 says that “from new moon to its new moon and from Sabbath to its Sabbath,” they gather by the throne at the center of the Holy City.”

**The phrase, “new moon,” is a Hebrew idiom for “month”;** since the Hebrews used the first sighting of the new moon to identify when each new month began. This was the only accurate way they could determine monthly and yearly cycles. (The weekly Sabbaths are on an entirely different cycle, independent of months and years.)

The Septuagint of Isaiah 66:23 has “*mena ek mena*”—**“from month to month.”** The Septuagint (LXX) is the Koine Greek version of the Hebrew Bible, translated in stages by dedicated Jews between the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. in Alexandria. It was begun by the 3rd century B.C. and completed before 132 B.C. It is the oldest of several ancient translations of the Hebrew Bible into Greek. The translation of this idiom, in the Greek of Isaiah 66:23, is this: “*kai estai* [and it is] *mena ek mena* [**month to month**] *kai* [and] *sabbaton ek sabbatou* [**Sabbath to Sabbath**]” (*Septuaginta, Vol. 2, p. 656*).

*Two basic facts should be explained here:*

**First: Our word, “month” (“moonth”), comes from the word for “moon.”** This is because it is the cycle of the moon which has, for thousands of years, dictated when each new month would begin. Although our modern months are dictated by an arbitrary number of days in the calendar (29, 30, or 31), originally, the month began with each new

lunar cycle.

*Second:* The modern “new moon” consists of several days when the moon cannot be seen because the moon passes between the earth and the sun. But **the true “new moon” is when the moon first appears in the eastern horizon, thus marking the beginning of the new month.**

It is from the Karaite Jews that our forefathers learned that the date of the Day of Atonement in 1844 was October 22. This is because the Karaites have the most accurate understanding of the Hebrew of the Old Testament, and accept the entire Hebrew Old Testament, while totally rejecting the “Oral Law” (Talmud).

*Here is the Karaite explanation of the meaning of the Hebrew phrase, “new moon”:*

**“The Biblical month begins with the crescent New Moon, also called First Visible Sliver** [on the eastern horizon]. The Hebrew word for **month** (*Hodesh*) literally means **New Moon** and only by extension the period between one New Moon and the next . . . The term for “Month” (*Hodesh*) itself implies that **the month begins with the crescent New Moon**. As will be seen, this would have been obvious to any ancient Israelite . . .

“There can be no doubt that **the biblical holidays are dependent on the moon**. The strongest proof of this is the passage in Ps. 104:19, which declares: **‘He created the moon for *Mo’adim* [appointed times].’**

“The Hebrew term *Mo’adim* [appointed times] is the same word used to describe the Biblical holidays. Leviticus 23, which contains a catalogue of the Biblical Holidays opens with the statement: **‘These are the *Mo’adim* [appointed times]** . . . holy convocations which you shall proclaim in their appointed times [*Mo’adam*]’ . . . So when the psalmist tells us that God created the moon for *Mo’adim* [appointed times], he means that the moon was created to determine the time of the *Mo’adim*, that is, the Biblical Holidays . . .

“This primary meaning is preserved in a number of passages such as 1 Samuel 20:5, in which David says

to Jonathan, ‘Tomorrow is the New Moon (*Hodesh*).’ Clearly, in this verse, *Hodesh* is used to refer to the specific day on which the month begins and not the entire month . . . **The Crescent New Moon is called *Hodesh* because it is the first time the moon is seen anew after being concealed for several days at the end of the lunar cycle . . .**

“Many people have been led astray by the inaccurate use in modern languages of the term, ‘New Moon.’ Modern astronomers adopted this otherwise unused term, which had always referred to the first visible sliver, and used it to refer to conjunction (when the Moon passes between the Earth and the Sun, at which time it is not visible). The astronomers soon realized that the inaccurate use of ‘New Moon’ to refer to conjunction would lead to confusion; so, to be more accurate, scientists now distinguish between ‘Astronomical New Moon’ and ‘Crescent New Moon.’”—*Karaite Korner*.

***Now, let us apply this to the new earth:* The redeemed will be living all over the world; and, once a month, they will come to the throne of God. Why? Because that wonderful tree of life, which is close to God’s throne, has just produced its latest, new variety of life-sustaining fruit.**

“There [in heaven] they will assemble in the Sanctuary [at the throne of God] from [1] **Sabbath to Sabbath**, from [2] **one new moon to another**, to unite in loftiest strains of song, in praise and thanksgiving to Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever.”—*6 Testimonies*, 368.

**The new moon marks the beginning of the new month; and the redeemed do not come up to the throne to worship the moon, but to worship God and partake of their monthly meal from the tree of life.**

It should also be mentioned that **Revelation makes it clear that the redeemed in the new earth have no need of the moon or its light**; for there is no night in the Holy City or anywhere on earth (Rev. 21:25; 22:5; GC 676).

“And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the

**moon**, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”—*Revelation 21:23*.

“The brightness of His presence fills the City of God, and flows out beyond the gates, flooding the whole earth with its radiance.”—*Great Controversy*, 665.

For your information, **there is no “feast of the new moon” commanded anywhere in the writings of Moses, or anywhere else in the Bible.** It is due to a misinterpretation of Isaiah 66:23 and 1 Samuel 20:5; some think that they should observe a “feast of the new moon.”

**We must beware of inventing new worship services which are not commanded in Scripture. Nowhere in the Bible are we told that, in this life, we are to worship God at the beginning of each new month.**

**Why then do we gather to the throne of God, in the earth made new, each month? —Because it is the monthly gathering to eat from the tree of life and perpetuate immortality!** While there, we worship the Father and Son who gave us that tree.

“They reasoned that **God has in His Word established the regulations governing His worship, and that men are not at liberty to add to these or to detract from them.** The very beginning of the great apostasy was in seeking to supplement the authority of God by that of the church. Rome began by enjoining what God had not forbidden, and she ended by forbidding what He had explicitly enjoined.”—*Great Controversy*, 289-290.

Summarizing: Our word, “month,” comes from “moon;” since the lunar month is about 28 days in length and was anciently determined by watching for the first appearance of the moon’s crescent each month.

**I would not wish to take part in a celebration in honor of the moon. In ancient paganism, the moon was a symbol of Astarte. This concept was brought into the papacy.**

“The Fathers often compared Jesus to the sun as they compared Mary to the moon.”—*William L.*



Gildea, "Paschale Gaudium," *The Catholic World*, No. 58; March 1894, p. 809.

**Many Buddhist novices and monks, and some Hindu and Catholic orders, are required to have a shaved area on top of their heads, with a circular hair ridge surrounding it.** Called the "tonsure" (from the Latin, *tondere*, meaning "to shear"), this symbolizes the Sun god embracing the moon goddess.

In the papal mass, the host is placed in a lunette; and this is placed in a radiating-ray monstrance, a symbol of copulation of the moon by the sun.

"Lunette (*L. luna*, moon). A thin circular receptacle, having a glass face which holds the consecrated Host at Benediction. It slides into the monstrance on a track."—*Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary*, p. 347.

It is of interest that Hubal, an ancient moon god from Mesopotamia, had been brought to the Kaaba in Mecca about 400 years before Muhammad (*Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar, Muhammad the Holy Prophet*). By the time of Muhammad, Hubal's name had been changed to "Allah;" and his symbol was the crescent moon (*Rick Stroud, "The Moon Gods," The Times of London, July 2, 2009*).

**In A.D. 610, Muhammad received his "first revelation" and was told to elevate this moon god as the greatest of the Arabian gods.** That is why the Arab symbol for their god is the crescent moon next to a star.

**Nowhere in Scripture are we told to hold a feast either in honor of the sun or of the moon. Let us not start doing it now.**

**"Leaves of the tree for the healing":** In the Holy City, eating of the leaves of the tree of life will be "for the healing of the nations" (Rev. 22:2). By eating of that tree, although already perfect, **the redeemed will be able to "grow up as calves of the stall"** (Mal. 4:2), to the original stature that Adam and Eve had at the time of Creation. Speaking of the future new earth, we are told:

**"And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side**

**and on that side**, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed [rot]: **it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months**, because **their waters they issued out of the Sanctuary**: and the **fruit thereof shall be for meat**, and the **leaf thereof for medicine.**—*Ezekiel 47:12.*

**It is believed that Adam was more than twice as tall as men living today**, and Eve was only slightly shorter (3SG 34-35; *Signs, January 9, 1879*). At about 15 feet tall, with Eve about 12 feet, they had massive mental powers and strength. Because they were twice as tall as those now living, their bodies and brains were four times larger in volume.

“As Adam came forth from the hand of his Creator he was of noble height and of beautiful symmetry. He was more than twice as tall as men now living upon the earth, and was well proportioned . . . Eve was not quite as tall as Adam. Her head reached a little above his shoulders.”—*Story of Redemption, 21.*

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**“And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign forever and ever.” Revelation 22:3-5.**

**“No more curse”**: The curse began in Eden, when **daily activities of Adam and Eve became more difficult because of sin** (Gen. 3:17). The sin of Cain added to the curse (Gen. 4:11-12); and it greatly intensified after the Flood (3SG 84; 1BC 1085). Christ bore this curse in order to eliminate it (*Review, June 23, 1896*). The curse is finally removed in the earth made new (Rev. 22:3); because rebellion against the will of God has finally ended.

“The **first curse** was pronounced upon the posterity of Adam and upon the earth, because of disobedience. The **second curse** came upon the ground after Cain

slew his brother Abel. The **third most dreadful curse**, from God, came upon the earth at the Flood.”—*I Bible Commentary*, 1085.

“As transgression becomes almost universal **the curse will be permitted to become as broad and as deep as the transgression.**”—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 411.

**“Throne of God and of the Lamb”:** This indicates that **both the Father and the Son will be in the new earth.** The word, “throne,” occurs 39 times in Revelation. **Three times we are told that both the Father and the Son share the same throne** (Rev. 3:21; 22:1, 3).

There is no evidence, anywhere in the Inspired Writings, that God the Father will remain in heaven and Christ will dwell here on earth, separate from Him.

Both the Father and Son are together on the throne; but, enshrouded in glory, the Father is never visible.

**“I saw a throne, and on it sat the Father and the Son.** I gazed on Jesus’ countenance and admired His lovely person. **The Father’s person I could not behold, for a cloud of glorious light covered Him.** I asked Jesus if His Father had a form like Himself. He said He had, but I could not behold it, for said He, ‘If you should once behold the glory of His person, you would cease to exist.’”—*Early Writings*, 54.

Here are two more passages; each shows the Son seated on the throne, with the glory of the Father about Him. In other words, the Father is there with Him, but unseen.

“The black, angry clouds that covered the firmament are parted, and like Stephen **they look up steadfastly into heaven and see the glory of God and the Son of man seated upon His throne.** In His divine form they discern the marks of His humiliation; and from His lips **they hear the request presented before His Father** and the holy angels: ‘I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am.’”—*Great Controversy*, 636.

“Now Christ again appears to the view of His ene-

mies. Far above the city, upon a foundation of burnished gold, is a throne, high and lifted up. **Upon this throne sits the Son of God**, and around Him are the subjects of His kingdom. The power and majesty of Christ no language can describe, no pen portray. **The glory of the Eternal Father is enshrouding His Son.** The brightness of His presence fills the City of God, and flows out beyond the gates, flooding the whole earth with its radiance.”—*Great Controversy*, 665.

*There is a deep truth here!* According to Revelation 22:3, the throne of God will, in the earth made new, be right here on our planet. This would appear to mean that, **by transferring His throne to the Holy City, God the Father will then have made our world the command center of the universe!**

“God’s glory in the heavens, **the innumerable worlds in their orderly revolutions.**”—*Education*, 21.

“The same creative energy that brought the world into existence is still exerted in upholding the universe and continuing the operations of nature. **The hand of God guides the planets in their orderly march through the heavens.** It is not because of inherent power that year by year the earth continues her motion round the sun and produces her bounties. The word of God controls the elements.”—*Counsels to Parents and Teachers*, 185.

“The same great laws that guide alike the star and the atom control human life.”—*Education*, 99.

“They [the redeemed] share the treasures of knowledge and understanding gained through ages upon ages in contemplation of God’s handiwork. With undimmed vision they gaze upon the glory of creation—**suns and stars and systems, all in their appointed order circling the throne of Deity.**”—*Great Controversy*, 677-678.

This may explain some (or all) of the mysterious passages about how God will, in the future, “*shake the heavens and the earth*” (Isa. 13:13; Joel 3:16; Hag. 2:21; Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:25; Luke 21:26). He may rearrange the orbital

motions of the galaxies so that they will henceforth circle His throne, which He will move from heaven to our planet. It would seem that He would definitely do this; since He is moving His capital—His throne—from heaven to earth.

“When the Lord said ‘heaven,’ in giving the signs recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, He meant heaven, and when He said ‘earth’ He meant earth. **The powers of heaven are the sun, moon, and stars.** They rule in the heavens. The powers of earth are those that rule on the earth. **The powers of heaven will be shaken** at the voice of God. **Then the sun, moon, and stars will be moved out of their places.** They will not pass away, but be shaken by the voice of God.”—*Early Writings*, 41.

“Whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, **Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.**”—*Hebrews 12:26*.

“The work of redemption will be complete. In the place where sin abounded, God’s grace much more abounds. **The earth itself, the very field that Satan claims as his, is to be not only ransomed but exalted. Our little world, under the curse of sin the one dark blot in His glorious creation, will be honored above all other worlds in the universe of God.** Here, where the Son of God tabernacled in humanity; where the King of glory lived and suffered and died,—**here, when He shall make all things new, the tabernacle of God shall be 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.’**”—*Desire of Ages*, 26.

**Descriptions of the throne**—Here are passages which describe what it looks like in front of this throne. It has the appearance of a sapphire; and that type of gem is a deep sky blue. **The throne itself is also of this color.**

“And they saw the God of Israel: and there was **under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone,** and as it were the body of heaven in His clearness.”—*Exodus 24:10*.

“And above the firmament that was over their heads

was the likeness of a **throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone**: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.”—*Ezekiel 1:26*.

“In the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims there appeared over them as it were a **sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne**.”—*Ezekiel 10:1*.

*Why is the throne and the floor around it blue? Blue is a favorite color of our heavenly Father; for it represents the law of God, the foundation of His government.* If you will check in an unabridged concordance, you will find 50 texts, showing that blue is a favorite color of our heavenly Father.

**Above and around God’s throne is a brilliant rainbow, which we are told, actually encircles the throne.**

“There was a **rainbow round about the throne**.”—*Revelation 4:3*.

“**Upon the sapphire throne**, was the Eternal One; and **round about the throne was a rainbow**, the emblem of divine mercy.”—*Prophets and Kings, 536*.

“The **rainbow about the throne** is an assurance that God is true; that in Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”—*8 Testimonies, 23*.

“The rainbow spanning the heavens with its arch of light is a token of ‘the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature.’ Genesis 9:16. And **the rainbow encircling the throne on high** is also a token to God’s children of His covenant of peace. As the bow in the cloud results from the union of sunshine and shower, so the bow above God’s throne represents the union of His mercy and His justice.”—*Education, 115 (also DA 834)*.

**Brilliant glory flows from the throne where Deity resides.**

“**Divine rays of glory** . . . emanate from the throne of God and shine from the face of Jesus Christ.”—*2 Testimonies, 619*.

As mentioned earlier, the entire universe revolves around the throne of God.

“With undimmed vision they gaze upon the glory of creation—suns and stars and systems, all in their appointed order circling the throne of Deity.”—*Great Controversy*, 677.

“**Shall serve Him**”: From *latreuo*, “to serve,” “to minister.” The word refers to normal, spontaneous serving, and is different than *leitourgeo*, which is serving in an appointed office. **God’s faithful ones live to serve Him, work for Him, praise Him, worship Him, and please Him in every way possible.** It is more than a requirement; it is natural living. Christ loved them enough to redeem them; and, with all their heart, they love Him in return.

“**See His face**”: Moses saw as much of God as he could (Ex. 33:20-23). The Redeemed will behold their Maker even more clearly.

“Blessed are the pure in heart: **for they shall see God.**”—*Matthew* 5:8.

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which **no man shall see the Lord.**”—*Hebrews* 12:14.

“We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for **we shall see Him as He is.**”—*1 John* 3:2.

“For now we see through a glass, darkly; **but then face to face:** now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”—*1 Corinthians* 13:12.

“**His name shall be in their foreheads**”: The divine name in the forehead is a **symbol of ownership and authentication. Their entire lives are dedicated to God.**

The frontal lobes, the thinking part of the brain, are just behind the forehead. This is the center in man of the kingly power of reason, where the power of choice is centered. This symbolizes that the entire life of each of the redeemed is dedicated to loving God, obeying Him, and encouraging others to do the same. Each one is utterly happy.

While on earth, the redeemed made godly choices the basis of their conduct—rather than letting their brain’s

emotional centers dominate their lives. As a result of their companionship with Christ, they experienced an ongoing peace and happiness which was foreign to others.

**This verse contrasts with the things written in the foreheads of Babylon and its supporters.** While the Father's name is written in the foreheads of His redeemed people (Rev. 14:1; 22:4), tragically, there will be a very large number at the end of time who will receive the mark of the beast in their foreheads (Rev. 13:3-4, 8).

**“No night there”:** This is the first mention, in Revelation, of the fact that there will be no night in the Holy City (Rev. 21:25). Light streams out from the throne and provides continual bright light to the entire world. This fact was so startling that John mentioned it twice. The light from the sun and moon pale into nothingness in comparison with the glory of God and of Christ.

**“The brightness of His presence fills the City of God, and flows out beyond the gates, flooding the whole earth with its radiance.”**—*Great Controversy*, 665.

**“They shall reign”:** This does not mean that the redeemed will rule over one another or over the other worlds. It symbolizes their total freedom in Christ; they are no longer under the oppressive domination of the wicked. However, in a sense, **they will reign over the natural world, the animals and plants.** “The dominion that Adam had lost through sin would be recovered” (DA 115).

“The earth originally given to man as his kingdom, betrayed by him into the hands of Satan, and so long held by the mighty foe, has been brought back by the great plan of redemption. **All that was lost by sin has been restored.** ‘Thus saith the Lord . . . that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited.’ Isaiah 45:18. **God’s original purpose in the creation of the earth is fulfilled as it is made the eternal abode of the redeemed.** ‘The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.’ Psalm 37:29.”—*Great Controversy*, 674.



**“And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” Revelation 22:6-7.**

*At this point, the description of the Holy City, given in Revelation 21 and 22 has ended,—and we turn our attention to several concluding matters, all of which are important.*

**“These sayings”**: This massive prophecy, given to us in the book of Revelation, began in Chapter One. Now we are nearing its end.

**“Blessed is he that keepeth”**: We want to earnestly study and hold tightly to the truths found in this most wonderful book.

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**“And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.” Revelation 22:8-9.**

**“Fell down to worship”**: John was so utterly astonished at the glory of what was being shown to him, that, for a moment, he forgot that it was only an angel and not Jesus Himself who was speaking to him. (Compare Revelation 19:10.)

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**“And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.” Revelation 22:10.**

**“Seal not”**: This verse says that **Revelation is not to be sealed**; for “the time is at hand.” This is opposite to the command given to Daniel concerning his book (Dan.

12:4). You will recall that **the book of Daniel was sealed until the last days.**

“But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”—*Daniel 12:4.*

It would not be until the last days that the book of Daniel would be better understood as people carefully studied it in connection with the book of Revelation—which, in contrast, was never sealed. **The messages in Revelation brought encouragement and strength to God’s people all through the Dark Ages—and especially now in these last days of earth’s history.**

The words, “seal not,” actually mean to share widely the messages of this book! Do not keep these truths to yourself!

“**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.**”—*Revelation 1:3.*

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**“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” Revelation 22:11.**

**“He that is unjust”:** The destiny of all will be forever fixed when Jesus makes this announcement and leaves the heavenly Sanctuary, preparatory to returning to earth for His own. This declaration, once made, will never afterward be reversed.

This is not an arbitrary decision on the part of God, but the result of decisions made over a lifetime by each individual. The very wording of the announcement tells us that each person, by his life, decided what it would be. If he consistently chose to be unjust, he will henceforth remain that way. In sharp contrast, those who determined, in the strength of Christ, to live godly lives will continue to do so for eternity.

You will recall that the message of the First Angel is that the hour of God's Judgment has come!

**“Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”—Revelation 14:7.**

The solemn words of Revelation 22:11 announce that the Judgment has ended and the destiny of every soul is forever fixed. Now, while there is still time, we must make sure we have accepted Christ and are daily living close by His side.

**There is a line by us unseen,  
That crosses every path,—  
The hidden boundary between  
God's patience and his wrath.**

Throughout these years of probationary time, men and women are to be permitted to live a life of their own choosing. But after that comes the harvest.

**“Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into My barn.”—Matthew 13:30.**

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**“And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” Revelation 22:12-13.**

**“My reward is with Me”:** Christ will reward His faithful ones when He returns for them. **We are specifically told on what basis they are rewarded. It will be according to their works.**

While they are *saved* through Christ's atoning sacrifice as they yield their lives to His control, **their reward in heaven is determined by their words and conduct while on earth.** Many passages attest to this.

**“Reward” means that the extent of their ability to**

serve God in heaven is according to what their dedication was on earth. That is what is meant by “reward.” See *Revelation 11:18* for a more complete explanation of this.

**But do not underestimate the reward that all the redeemed will receive. For every one of them—it will be immense!** Behold what is in store for you, if you will determine to cling to Jesus throughout these earthly days:

**“All the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God’s redeemed. Unfettered by mortality, they wing their tireless flight to worlds afar—**worlds that thrilled with sorrow at the spectacle of human woe and rang with songs of gladness at the tidings of a ransomed soul. **With unutterable delight the children of earth enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfallen beings.** They share the treasures of knowledge and understanding gained through ages upon ages in contemplation of God’s handiwork. **With undimmed vision they gaze upon the glory of creation—**suns and stars and systems, all in their appointed order circling the throne of Deity. Upon all things, from the least to the greatest, the Creator’s name is written, and in all are the riches of His power displayed.”—*Great Controversy*, 677-678.

**“The Alpha and Omega”:** The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. **Christ is both our Creator and the final fulfillment of all our happiness.** He is both the source and beginning of our salvation, and also the one who will complete it—and take us to heaven.

“These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.”—*Revelation 14:4*.

The original Greek of that passage reads: “These are they that accompany the Lamb wherever He goes.” What a thrilling thought!

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

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**“Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14.**

**“*They that do His commandments*”:** Blessed are they who fulfill this, the seventh and last blessing of the book of Revelation.

**“None who have had the light of truth will enter the city of God as commandment breakers.** His law lies at the foundation of His government in earth and in heaven. If they have knowingly trampled upon and despised His law on the earth, they will not be taken to heaven to do the same work there. There is no change of character when Christ comes.

**“The character building is to go on during the hours of probation.** Day by day their actions are registered in the books of heaven, and they will, in the great day of God, be rewarded as their works have been. It will then be seen who receives the blessing. ‘Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.’”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 990.

*This verse—Revelation 22:14—is the third verse in this book which clearly identifies God’s special people at the end of time.*

**The first one:** At the end of the description of the persecution in the Dark Ages, we are told that the “remnant” can be identified as those who keep God’s commandments.

**“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”—Revelation 12:17.**

**The second one:** At the end of the Third Angel’s Message, we are told that those who will not receive the mark of the beast will be those who keep God’s commandments.

**“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith**

of Jesus.”—*Revelation 14:12*.

*The third one:* And, now as we near the end of Revelation, we are told that **those who will enter the Holy City and eat of the tree of life will be those who keep God’s commandments.**

“**Blessed are they that do His commandments**, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”—*Revelation 22:14*.

**A parallel passage is found at the end of the book of Isaiah.** It describes those who will live in the Holy City as those who faithfully keep the Bible Sabbath:

“For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and **from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me**, saith the Lord.”—*Isaiah 66:22-23*.

*We are saved from our sins by Jesus Christ. By His sacrifice on Calvary and mediation in the Sanctuary in heaven, Christ forgives the humble, repentant sinner; and, by His enabling grace, helps him to live a clean, godly life in obedience to the moral Ten Commandment law.*

*But those who presume to claim that they are “saved,” while remaining in their sins and refusing Christ’s enabling grace, will not enter heaven. For only God’s faithful, obedient children will be there.*

“*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: **Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.***”—*Ecclesiastes 12:13-14*.

Christ did not set aside obedience to God’s law.

“**Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.** For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”—*Matthew 5:17-18*.

The word, “*fulfill*,” in the above passage is not *kataluso* (“to destroy, abolish”; Matt. 26:61), but *pleroo* (“to fill up to even fuller measure”). Here are several examples where *pleroo* is used. Each one is obviously not about “destroy,” but “make more full.”

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so **fulfill** the law of Christ.”—*Galatians 6:2*.

“These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be **full**.”—*John 15:11* (1 *John 1:4*; 2 *John 12*).

“Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be **full**.”—*John 16:24* (*Phil. 2:2*; *Col. 1:25*).

**Wash their robes**—A variant of Revelation 22:14 is found in the Revised Standard Version.

“Blessed are those who wash their robes . . .”—*Revelation 22:14* (RSV).

Both alternates of this particular verse agree with one or more other passages of Scripture: Dozens agree with “do [keep] His commandments.” Here are six of them: Rev. 12:17; 14:12 (*cf.* John 14:15, 21; 15:10; 1 John 2:3-6). One agrees with “wash their robes”: Revelation 7:14.

Some scribe, apparently at Alexandria, who was copying the passage made a mistake and wrote down something that had a similar sound and rhythm: *poiountes tas entolas autou* (“keep His commandments”) vs. *plumontes tas stolas auton* (“wash their robes”).

But the earliest manuscripts have it as it is found in the KJV. An excellent example of this is the Syriac New Testament, which is one of the very earliest translations from the original Greek. In this verse, as well as most others, it reads just like the KJV; whereas the two later fourth century uncials, written on parchment (the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus), have “wash his robes.”

Cyprian (bishop of Carthage and an important early Christian writer, martyred in A.D. 258), whose writings predate any extant Greek manuscript, quotes the text of this

verse as “Blessed are they that do His commandments” (*The Treatises of Cyprian*,” No. 12, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. V, p. 525). Most of the minuscule manuscripts also read “that do His commandments.”

It is of interest that the Spirit of Prophecy quotes both variants! **The first set of quotes, which refer to Revelation 22:14, emphasize the obedience of the redeemed:**

“Jesus threw open the gates of the golden city and led us in. Here we were made welcome; **for we had kept the ‘commandments of God,’ and had a ‘right to the tree of life.’**”—*Early Writings*, 35.

“**All who keep the commandments of God; will enter in through the gates into the city and have right to the tree of life** and ever be in the presence of the lovely Jesus, whose countenance shines brighter than the sun at noonday.”—*Early Writings*, 51.

“In the final restitution, when there shall be ‘a new heaven and a new earth’ (Revelation 21:1), it [the garden of Eden] is to be restored more gloriously adorned than at the beginning. **Then they that have kept God’s commandments shall breathe in immortal vigor beneath the tree of life;** and through unending ages the inhabitants of sinless worlds shall behold, in that garden of delight, a sample of the perfect work of God’s creation, untouched by the curse of sin—a sample of what the whole earth would have become, had man but fulfilled the Creator’s glorious plan.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 62.

**The second set of quotes refer to Revelation 7:14 and thus emphasize the sufferings they have experienced while remaining faithful:**

“We marched over the sea of glass to the gate of the city. Jesus raised His mighty, glorious arm, laid hold of the pearly gate, swung it back on its glittering hinges, and said to us: **‘You have washed your robes in My blood, stood stiffly for My truth, enter in.’** We all marched in and felt we had a perfect right there.”—*I Testimonies*, 61.

“The question was then asked: **‘Why have you**



not washed your robes of character and made them white in the blood of the Lamb? . . . You would not be partaker of His sufferings, and you cannot now be partaker with Him of His glory.’ Then were uttered these solemn words: ‘He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.’ The book then closed.”—4 *Testimonies*, 387.

*Brief history of Bible translations*—In the mid-19th century, Tischendorf discovered the Codex Sinaiticus in the monastery at the foot of Mount Sinai and thought it was apparently one of the fifty copies of the Bible commissioned by Constantine, as a favor to Eusebius.

The Codex Vaticanus, apparently another of those commissioned by Constantine, first appeared in the Vatican Library in the 15th century.

Both Codexes are Alexandrian text-type manuscripts written in the mid-4th century in uncial (all capital) letters on parchment, and were apparently prepared at that worldly Christian seminary at Alexandria, where paganism first entered the Church in A.D. 200.

The Vaticanus was extensively used by Westcott and Hort in their edition of *The New Testament in the Original Greek* in 1881. The most widely sold editions of the Greek New Testament today are largely based on the text of the Codex Vaticanus. The Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are the primary basis for nearly all modern English Bible translations.

The King James Version (KJV, or Authorized Version) was translated between 1604 and 1611 by scholars in England. Most of it was copied from William Tyndale’s Bible. Tyndale (born in 1494; burned at the stake in 1536) was a genius at translation from ancient languages, and produced a very accurate translation. It is estimated that 83% of the KJV New Testament and 76% of the KJV Old Testament came directly from Tyndale’s Bible. Neither Tyndale nor the KJV translators worked from the Vaticanus or Sinaiticus. (*For a complete history of this, see our book, The King*

*James Bible and the Modern Versions.)*

**“Have right”**: The word is *exousia*, “privilege,” “right.” **Is it not a wonderful thing to be able to enter the gates of the New Jerusalem with the encouraging thought that, through the enabling grace of Christ,—you have a right to enter and live there?**

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**“For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.” Revelation 22:15.**

**“For without”**: Truly, this is a tragic passage! **Why would anyone intentionally choose to avoid a godly way of life? Why would they instead choose to live a few miserable years of repeatedly shattered pleasures down here,—when they could go home with Jesus and inherit eternal life? (A similar list is in Revelation 21:8.)**

The “*dogs*” are the vile, shameless persons. The “*sorcerers*” are the practicers of magical arts, with its enchantments. Spiritualism, as well as the use of mind-altering drugs would also come under this category. It would also include those who enjoy books and movies on witchcraft.

The “*whoremongers*” are those who indulge in or profit from sexual immorality. The “*murderers*” are those who, with their tongues or weapons, try to destroy others.

“*Idolaters*” are those who love something or someone better than they love Jesus and His ways.

Those who “*loveth and maketh a lie*” include those who find pleasure in the unreal world of fiction stories, novels, and movies. It includes those who are dishonest in their words and actions. Also included are those who turn away from truth in Scripture, in order to believe errors which permit them to remain in their sins and in disobedience to God’s requirements.

Look around your home and see what you have that is leading you away from God and His Inspired Writings. Remove those things from your home and your life, or they will keep you from heaven.

**“I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Revelation 22:16-17.**

**“I Jesus”:** Jesus Himself speaks, and authenticates the truths in the book of Revelation—as coming from Him.

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass.”—*Revelation 1:1*.

**Others say “Come”:** The Holy Spirit and the church, composed of the humble and obedient children of God, agree. **Each of us who has read this book should determine that we too will repeat the call—to yet others—to come to Jesus while there is still time!**

All the blessings obtained for mankind, by the sinless life and sacrificial death of the dear Saviour, are offered freely—to all who will have them. The lowliest sinner is invited; and the loftiest king has no pre-eminence. **All may receive the promise; and all who accept of it are to join in sounding the invitation, “Come, take, and share freely.”**

“Now the church is militant, now we are confronted with a world in midnight darkness, almost wholly given over to idolatry. **But the day is coming in which the battle will have been fought, the victory won.** The will of God is to be done on earth, as it is done in heaven. **Then the nations will own no other law than the law of heaven.** All will be a happy, united family, clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving—the robe of Christ’s righteousness.”—*7 Bible Commentary, 988*.

**“The bright and morning star”:** Without Jesus, our lives would be gloom and darkness! He is “the day star” that arises in our hearts (2 Peter 1:19). **He fills our thoughts with joy and our lives with brightness and purpose.**

“There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel” (Num. 24:17). **Because we rejoice now that we have Him, we will rejoice in the New Earth also.**

**“The Spirit and the bride”**: The Holy Spirit pleads with us to accept Christ’s offer of salvation, and the New Jerusalem beckons us to come and live there forever.

**“Him that heareth say”**: Literally “keep on saying, ‘Come.’”

**“Whosoever will”**: The offer is universal! None are excluded, except by their own decision. **You can have it!**

**Everyone is elected.** Everyone is elected to be saved. **God does not want anyone to be lost**; and He gives each of us a lifetime in which make our decision. He does not predecide for any of us! **The teaching that a few are predestined to be saved, and all others are predestined to be lost—is terrible, and it is un-Scriptural! It questions the character of God and denies the truth that everyone can be saved.**

If predestination were true, **there would be no free will, no need to pray, and no need to do missionary work.** Indeed, it would be blasphemous. We would just be machinery.

“Predestination: The act of decreeing or foreordaining events; the decree of God by which he hath, from eternity, unchangeably appointed or determined whatever comes to pass. It is used particularly in theology to denote the preordination of men to everlasting happiness or misery.”—*1828 Noah Webster’s Dictionary.*

**The Bible teaches free will, free choice! Everyone can be saved**; and as many as wish to continue separated from Christ and disobedient to His moral law will be lost.

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation **hath appeared to all men.**”—*Titus 2:11.*

“**Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth . . . Who gave Himself a ransom for all.**”—*1 Timothy 2:4, 6.*

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as

some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, **not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**—*2 Peter 3:9.*

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**”—*John 3:16.*

“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.”—*John 1:12.*

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.”—*2 Corinthians 6:17.*

“Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but **he that doeth the will of My Father** which is in heaven.”—*Matthew 7:21.*

“And if ye call on the Father, **who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work**, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.”—*1 Peter 1:17.*

“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, **If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed.**”—*John 8:31.*

“And the times of this ignorance God winked at; **but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.**”—*Acts 17:30.*

“Hearken, My beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom **which He hath promised to them that love Him?**”—*James 2:5.*

“And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, **to give every man according as his work shall be.**”—*Revelation 22:12.*

“**Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity**, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”—*Titus 2:14.*

“**He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.**”—*John 3:36.*

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that **He**

loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”—*1 John 4:10*.

“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.”—*Matthew 7:24*.

“Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.”—*Matthew 1:21*.

“And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected.”—*1 John 2:2-5*.

**“Take the water of life freely”:** Fill your life with it! Share it with others. Tell them the wonderful things you have learned, the close walk you are having with Jesus.

“The water of life [is] the spiritual life which Christ gives to every thirsty soul.”—*Desire of Ages, 190*.

“That which appealed to His heart was a soul thirsting for the waters of life. He passed by no human being as worthless, but sought to apply the healing remedy to every soul.”—*Ministry of Healing, 25*.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”—*Matthew 5:6*.

“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.”—*Revelation 21:6*.

“The divine grace which He alone can impart, is as living water, purifying, refreshing, and invigorating the soul.”—*Desire of Ages, 187*.

“Endure unto the end, and you shall eat the fruit of the tree of life and drink of the water of life”—*1 Testimonies, 65*.

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**“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words**

of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”  
**Revelation 22:18-19.**

**“For I testify”:** The speaker is Jesus. The warning is urgent: Do not reject the messages of this book, but put them into your life and share them with others.

**“Take away his part”:** The guilty one will suffer three major losses: *First:* **He will lose immortality** and receive eternal death. *Second:* **He will not inherit a place in the Holy City.** *Third:* **He will lose all the blessings and promises** in the book of Revelation. Nothing he can gain in this present life can compensate for such a staggering loss.

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**“He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”** Revelation 22:20-21.

**“I come quickly”:** The promise is solid. Christ is soon to return. The six-thousand-year history of this world is short and we are living down at the very close of it. *Jesus is soon to come for His own!*

If faithful to the end, you and I will be among that number who will live with Jesus forever! **It is worth any present sacrifice! We must determine that we will prove true.**

**“Come, Lord Jesus: Yes, come, Lord Jesus!** We want you to come and take us out of this evil world! We want to be with you forever!

**“The grace of Christ be with you all”:** Until we meet in heaven, be faithful, my brother, my sister. We must be there!

To those who have proved faithful, the voice of Jesus,

richer than any that ever fell on mortal ear, will be heard saying, "Your conflict is ended."

**Eternal life with Jesus! This must become our all-absorbing hope;** this must become the destiny toward which we travel down life's path.

If faithful, you and I can live forever when Christ returns! But if we miss eternity, we have missed everything.

If we are not prepared for Christ's soon return, we will miss the greatest event in history. **Jesus says "Come now. Come for forgiveness. Come for mercy. Come for victory over besetting sin. Come, so you can inherit eternity."**

Let Jesus become the center of your life. **Only He can bring you the happiness and peace of heart that you are craving. Only He can help you change your life**—and start anew. Yes, it will be difficult and Satan will try to lure you away, but let each difficulty cause you to run to Jesus for help.

**Bow before Him, and confess and forsake your sins. Surrender your life to Him.** Take into your hands the Holy Bible. Open it. With a prayer for guidance, read it every day; and bring its teachings into your life. Ask Him to guide you and make its words a reality for you.

"Many seem to have the idea that this world and the heavenly mansions constitute the universe of God. Not so. **The redeemed throng will range from world to world, and much of their time will be employed in searching out the mysteries of redemption.** And throughout the whole stretch of eternity, this subject will be continually opening to their minds. **The privileges of those who overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony are beyond comprehension.**"—*7 Bible Commentary, 990.*

"There the redeemed shall know, even as also they are known. **The loves and sympathies which God Himself has planted in the soul shall there find truest and sweetest exercise.** The pure communion with holy beings, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels and with the faithful ones of all ages who have



washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, the sacred ties that bind together 'the whole family in heaven and earth' (Eph. 3:15)—these help to constitute the happiness of the redeemed.

**“There, immortal minds will contemplate with never-failing delight the wonders of creative power, the mysteries of redeeming love. There will be no cruel, deceiving foe to tempt to forgetfulness of God. Every faculty will be developed, every capacity increased.** The acquirement of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies. **There the grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized; and still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body.**”—*Great Controversy*, 677.

**John's last words**—“Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”

**“There are homes for the pilgrims of earth.** There are robes for the righteous, with crowns of glory and palms of victory. **All that has perplexed us in the providences of God will in the world to come be made plain.** The things hard to be understood will then find explanation. The mysteries of grace will unfold before us. **Where our finite minds discovered only confusion and broken promises, we shall see the most perfect and beautiful harmony.** We shall know that infinite love ordered the experiences that seemed most trying. As we realize the tender care of Him who makes all things work together for our good, we shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory . . .

“We are still amidst the shadows and turmoil of earthly activities. **Let us consider most earnestly the blessed hereafter. Let our faith pierce through every cloud of darkness and behold Him who died for the sins of the world.**

**“He has opened the gates of paradise to all who receive and believe on Him.** To them He gives power

to become the sons and daughters of God. **Let the afflictions which pain us so grievously become instructive lessons, teaching us to press forward toward the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ.** Let us be encouraged by the thought that the Lord is soon to come. Let this hope gladden our hearts. 'Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.' Hebrews 10:37. Blessed are those servants who, when their Lord comes, shall be found watching.

**"We are homeward bound. He who loved us so much as to die for us hath builded for us a city.** The New Jerusalem is our place of rest. There will be no sadness in the city of God. No wail of sorrow, no dirge of crushed hopes and buried affections, will evermore be heard. Soon the garments of heaviness will be changed for the wedding garment. **Soon we shall witness the coronation of our King.** Those whose lives have been hidden with Christ, those who on this earth have fought the good fight of faith, will shine forth with the Redeemer's glory in the kingdom of God.

**"It will not be long till we shall see Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. And in His presence, all the trials and sufferings of this life will be as nothingness.** 'Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.' Verses 35-37. **Look up, look up, and let your faith continually increase. Let this faith guide you along the narrow path that leads through the gates of the city of God into the great beyond, the wide, unbounded future of glory that is for the redeemed.**"—9 *Testimonies*, 286-288.

## Appendix 1

## *The Expanding Claims of the Papacy*

Over the centuries, the claims of the papacy kept expanding. *They kept getting bigger and bigger!* Here is a brief overview of the gradual development of papal power.

Peter de Rosa, a church historian who was a former Jesuit, wrote this:

“Not one of the early Fathers [Christian writers] of the church saw in the Bible any reference to papal jurisdiction over the church [other churches]. On the contrary, they took it for granted that bishops, especially metropolitans [in charge of larger churches], have the full right to govern and administer their own territory without interference from anyone. The Eastern church [at Constantinople] never accepted papal supremacy.”—*Peter de Rosa, Vicars of Christ: The Dark Side of the Papacy, pp. 248-249.*

***Christ is the Rock***—*Christ is the Rock, not Peter!* “That rock is Christ” (Deut. 32:4; 2 Sam. 22:32; Ps. 18:2; 1 Cor. 10:4).

“Jesus continued: ‘I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and **upon this rock I will build My church**; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’ **The word Peter signifies a stone,—a rolling stone. Peter was not the rock upon which the church was founded.** The gates of hell did prevail against him when he denied his Lord with cursing and swearing. **The church was built upon One against whom the gates of hell could not prevail.**”

“Centuries before the Saviour’s advent Moses had pointed to the Rock of Israel’s salvation. The psalmist had sung of ‘the Rock of my strength.’ Isaiah had writ-

ten, 'Thus saith the Lord God, **Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation.**' Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 62:7; Isaiah 28:16. Peter himself, writing by inspiration, applies this prophecy to Jesus. He says, 'If ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious: unto whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house.' 1 Peter 2:3-5, R.V.

“**‘Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.’** 1 Corinthians 3:11. ‘Upon this rock,’ said Jesus, ‘I will build My church.’ In the presence of God, and all the heavenly intelligences, in the presence of the unseen army of hell, **Christ founded His church upon the living Rock. That Rock is Himself,—His own body, for us broken and bruised. Against the church built upon this foundation, the gates of hell shall not prevail.**”—*Desire of Ages, 412-413.*

**As for Peter, he was reproved by Jesus for trying to learn another disciple’s future (John 21:21-22).**

“Peter had been restored to his apostleship, but **the honor and authority he received from Christ had not given him supremacy over his brethren.** This Christ had made plain when in answer to Peter’s question, ‘What shall this man do?’ He had said, ‘What is that to thee? follow thou Me.’ **Peter was not honored as the head of the church.**”—*Desire of Ages, 817.*

**Peter said that he, himself, was only one among many elders in the church and that none of them should try to control the church or seek to become rich from their position.** Here are his words:

“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: **Feed the flock of God which is among you,** taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; **not for filthy lucre,** but of a ready mind; **neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.** And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye

shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”—*1 Peter 5:1-4.*

*Here are several of the most important steps in this process, by which the pope kept claiming greater and greater things for himself:*

Roman Emperor Valentinian I (364-375) decreed that Damasus would have **the primacy and authority over the other churches.**

“In his episcopate, Valentinian I enacted a law making the bishop of Rome the judge of other bishops. A council in Rome, in A.D. 378, enlarged his powers of judging and petitioned the emperor Gratian to **exempt the bishop of Rome from all civil jurisdiction except that of the emperor** alone; to order that **he be judged by none except a council, or the emperor direct**; and that the imperial power should be exerted to **compel obedience to the judgment of the bishop of Rome concerning other bishops.** Gratian granted part of their request and it was made to count for all.”—*A. T. Jones, Ecclesiastical Empire, p. 157.*

“The first great step in the development of papal power took place under [Pope] Damasus (366-384) who obtained from the Emperor Valentinian I the right of **all bishops in the western part of the empire** who were condemned by their provincial synod **to appeal to the Bishop of Rome.**”—*Claude Beaufort Moss, The Christian Faith, Part 3, Chapter 49, p. 3.*

Pope Leo I (440-461) asserted **the authority of the Roman bishop over everyone.**

“The Lord . . . wanted His gifts to flow into the entire body from Peter himself, as if from the head, in such a way that **anyone who had dared to separate himself from the solidarity of Peter would realize that he was himself no longer a sharer in the divine mystery . . .** The Apostolic See . . . has on countless occasions been reported in consultation by bishops . . . And through the appeal of various cases to this See, decisions already made have been either revoked or confirmed.”—*Pope*

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*Leo I, Letter to the Bishops of Vienne, July 445 A.D., in W.A. Jergens, ed., The Faith of the Early Fathers, Vol. 3, p. 269. (Also see p. 275 for another statement by Leo I.)*

Pope Gregory VII (A.D. 1073-1085) issued a number of “dictates,” in which **he set forth the broad powers of the papal pontiff.**

“1. That the Roman Church was founded by the Lord alone. 2. That **the Roman Pontiff alone is justly called universal.** 3. That **he alone can depose bishops or restore them.** 9. That **all princes should kiss the feet of the pope alone.** That it is lawful for him to depose emperors. That **his sentence ought not to be reviewed by any one; and he alone can review [the decisions] of all.** 19. That **he ought to be judged by no one.** 22. That **the Roman Church never erred; nor will it,** according to Scripture, ever err. That **he can absolve subjects from their allegiance to unrighteous [rulers].**”—*Gregory VII (A.D. 1073-1085), Dictatus Papae (“Dictates of the Pope”; sometimes called the Dictates of Hilderbrand), Latin text in Karl Hofmann, Der Dictatus Papae Gregory VII, p. 11.*

Pope Innocent III (A.D. 1198-1216) **claimed divine authority.** He declared that **only the Roman Pontiff had the power to appoint and transfer bishops,** because **he acts “not only as a man, but as God’s vice governor on earth”** (*non puri hominis, sed veri Dei vicem gerit in terris*). . . He “dissolves not with human, but with **divine authority**” (*non humana, sed divina potius auctoritate dissolvit*).

“It is not a man, but God, who separates those whom the Roman Pontiff (**not only as a man, but as God’s vice governor on earth**), providing for the necessities and the good of the churches, **dissolves not with human, but with divine authority.**”—*Decretales of Gregory II, liber: 1, titulus 7, cap. 3, col. 217.*

Pope Innocent III also **claimed to have authority over kings.**

“Just as the founder of the universe established two great lights in the firmament of heaven, the greater light

to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night, so too He set two great dignities in the firmament of the universal church . . . the greater one to rule the day, that is, souls, and the lesser to rule the night, that is, bodies. **These dignities are the papal authority and the royal power.** Now just as the moon derives its light from the sun and is indeed lower than it in quantity and quality, in position and in power, so too **the royal power derives the splendor of its dignity from the pontifical authority.**—*Comment of Pope Innocent III, Letter to the prefect Acerbius and the nobles of Tuscany, 1198.*

Pope Innocent IV (1243-1254) declared that **every priest and religious leader in the world must obey the pope.**

**“Every cleric must obey the Pope, even if he commands what is wrong, for no one can judge him.”**—*Pope Innocent IV, Comment in Decretal, Janus, The Pope and the Council, p. 161.*

In the Bull of Pope Innocent IV (A.D. 1243-1254), at the First Council of Lyons (A.D. 1245), **he deposed Emperor Frederick II.**

“We [Pope Innocent IV] therefore, after careful discussion with our brother cardinals and the sacred council [Lyons, A.D. 1245] on his [Emperor Frederick II] wicked transgressions already mentioned and many more besides, since though unworthy we hold on earth the place of Jesus Christ . . . [Emperor Frederick II] has been cast out by God from kingdom and empire; we mark him out as bound by his sins, an outcast and deprived by our Lord of every honour and dignity; and we deprive him of them by our sentence.”—*Pope Innocent IV, Bull at First Council of Lyons (July 17, 1245), in the third year of our pontificate; in The Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils.*

Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) declared, **“I am Caesar.”**

“The papal theory made **the Pope alone God’s representative on earth.** He maintained that **the Emperor**

received his right to rule from St. Peter's successor. For historical proof of the genuineness of this position attention was called to the power of the keys, the Donation of Constantine, the coronation of Pepin, the restoration of the Empire in the West . . . It was upheld by Nicholas I, Hildebrand, Alexander III, . . . Innocent III, and culminated with Boniface VIII at the jubilee of 1300 when, seated on the throne of Constantine, girded with the imperial sword, wearing a crown, and waving a sceptre, he shouted to the throng of loyal pilgrims: **'I am Caesar—I am Emperor.'**”—*Alexander Clarence Flick, The Rise of the Mediaeval Church, p. 413.*

In his 1302 bull, *Unam Sanctam*, Pope Boniface VIII declared that **obedience to the pope was necessary for salvation:**

“We, moreover, proclaim, declare and pronounce that **it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human being to be subject to the Roman Pontiff.**”—*Pope Boniface VIII, Bull Unam Sanctam (November 18, 1302). Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History, Vol. 3, No. 6, pp. 20-23.*

Catholic apologists sometimes suggest that Boniface VIII meant to apply his remark only to Catholics, and that Protestants are not automatically excluded from salvation by it. However the Latin text reads *omni humanae creaturae* (“**every human creature**”). This is from *Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, Vol. 5, Part 2, p. 28.* The title of the bull, *Unam Sanctam* (One Holy Church), and its last sentence make it clear that Boniface VIII was declaring that **submission to the Pope, the Holy See of Rome, of the Catholic Church is the only means of salvation, and those resisting that presumed authority are lost souls.** Conservative traditional Catholics will staunchly defend the statement that, **“Outside the Catholic Church, there is no Salvation”**; and they will cite *Unam Sanctam* as positive proof.

Boniface VIII added that **the decision of the pope and the decision of God constitute one decision.**



**“Only the Pope is said to be the Vicar of God: because he alone is able to bind and loose, possessing alone loosing and binding given to him by God. The decision of the Pope and the decision of God constitute one decision, just as the decision of the Pope and his disciple are the same.”**—*Boniface VIII, Unam Sanctam, Translations and Reprints, Vol. 3, No. 6, p. 24.*

Pope Martin V (1417-1431) claimed **worldwide authority.**

**“The Roman Pontiff, successor of the blessed Peter, and the vicar of Jesus Christ, keeper of the keys of the heavenly Kingdom, of all regions of the world, and of all of the nations and those who dwell in them”** (April 4, 1417).

**“Stationed on the lofty watchtower of the church militant, the Roman Pontiff, Blessed Peter’s successor, keeper of the keys of the heavenly kingdom, and the Vicar of Jesus Christ having fullness of power and privileges over all the churches and monasteries and other religious places of the world in the manner of the Shepherd, the eyes of His providence over the whole world, the nations and all of those who dwell in them . . .”** [June 10, 1420].”—*Bullarium Patronatus Portugalliae Regum In Ecclesiis Africae, Asiae, Atque Oceaniae, Vol. 1, pp. 8, 12.*

Pope Eugene IV (1431-1447) claimed **primacy over the world.**

**“We likewise define that the holy Apostolic See, and the Roman Pontiff, hold the primacy throughout the entire world; and that full power was given to him in blessed Peter by Our Lord Jesus Christ, to feed, rule, and govern the universal Church just as is contained in the acts of the ecumenical Councils and in the sacred canons.”**—*Pope Eugene IV, Papal Bull Laetentur Coeli (July 6, 1439), Denzinger, The Sources of Catholic Dogma, p. 220.*

In a speech addressing Pope Julius II (1503-1513), in the Fifth Lateran Council, Session 4 (1512), Christopher

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Marcellus (appointed Archbishop of Corfù, June 1514) proclaimed that **the pope was another god on earth.**

“Take care, so that the sheepfold may be one. It now is divided into parts. Take care at last, that we lose not that salvation, that life and breath which thou hast given us. **For thou art our shepherd, thou art our physician, thou art our governor, thou art our husbandman, thou art finally another God on earth** [*tu denique alter Deus in Terris*].”—*Sacrorum Conciliorum: Nova et Amplissima Collectio, J.D. Mansi (ed.), Vol. 32, Col. 761.*

**All of Christ’s Scriptural names also apply to the pope,** according to Cardinal Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621), Doctor of Church State Relations. In his *Disputationes de controversiis christianae fidei, Adversus hujus temporis Haereticos (Debates on the Christian Controversies of Faith against Contemporary Heresy)*, he claimed that all the names that Scripture applies to Christ are also to be applied to the Pope. In *Volume 2, Liber Secundus, De Conciliorum auctoritate (Book 2, The Authority of Councils)*, the following is given:

“Third proposition: . . . Second, it is proved by an argument, founded in the scriptures: for **all the names, which in the scriptures are applied to Christ, proving him to be above the Church, are in like manner applied to the Pontiff:** as first, Christ is head of the family in his own house, which is the Church. The Pontiff is high steward in the same, that is, **he is head of the family in the place of Christ.**”—*Robert Bellarmine, De Conciliorum Auct., Lib. II, Cap. 17, 1608, Paris, Tom. ii. Col. 95.*

Pope Pius IX (1846-1878) declared, in 1863, that **unity with the Roman Pontiff is necessary for salvation.**

“Also well known is the Catholic teaching that **no one can be saved outside the Catholic Church. Eternal salvation cannot be obtained by those who oppose the authority and statements of the same Church** and are stubbornly separated from the unity of the Church and also from the successor of Peter, the Roman Pontiff, to

whom ‘the custody of the vineyard has been committed by the Saviour.’ ”—*Pope Pius IX, Encyclical, On Promotion of False Doctrines, August 10, 1863.*

Pope Pius IX declared that **he, himself, alone is “the way, the truth, and the life.”**

“I alone, despite my unworthiness, am the successor of the apostles, **the vicar of Jesus Christ**: I alone have the mission to guide and direct the bark of Peter. **I am the way, the truth, and the life: they who are with me are with the church: they who are not with me are out of the church—they are out of the way, the truth, and the life.** Let men well understand this, that they be not deceived or led astray by dissident Catholics who desire and teach something quite different from what the head of the church teaches.”—*Pope Pius IX, address given in French on March 24, 1866. Published in France, in the Catholic monthly Revue du Monde Catholique; the L’Union and the Observateur Catholique of April 1, 1866, p. 357; and The Guardian, London, April 11, 1866.*

Pope Pius IX declared that **recognition of papal jurisdiction is necessary for salvation.** The following two paragraphs are from the *Dogmatic Constitution I on the Church of Christ (Vatican I)*, Session IV, July 18, 1870, which was convened by Pope Pius IX for the purpose of declaring the doctrine of papal infallibility:

“Therefore, relying on the clear testimonies of Sacred Scripture and adhering to the eloquent and manifest decisions not only of Our predecessors, the Roman Pontiffs, but also of the general Councils, We renew the definition of the Ecumenical Council of Florence, by which all of the faithful of Christ must believe ‘that **the Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff hold primacy over the whole world, and that the Pontiff of Rome himself is the successor of the blessed Peter, the chief of the apostles, and is the true vicar of Christ and head of the whole Church and faith, and teacher of all Christians;** and that to him was handed down in blessed Peter, by our Lord Jesus Christ, **full power to**

feed, rule, and guide the universal Church, just as is also contained in the records of the ecumenical Councils and in the sacred canons' [p. 1826].

“Furthermore We teach and declare that the Roman Church, by the disposition of the Lord, **holds the sovereignty of ordinary power over all others**, and that this power of jurisdiction on the part of the Roman Pontiff, which is truly episcopal, is immediate; and with respect to this the pastors and the faithful of whatever right and dignity, both as separate individuals and all together, are bound by the duty of hierarchical subordination and true obedience, **not only in things which pertain to faith and morals, but also in those which pertain to the discipline and government of the Church** [which is] spread over the whole world, so that the Church of Christ is protected not only by the Roman Pontiff, but by the unity of communion as well as of the profession of the same faith is one flock under one highest shepherd. **This is the doctrine of Catholic truth from which no one can deviate and keep his faith and salvation** [p. 1827].”—*Dogmatic Constitution I, on the Church of Christ, Vatican I, Session 4, July 18th, 1870, Chap. 3. The Power and Manner of the Primacy of the Roman Pontiff, Denzinger, The Sources of Catholic Dogma.*

The papal claim to infallibility was officially declared on July 18, 1870, by Vatican I (1869-1870).

“Therefore faithfully adhering to the tradition received from the beginning of the Christian faith, for the glory of God our Saviour, the exaltation of the Catholic religion, and the salvation of Christian people, the sacred Council approving, we teach and define that **it is a dogma divinely revealed**: that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra* [in the throne], that is, when in discharge of the office of pastor and doctor of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the universal Church, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, **is possessed of that infallibility** with which the divine Redeemer willed that his Church

should be endowed **for defining doctrine regarding faith or morals**; and that therefore **such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are irreformable of themselves**, and not from the consent of the Church.

**“But if any one—which may God avert—presume to contradict this our definition, let him be anathema.** Given at Rome in public Session solemnly held in the Vatican Basilica in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy, on the eighteenth day of July, in the twenty-fifth year of our Pontificate.”—*Vatican Council, Session 4 (July 18, 1870), First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ (Pastor Aeternus), Chap. IV, Concerning the Infallible Teaching of the Roman Pontiff, in Philip Schaff, The Creeds of Christendom, Vol. 2, pp. 266–271.*

Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) declared, in 1894, that **the pope holds the place of God on Earth.**

**“We [the popes] hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty.”**—*Pope Leo XIII, Apostolic Exhortation Praeclara Gratulationis Publicae (The Reunion of Christendom), dated June 20, 1894, trans. in The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII, para. 5, p. 304.*

Pope Leo XIII also **affirmed supreme, universal papal authority.**

**“9. But he who dissents even in one point from divinely revealed truth absolutely rejects all faith,** since he thereby refuses to honour God as the supreme truth and the formal motive of faith . . .

**“13. The Pontiffs who succeed Peter in the Roman Episcopate receive the supreme power in the Church, *jure divino* [by divine law]. ‘We define’ (declare the Fathers of the *Council of Florence*) ‘that the Holy and Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff hold the primacy of the Church throughout the whole world: and that the same Roman Pontiff is the successor of St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, and the true Vicar of Christ, the head of the whole Church, and the father and teacher of all Christians; and that full power was given**

to him, in Blessed Peter, by our Lord Jesus Christ to feed, to rule, and to govern the universal Church, as is also contained in the acts of ecumenical councils and in the sacred canons' (*Conc. Florentinum*). Similarly the *Fourth Council of Lateran* declares: **'The Roman Church, as the mother and mistress of all the faithful, by the will of Christ obtains primacy of jurisdiction over all other churches.'** These declarations were preceded by the consent of antiquity which ever acknowledged, without the slightest doubt or hesitation, the Bishops of Rome and revered them as the legitimate successors of St. Peter . .

"15. But **the authority of the Roman Pontiff is supreme, universal, independent;** that of the bishops . .

"16. What Christ has said of Himself, We may truly repeat of Ourselves: 'Other sheep I have that are not of this fold: them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice' (John 10:16).

"Our soul goes out to those whom the foul breath of irreligion has not entirely corrupted, and who at least seek to have the true God, the Creator of Heaven and earth, as their Father. Let such as these take counsel with themselves, and realize that **they can in no wise be counted among the children of God, unless they take Christ Jesus as their Brother, and at the same time the [Roman Catholic] Church as their mother.**"—*Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter Satis Cognitum (On the Unity of the Church), June 29, 1896.*

Pope Leo XIII declared that **the Roman Pontiff is God's instrument of salvation:**

"This is our last lesson to you: receive it, engrave it in your minds, all of you: by God's commandment, **salvation is to be found nowhere but in the Church; the strong and effective instrument of salvation is none other than the Roman Pontificate.**"—*Pope Leo XIII, in a speech for the 25th Anniversary of His Election, given on February 20, 1903.*

Pope Pius XI (1922-1939), in an Encyclical Letter of

December 1922, declares that **the pope is sovereign over all the peoples of the world.**

“The hand of God, who guides the course of history, has set down the Chair of His Vicar on earth, in this city of Rome which, from being the capital of the wonderful Roman Empire, **was made by Him the capital of the whole world, because He made it the seat of a sovereignty which, since it extends beyond the confines of nations and states, embraces within itself all the peoples of the whole world.** The very origin and divine nature of this sovereignty and the inviolable rights of conscience of millions of the faithful of the whole world demand that **this sacred sovereignty must not be, neither must it ever appear to be, subject to any human authority or law whatsoever**, even though that law be one which proclaims certain guaranties for the liberty of the Roman Pontiff.”—*Pope Pius XI, Encyclical Letter, Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio (On the Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ), December 23, 1922.*

—For these and other papal statements, see *Papal Teachings of the Church*, selected and arranged by the Benedictine Monks of Solesmes, translated by Mother E. O’Gorman, R.S.C.J. Also recognized by the Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart, 1962, and the Daughters of St. Paul.

In unusual wording, printed in a St. Louis Catholic publication of 1912, a Catholic priest said **the pope is the ruler over all the world, and any government which opposed him should be damned to hellfire.**

“Tell us we are Catholics first and Americans or Englishmen afterwards; of course we are. Tell us, in the conflict between the church and the civil government we take the side of the church; of course we do. Why, if the government of the United States were at war with the church, we would say tomorrow, to hell [sic.] with the government of the United States; and if the church and all the governments of the world were at war, we would say, to hell with all the governments of the world . . . Why

is it that in this country where we have only seven per cent of the population, the Catholic church is so much feared? She is loved by all her children and feared by everybody. Why is it the Pope has such tremendous power? Why, **the Pope is the ruler of the world. All the emperors, all the kings, all the princes, all the presidents of the world are as these altar boys of mine.** The Pope is the ruler of the world.”—*The Western Watchman, periodical published in St. Louis by D.S. Phelan, June 27th, 1912.*

Comment by Martin Luther (1483-1546) on papal infallibility:

**“They assume authority, and juggle before us with impudent words,** saying that the Pope cannot err in matters of faith, whether he be evil or good, **albeit they cannot prove it by a single letter . . .** We will quote the Scriptures. St. Paul says, ‘If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace’ (1 Cor. 14:30). What would be the use of this commandment, if we were to believe him alone that teaches or has the highest seat? Christ Himself says, ‘And they shall be all taught of God’ (John 6:45). **Thus it may come to pass that the Pope and his followers are wicked and not true Christians, and not being taught by God, have no true understanding,** whereas a common man may have true understanding. Why should we then not follow him? Has not the Pope often erred? . . . Therefore it is a wickedly devised fable—and they cannot quote a single letter [of Scripture] to confirm it—that it is for the Pope alone to interpret the Scriptures or to confirm the interpretation of them. **They have assumed the authority of their own selves.** And though they say that this authority was given to St. Peter when the keys were given to him, it is plain enough that the keys were not given to St. Peter alone, but to the whole community.”—*Luther’s Werke (Luther’s Writings), trans. and ed. by H. Wace and C.A. Buckheim (1828–1870), in First Principles of the Reformation; reprinted in Louis L. Snyder, ed., Documents of German History, pp. 69-70.*



Martin Luther also wrote:

**“It is a horrible thing to behold the man who styles himself Christ’s vicegerent, displaying a magnificence that no emperor can equal. Is this being like the poor Jesus or the humble Peter? He is, say they, the Lord of the world! But Christ, whose vicar he boasts of being, said, ‘My kingdom is not of this world.’ Can the dominions of a vicar extend beyond those of his superior?”**—*Martin Luther, quoted in J.H. Merle D’Aubigne, Bk 6, Chap. 3.*

**“I am reading the decrees of the pontiffs, and . . . I do not know whether the pope is antichrist himself or his apostle, so greatly is Christ misrepresented and crucified in them.”**—*Martin Luther, quoted in J.H. Merle D’Aubigne, Bk 5, Chap. 1.*

## Appendix 2

### *Nearing the End*

**Where do we stand today?**—We are now well into a new millennium. What is ahead?

**“The Protestant Reformation has now effectively been abandoned by the visible Church in Britain and is widely represented as a tragic mistake.”**—*Michael Semlyen, All Roads Lead to Rome, p. 15.*

**“It’s time for Protestants to go to the shepherd [the pope] and say What do we have to do to come home?”**—*Robert Schuller, pastor of the Crystal Cathedral, quoted in Los Angeles Herald Examiner, September 19, 1987.*

**“Heads of American Protestant and Eastern Orthodox churches who were meeting with Pope John Paul II on Friday hailed their first broad representative discussion as a landmark on the road to greater unity . . . Donald Jones, a United Methodist, termed it ‘the most important ecumenical meeting of the century.’ . . . Paul A. Crow, Jr, of Indianapolis, ecumenical officer**

of the Christian Church [Disciples of Christ] called it a **'new day in ecumenism,' opening a future in which God 'is drawing us together.'**”—*The Montgomery Advertiser, September 12, 1987.*

“[John Paul II] insists that **men have no reliable hope of creating a viable geopolitical system unless it is on the basis of Roman Catholic Christianity.**”—*Malachi Martin, The Keys of This Blood, p. 492.*

“Pope John Paul II . . . on Tuesday told Roman Catholics to **seek forgiveness through the priests and not directly from God.** In a major document on the need for confession of sin, the pontiff laid down guidelines for confessing sins . . . **The requirement for confessing sin through priests is one of the fundamental principles of Roman Catholicism.**”—*Associated Press, December 11, 1984.*

“It was an unprecedented interlude, there in the overwhelmingly Protestant Southland September 11, 1987, as **Pope John Paul II led a Billy Graham-style service, using Graham’s advisers, pulpit and sound equipment, in conjunction with the widest array of American church officials ever assembled with a pope . . .**

“‘The whole atmosphere has changed,’ says religion historian Harry S. Stout of Yale University, noting that **in television sermons it is generally impossible to tell a Catholic from a Protestant.**”—*The Courier, Findlay, Ohio, March 29, 1988.*

On March 29, 1994, **forty well-known Evangelical and Catholic leaders signed a historic agreement, entitled *Evangelicals and Catholics Together*, that they were now “together.”** Some of the Protestant leaders who signed the document included Bill Bright, J.I. Packer, and Pat Robertson. The opening paragraph includes these words:

“If in the merciful and mysterious ways of God the Second Coming is delayed, we enter upon a Third Millennium that could be, in the words of John Paul II, ‘a springtime of world missions.’ ”—*Evangelicals and*

*Catholics Together: Toward a Common Mission*, ed. by Chuck Colson and Richard Neuhaus, p. 1.

**“After nearly four centuries of division and hostility, Protestants and Catholics have taken an important step toward unity . . . urging their followers to accept each other as Christians, put aside differences, and contend for common causes.”**—*Christian America*, March 1994, p. 1 (*Journal of the Christian Coalition*).

**“European Catholics and Protestants have concluded that the condemnations of the Reformation were based on misconceptions, were aimed at extreme positions on the other side, and no longer apply to today’s situations.”**—*Ibid.*, p. 108.

Yet priest Richard Neuhaus (former Lutheran minister and the leading Catholic on the above committee) **has admitted that Catholic teachings have not changed.** When asked why the modern papacy does not repudiate the teachings of the Council of Trent, Neuhaus made this significant statement:

**“[The question has been asked:] ‘Why does the Catholic Church not recant what was said at Trent?’ . . . Because it is Catholic teaching that a council teaches authoritatively [*i.e.*, infallibly], and the Church is not authorized to repudiate retrospectively a conciliar decree.”**—*Ibid.*, p. 209.

About 13 months after the *Evangelicals and Catholics Together* document, a Papal Encyclical Letter, *Ut Unum Sint* (“That They May Be One”), written by Joseph Ratzinger (the later Pope Benedict XVI) and signed by John Paul II, was released on May 25, 1995. It was given as the papacy’s commitment to ecumenism in what is called a letter; but it is actually a 115-page book. (“Ecumenism” is an ongoing attempt to gradually bring all the churches into oneness with one another and with Rome.)

**“Pope John Paul II’s latest encyclical [*Ut Unum Sint* on May 25, 1995] is surely one of the broadest, most emphatic pleas for Christian unity ever issued by a**

pope, perhaps even the most insistent and considered call for the reunion of divided Christians ever made by any Christian Church leader.”—*Inside the Vatican*, June-July 1995 issue (R.C. magazine).

“Pope John Paul wants . . . a unity that would allow for diversity . . . The pope does use the term ‘hierarchy of doctrine.’ Obviously some teachings are more important than others, and there has to be agreement on those essential points, while leaving considerable latitude on other points that are less essential to the faith.”—*Paulist priest, Ronald Roberson, Our Sunday Visitor*, January 14, 1996.

“In Catholic teaching, the pope, as bishop of Rome, is the successor of Peter, and **this continuing ‘Petrine ministry’ belongs to all Christians, whether they recognize it or not.**”—*Richard John Neuhaus, The Wall Street Journal*, July 6, 1995.

“**The pontiff apparently hopes to make dramatic progress toward reconciliation with both Eastern Orthodox and Protestant churches.**”—*Washington Post*, May 31, 1995.

“In a bid to forge Christian unity, the 75-year-old pope **also pledged to forgive those who caused Catholics to suffer.** ‘He is pushing hard on the accelerator toward unity,’ said Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls. **‘The main obstacle is not doctrine but history with all its prejudices.’**”—*USA Today*, May 22, 1995.

“We can revisit the controversies of the Reformation . . . [in private], but in the public arena **we should thank God that Catholics and Evangelicals have found one another. If some people find that scary, it’s because they realize that the tide is turning.**”—*Deal Hudson, Crisis*, November 1995.

Catholic attorney Keith Fournier, executive director of the *American Center for Law and Justice*, the “religious liberty” arm of the *Christian Coalition*, wrote this:

“**Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox can come together, must come together, and are coming together. The wall of separation is cracking, portions**

of the wall are beginning to fall away. Christians are waking up and starting to see each other as Family . . . It is a road we need to travel together—with courage and confidence.”—*Keith Fournier, House United, p. 336.*

In September 1995, the Christian Coalition held a National Convention in Washington, D.C., called *Road to Victory Conference*, where **participants were urged to also attend the November 17-18 Catholic Campaign for America (CCA). The objective is to solidify the Catholic vote to attain their objectives in Congress and the White House.**

The CCA describes their objectives this way:

**“The Catholic Campaign for America was founded in 1991** with the mission to activate Catholic citizens, increase the Catholic electorate’s influence in formulating policy, and **focus the public’s attention on the richness and beauty of Catholic teaching.** The National Convention is one more step on the road to achieving our mission.”—*Official CCA document.*

Ralph Reed, executive director of *Christian Coalition*, of which Pat Robertson was president, was a featured speaker at this *Catholic Campaign Conference*. **Expressing sorrow for the “bigotry” expressed toward Catholics in the past, he encouraged the CCA to work with the Christian Coalition in coming elections.** His speech included these significant words:

**“Just as the Evangelicals have become the base vote of the Republican party, Catholics are now today the swing vote in American politics. Any candidate who wins the Catholic vote will be able to govern America.** No president has been elected since John F. Kennedy in 1960 without winning the Catholic vote . . . **The Catholic vote holds the key to the future of America. And I believe that if they can unite—if Catholics can unite with the Evangelical Christians . . . there is no person who runs for office in any city or any state in America that can’t be elected and there is no bill that can’t be passed in either house of Congress or any state legisla-**

tive chamber anywhere in America. It is the emerging force in the electorate today . . .

“We are uniting because the darkness has become so pervasive that the light must come together. We are coming together because, whatever theological differences there are, **there is far more that unites us and brings us together than divides us and separates us. The good news is the chasm [that has formerly divided us] is being bridged and those walls are crumbling.** I believe that this is not the work of any man. I believe that it is the work of God.”—*Ralph Reed, speech, Catholic Campaign for America Convention, November 17, 1995.*

**From 1981 through the 1990s and beyond, there have been large numbers of Marian apparitions (apparent appearances of Mary). They tell Christians everywhere to unite; for Christ’s return will be very soon.**

“Our Lady states that the reasons for her warnings are to prepare us for the **Second Coming of Jesus Christ** . . . She has come to warn us.”—*Ted and Maureen Flynn, Thunder of Justice, p. 1.*

Medjugorje, in former Yugoslavia, has been visited by an estimated 15 million pilgrims and 15,000 clergy since 1981. Other apparitions have occurred elsewhere.

“Through this current deluge of apparitions and locutions, **the Blessed Virgin Mary is issuing a wake-up call** . . . It is now part of God’s plan to have the ‘Woman Clothed with the Sun’ [Rev. 12:1] **appear throughout the world.**”—*Ibid., pp. 3-5 (applying Revelation 12:1 to Mary).*

“His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger [now Pope Benedict XVI] has stated in *The Ratzinger Report*, **‘One of the signs of our times is that the announcements of Marian Apparitions are multiplying all over the world.’**”—*Ibid., pp. 7-8.*

**Part of this campaign is to urge Catholics and Protestants to believe that visitants from the dead wish to speak to them, and call them back to the beliefs of the true church.**

“The most startling event for Ramon [a visitor to Medjugorje] was the revelation from the visionaries that they had conversed with his dead brother, Luis Andreu.”—*Ibid.*, p. 166.

**“The doctrine of man’s consciousness in death, especially the belief that spirits of the dead return to minister to the living, has prepared the way for modern spiritualism.”**—*Great Controversy*, 551.

“Since the days of the Old Testament, **the holy dead have been sent to earth as God’s celestial couriers.** This outstanding new book [*Messengers*, a best-selling book for Catholics] will fascinate and intrigue readers with his compelling glimpse into **the reality of the afterlife** as well as boost the reader’s faith in God.”—*Ad for the book*, in *Our Sunday Visitor* magazine, January 7, 1996.

**“There are few who have any just conception of the deceptive power of spiritualism and the danger of coming under its influence.** Many tamper with it merely to gratify their curiosity. They have no real faith in it and would be filled with horror at the thought of yielding themselves to the spirits’ control. But they venture upon the forbidden ground, and the mighty destroyer exercises his power upon them against their will. Let them once be induced to submit their minds to his direction, and he holds them captive.”—*Great Controversy*, 558.

**We are nearing the fulfillment of the last half of the book of Revelation, the final crisis just before Christ returns!**

“Marvelous in her shrewdness and cunning is the Roman Church. She can read what is to be. **She bides her time, seeing that the Protestant churches are paying her homage in their acceptance of the false sabbath and that they are preparing to enforce it by the very means which she herself employed in bygone days.** Those who reject the light of truth will yet seek the aid of this self-styled infallible power to exalt an institution that originated with her. **How readily she will come to**

**the help of Protestants in this work it is not difficult to conjecture.** Who understands better than the papal leaders how to deal with those who are disobedient to the church?"—*Great Controversy*, 580.

"The Roman Church now presents a fair front to the world, covering with apologies her record of horrible cruelties. She has clothed herself in Christlike garments; but she is unchanged. **Every principle of the papacy that existed in past ages exists today. The doctrines devised in the darkest ages are still held.** Let none deceive themselves.

"**The papacy that Protestants are now so ready to honor is the same that ruled the world in the days of the Reformation,** when men of God stood up, at the peril of their lives, to expose her iniquity. **She possesses the same pride and arrogant assumption that lorded it over kings and princes, and claimed the prerogatives of God.** Her spirit is no less cruel and despotic now than when she crushed out human liberty and slew the saints of the Most High. The papacy is just what prophecy declared that she would be, the apostasy of the latter times. 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4. It is a part of her policy to assume the character which will best accomplish her purpose."—*Great Controversy*, 571.

*Here is how the final crisis will begin:*

"**When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result.**"—*Great Controversy*, 445.

"**When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and**



republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, **then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.**

“As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, **so may this apostasy be a sign to us that the limit of God’s forbearance is reached, that the measure of our nation’s iniquity is full,** and that the angel of mercy is about to take her flight, never to return. **The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress which prophets have described as the time of Jacob’s trouble.**”—*5 Testimonies, 451.*

“**Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions.** While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The **Protestants** of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of **spiritualism**; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the **Roman power**; and **under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.**

“**As spiritualism more closely imitates the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare.** Satan himself is converted, after the modern order of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light. **Through the agency of spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed.** And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power.”—*Great Controversy, 588.*

*Special Topical Index*

***Special notes:*** In order to aid you in locating the large number of special topics discussed in this book, this index lists both subjects, as well as key phrases.

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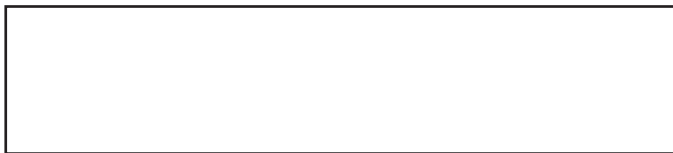


## ABBREVIATIONS

AA - Acts of the Apostles	MB - Mount of Blessing
AH - Adventist Home	MH - Ministry of Healing
1BC - Bible Commentary, Vol. 1	MM - Medical Ministry
COL - Christ's Object Lessons	MYP - Messages to Young People
CT - Counsels to Teachers	PK - Prophets and Kings
CW - Counsels to Writers	PP - Patriarchs and Prophets
DA - Desire of Ages	SC - Steps to Christ
Ed - Education	1SG - Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 1
Ev - Evangelism	SL - The Sanctified Life
EW - Early Writings	1SM - Selected Messages, Vol. 1
FE - Fundamentals of Educa- tion	SR - Story of Redemption
GC - Great Controversy	1T - Testimonies, Vol. 1
GW - Gospel Workers	TM - Testimonies to Ministers
LS - Life Sketches	WM - Welfare Ministry

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